



Time: 12 minutes 34 seconds

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Lesson Overview

In this lesson you'll be introduced to:

- a definition of formative assessment;
- the difference between formative and summative assessment;
- five activities for successful formative assessment;
- obstacles to effective formative assessment implementation;
- suggestions for teachers and instructional leaders to implement and promote the formative assessment process; and,
- recommended activities and resources (which are expanded on in this facilitator guide).

Video Outline

- Introduction (0:00-2:04)
- Formative Assessment Definition (2:05-3:23)
- Five Formative Assessment Activities (3:24-8:47)
- Common Statements from Formative Assessment Novices (08:48-10:34)
- Tips for Your Role (10:35-11:46)
 - Teachers
 - Instructional Leaders and Administrators
- Activities and Resources (11:47-12:34)
 - Recommended Activities
 - Suggested Resources

Your Learning Objectives

Record your objectives and points to focus on.

Your Stops

Make notes on stopping points and content discussion you would like the participants to take part in.

Stopping Point	Content Discussion	Notes

Suggested Discussion Questions

- How do formative and summative assessment differ in terms of their purposes?
- What do learning progressions have to do with formative assessment?
- What are the roles of teachers and students in formative assessment?
- In what ways can formative assessment promote student motivation to learn?
- What are the challenges or obstacles to full implementation of formative assessment practices?

Recommended Activities

- Find Caroline Wylie's document on formative assessment rubrics and observation protocols (cited below). Do a self-evaluation of your formative assessment practices by applying the rubrics to your teaching. Based on your evaluation, in what ways might you improve your instruction?
- Discuss formative assessment with a colleague or colleagues and your supervisor or principal. Address possible impediments to the widespread implementation of formative

assessment in your school and whether actions to advance the approach would be advisable.

- Experts on formative assessment include Margaret Heritage, James Popham, Rick Stiggins, and Lorrie Shepard, among others. Do Google searches on at least two of those experts and “formative assessment” and read what they have to say.
- Steps in the formative assessment process have been well researched for some time. David Ausubel and John Hattie studied many aspects of instruction and learning, but for this activity, Google “David Ausubel and advance organizers” and “John Hattie and feedback.” Note how the work of these researchers relates to the Black and Wiliam conception of formative assessment.
- Using the article, Black, P. and Wiliam, D. Inside the Black Box: Raising Standards Through Classroom Assessment. *Phi Delta Kappan*, October 1998, pp. 1-13. Have participants jigsaw read the article. Dividing the number of sections with the number of participants.

Suggested Resources

Black, P. and Wiliam, D. Inside the black box: raising standards through classroom assessment. *Phi Delta Kappan*, October 1998, pp. 1-13. <https://kappanonline.org/inside-the-black-box-raising-standards-through-classroom-assessment/>

- This Black and Wiliam article is the one that brought widespread attention to this effective instructional practice starting over two decades ago.

Wiliam, D. and Thompson, M. (2008). Integrating assessment with instruction: what will it take to make it work. In Dwyer, C. *The Future of Assessment*, Oxfordshire, England, UK: Routledge. <https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/10001162/1/Wiliam2006Integrating.pdf>

Formative Assessment for Teachers and Students (FAST) State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards (SCASS) (2008). Attributes of effective formative assessment. Washington, DC: Council of Chief State School Officers. https://www.ccsso.org/sites/default/files/2017-12/Attributes_of_Effective_2008.pdf

Heritage, M. Formative assessment: what do teachers need to know and do? *Phi Delta Kappan*, October, 2007. <https://kappanonline.org/formative-assessment-heritage/>

Wylie, C. and Lyon, C. (2016). *Using the Formative Assessment Rubrics, Reflection and Observation Tools to Support Professional Reflection on Practice (Revised)*, Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service. <https://cms.azed.gov/home/GetDocumentFile?id=59495f623217e10fbc43eb0d>

ScriptSlide 1

- Welcome to Lesson 2 on formative assessment.
- Most educators already have some familiarity with this topic as it has been a major focus of teacher professional development for some time.
- We hope this lesson will broaden your understanding and appreciation of formative assessment and your awareness of obstacles to its effective implementation.

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- As explained in Lesson 1, formative and summative assessment are very different. Driver's education offers a nice parallel.
- The driving instructor has the student engage in various driving activities and provides ongoing feedback to help the student improve his or her driving performance. That's formative assessment.
- The grading of the student's driving performance is accomplished by a DMV staffer during the driving test that is conducted after the instruction. That activity is summative assessment.

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- Classroom formative assessment is a multi-step instructional process focused on specific learning targets.
- Research shows that this process, effectively implemented, can lead to achievement gains equivalent to those from individual tutoring. This is especially true for lower performing students.

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- This lesson has four parts:
- In part one we describe the formative assessment process and go beyond the definition to address a related issue.
- In part two, we present five activities that are central to successful formative assessment process. They are from researchers Paul Black and Dylan Wiliam, who are credited with kickstarting the formative assessment movement in the late 1990s.
- In part three, we'll address some common statements about formative assessment from educators just beginning to learn about the process.
- Finally, in part four we'll discuss tips for your individual role as teacher, instructional leader, or administrator - followed by recommended activities and further reading.

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Slide 6

- A formative assessment task force of the Council of Chief State School Officers developed the definition of formative assessment shown in this slide. It describes formative assessment as a multi-step instructional process that is focused on intended instructional outcomes specific to a particular lesson or unit of instruction.
- During instruction, evidence of student learning is gathered on an ongoing basis and is used in feedback that helps both teachers and students to identify learning gaps and address them by making adjustments to their teaching and learning.

