

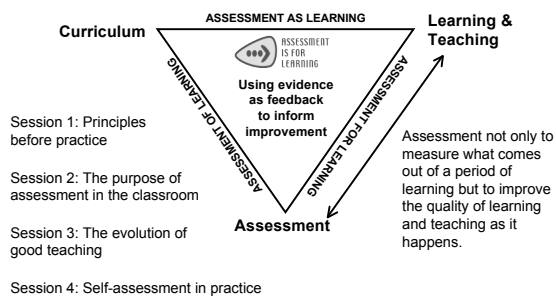
Section B
Unit 1

Embedding Formative Assessment *so what are the pupils doing?*

The Highland Council
Learning and Teaching Reflection Framework

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Embedding Formative Assessment



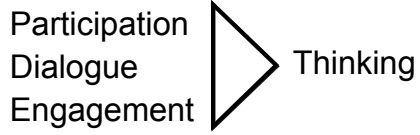
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A moment of learning

Assessment is ... a moment of learning, and students have to be active in their own assessment and to picture their own learning in the light of an understanding of what it means to get better.

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Evidence of effective interaction



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Session 2

Classroom assessment and better learning

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Just good teaching?

We're doing these things already ... it's just good teaching.

Yes, but:

- Do you know why you're doing it?
- How often do you use it?
- Are you systematic about it?
- What are the pupils doing as a result?

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Revisiting the Black Box

Is there evidence that improving formative assessment raises standards?

All of these studies show that innovations which include strengthening the practice of formative assessment produce significant, and often substantial, learning gains.

Is there evidence that there is room for improvement?

There is a wealth of research evidence that the everyday practice of assessment in classrooms is beset with problems and shortcomings.

Is there evidence about how to improve formative assessment?

Ways of managing formative assessment which work with the assumption of 'untapped potential' do help all pupils to learn and can give particular help to those who have previously fallen behind.

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Improving formative assessment

The self esteem of pupils

Encourage pupils to believe that if they try harder, they'll do better

Self-assessment by pupils

Encourage pupils to become actively involved in assessing themselves

The evolution of good teaching

Encourage teachers to improve planning and teaching for its own sake AND to train pupils in the approaches, skills and techniques they can use to evaluate their own learning

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The self-esteem of pupils

What is needed is a culture of success, backed by a belief that all can achieve. Formative assessment can be a powerful weapon here if it is communicated in the right way. Whilst it can help all pupils, it gives particularly good results with low achievers where it concentrates on specific problems with their work, and gives them both a clear understanding of what is wrong and achievable targets for putting it right. Pupils can accept and work with such messages, provided that they are not clouded by overtones about ability, competition and comparison with others.

Inside the Black Box

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Activity 2
Beliefs and classroom practice

Use the statements in the beliefs activity sheet to reflect on and discuss your beliefs about the role of intelligence in learning and about the relationship between teaching and learning.

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The involvement of learners

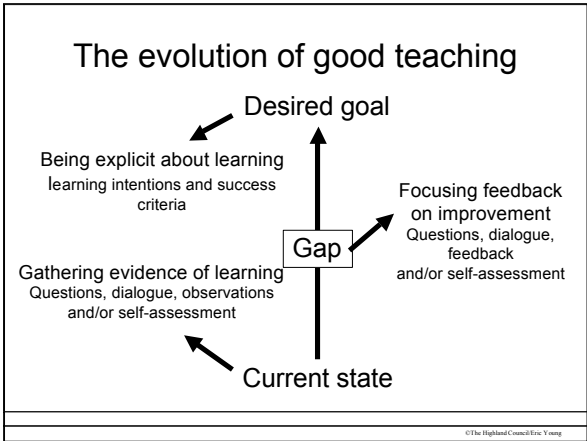
Formative assessment consists of two related actions:

- 1 the learner perceives a gap between a desired goal and her or his present state of knowledge/understanding/skill.
Stimulate learning
- 2 the learner acts to close that gap in order to reach the desired goal.
Support learning

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Session 3
The evolution of good teaching

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- ### The evolution of good teaching
- Being explicit about learning
 - Gathering evidence of learning
 - Focusing feedback on improvement
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Being explicit about learning

Research evidence: to succeed in learning, students need to understand what they are being asked to learn and how they will recognise their own progress.

Practice: the learning purpose of any classroom activity should be shared with students in a way that will support their efforts to achieve it.

Tactics: WALT, WILF, OLI, TIB or “I want you to learn...” and “the success criteria to look for are...”

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Gathering evidence of learning

Research evidence: teachers need feedback from students about their learning if they are to adjust teaching and learning to meet their needs.

Practice: questions and questioning approaches that are most likely to provide useful feedback and evidence of learning should be a common feature of classroom interaction.

Tactics: wait time, no hands up, think pair share, higher order questions, using wrong answers to explore misunderstandings.

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Focusing feedback on improvement

Research evidence: to improve in their learning, students need encouragement and specific advice on what to do to get better and how to do it.

Practice: feedback, written or oral, should tell students what has been done well, where improvement can be made and how. Students will also need some time to work on improvements.

Tactics: two stars and a wish, www.ebi, etc

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Activity 3

Exploring formative assessment

Using 'Exploring formative assessment' as a starting point, think about your own experience of a particular strategy, for example 'wait time' or 'two stars and a wish'.

Discuss if and how your use of it reflected the underlying principles of participation, dialogue, engagement and thinking.


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Session 4

Self-assessment in practice

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Formative assessment in practice



A circular diagram with a central white circle and a grey outer ring. The ring contains the text 'FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT' at the top and 'FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT' at the bottom. Inside the ring, four phrases are arranged in a circle: 'Being explicit about Learning', 'Focusing Feedback on Improvement', 'Gathering Evidence of Learning', and 'Turning Learning into Action'.

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Embedding practice



A circular diagram similar to the one above, but with a central black circle containing the text 'THE THINKING CHILD'. The outer ring also contains the text 'EMBEDDING' at the bottom.

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Handing on responsibility for learning

Research evidence: only students can take the action needed to improve their learning. To achieve this, they must have some understanding of their present position and their desired learning goal.

Practice: train students to use various formative assessment approaches to assess one another and themselves.

Tactics: traffic lights, peer marking, learning partners etc

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The challenge of assessment

Seeing ourselves as teachers who 'help students to search rather than to follow is challenging and, in many ways, frightening as it involves a shift from a well-managed classroom to a transformation seeking classroom.'

In Search of Understanding
Brooks & Brooks 1993

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Activity 4 Reflecting on practice

A number of reflection tools can be used in this activity:

- The reflection tool in The Highland Council AifL policy.
- The AifL Self-assessment Toolkit.
- An evaluation tool included in this unit which focuses more closely on peer and self-assessment.

Using the resource which most suits school circumstances, explore your progress in embedding formative assessment, and try to identify appropriate next steps.

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Meeting the challenge

Changing habits

- ✓ Personal reflection
- ✓ Critical review
- ✓ Learning communities
- ✓ Action research

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