

Section B: Embedding Formative Assessment

Unit 1: So what are the pupils doing?

Preparatory evaluation: Establishing prior learning

Establishing Prior Learning

The Highland Council Learning and Teaching Reflection Framework has been devised to help teachers think critically and constructively about everyday classroom practice in the light of what we know about effective learning and teaching.

One of its main messages is that, to do this, teachers need to see themselves as learners too, gathering information and ideas about the learning needs of the pupils in their class and how they plan to meet them.

In exploring ways in which they might do this, a good starting point is to reflect on where they are in their own understanding and use of formative assessment. The short presentation, *Establishing Prior Learning*, is designed to help participants achieve that.

The presentation provides a brief introduction to the principles of Assessment for Learning, emphasising that learners need to be fully familiar with both what they are learning and how they are going to do it.

Each of the four aspects of formative assessment - sharing criteria, questioning, feedback and peer and self-assessment - are discussed briefly, emphasising the possible benefits of using them in the classroom and identifying one or two ways in which they are used.

The final slide in the presentation offers an opportunity for participants to identify something from their own experience of using formative assessment in the classroom which they can discuss with some colleagues in a small group. The aim of the activity is stimulate some initial discussion around the benefits and challenges arising from developing and approach to assessment in the classroom based on formative assessment.

Outline

Aspects of formative assessment discussed

Sharing criteria

Quality of questioning

Quality of feedback

Peer and self-assessment

Strategies referred to

WALT and WILF

Think time

Closed v open questions

Comment-only marking

Two stars and a wish

Traffic lights

Activity

Sharing experiences

Think about your own experience of a particular strategy, for example, 'think time' or 'two stars and a wish'.

In small groups, discuss the benefits and challenges you found in using it.