Slide 7

- In the decade following publication of a Black and Wiliam 1998 landmark article in the Phi Beta Kappan, some education experts felt that test publishers may have undermined efforts to implement or improve formative assessment practices by “pirating” the term.
- Many tests in their catalogs were characterized as and even labeled “formative assessment.”
- A lot of tests were sold that did not yield the kind of rich evidence needed to identify specific learning gaps and guide instructional adjustments. Frequent testing was the result, but not improved teaching and learning.

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Slide 9

- Black and Wiliam identified five activities or strategies that are central to successful formative assessment practice. The research literature on them is voluminous, and the evidence of their effectiveness conclusive.
- In this section, we elaborate on each of the five, which are shown here.
- These practices are powerful because research shows they increase student achievement when they are done well and combined in a planned set of activities.
- This lesson, together with the accompanying activities and resources, will help you hone your instructional practice.

Slide 10

- The first activity involves the teacher helping students understand
 - what is expected of them in terms of the lesson or unit goals and
 - how they will know when they reach them.
- Students should also understand connections between the current lesson and previous and future learning.

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- During a lesson or unit, the teacher should be continually monitoring students' progress in understanding the material. When possible, students should be checking their own understanding.
- A variety of tools and techniques can be used to gather evidence of learning, including oral questioning, observation of students working, interviews, and quizzes.
- Sometimes evidence of student performance gathered for the purpose of formative and classroom summative assessment is similar. For instance, a written response to a question. There is a difference, however, in how that evidence is used.
- While there are sometimes gray areas between these two categories of assessment, formative evidence usually is not (or should not) count toward student grades.

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- Students should be provided with evidence-based feedback that is linked to the intended learning outcomes and success criteria.
- Feedback is a topic that has been researched extensively for many years. The most effective feedback is individualized and descriptive -- in other words, more than just the number of questions answered correctly on a quiz.
- Some research studies have shown that when a piece of work is returned to students with both a grade and descriptive feedback, the latter is more likely to be ignored.
- Feedback should advance the learning, meaning it should identify learning gaps and lead to decisions by the teacher and student about next steps. This might involve the reteaching or relearning of a prerequisite concept or skill or moving on to the next lesson if the evidence justifies it.

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- Through peer assessment of student work, all parties benefit from the opportunity to think about each other's work. Thinking about and verbalizing observations and analyses of work quality can advance learning.
- This is a major departure from a model in which the teacher is the source of all knowledge transmitted in the classroom. It also allows students to get feedback on their learning in a low stress way and can be a time saver for teachers.

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- Students taking responsibility for their own learning is a worthy goal for all teachers. Effective use of formative assessment practices can help accomplish this by enhancing students' motivation to learn.

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- Learning progressions and motivation to learn are two topics that are central to the formative assessment process.

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- In order for teachers to make good decisions about their next instructional steps, it is critical that they have a good understanding of learning progressions within their disciplines.
- A learning progression is a sequence of “building blocks,” successively more sophisticated, that students encounter or master on the way toward a more expert understanding of an idea or process.
- Learning progressions are closely tied to intended learning outcomes and underly feedback to students and adjustments to teaching and learning. The intended learning outcomes fall somewhere in a learning progression, and instructional decisions based on the analysis of feedback could lead to activities that take a student back to a prerequisite idea or skill in the learning progression or perhaps to the next idea or skill the student will tackle.

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- One of the ways formative assessment can foster motivation to learn is through the proper use of evidence of learning.
- It is unfair to students to count toward their course grades the work they’ve produced before they’ve reached the level of proficiency needed to move on.
- After all, the DMV doesn’t include information on a candidate’s first performance behind the wheel of a driving instructor’s car when deciding whether to award a driver’s license.
- Usually, evidence gathered during instruction should not be graded. It should be analyzed to determine learning gaps and inform subsequent instructional activity.
- This removes the tension and focus on a score so often associated with testing.
- At the same time, the work students are expected to do for formative purposes should give them a good indication of the kind of tasks they will be asked to perform later, when the work will be graded.
- And that should happen when the student is ready and confident that he or she has a good handle on the desired learning outcomes.

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- Here are two common responses to formative assessment from teachers who are just beginning to learn about the process.
- The key to successful formative assessment in classrooms where it is not being implemented effectively is mindset changes on the part of teachers and students about the way their time is spent.

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- Again, formative assessment is not frequent testing. Formative assessment evidence gathering is a part of good instruction that can take many forms – informal and not intimidating.

- In fact, the full instructional process, implemented well, can reduce the amount of classroom summative testing (and grading) that is necessary. Active roles of students and their peers in the process can be time-efficient, too.

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- Many common grading practices program students to be motivated by grades rather than learning. Grades are often used to get students to do what we want and even to maintain discipline.
- The first time we tell students that a quiz or assignment isn't going to be graded, they will indeed be unmotivated to do their best. But how long would it take to reprogram them when they see the same or similar tasks appear on tests that count?
- The whole idea is to help students understand what will be expected of them. They will work by themselves and with others to learn the material and be ready for the graded activities. There should be no surprises. Actually, experts suggest that formative assessment prepares the student for success the first time their work counts and should minimize the need for remediation.

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- The steps or activities of formative assessment have been well researched. They are all important for maximizing learning.
- It is important to perform all the steps and to do them well in order to generate good evidence of learning, provide good feedback, and make effective instructional adjustments.
- Formative assessment is planned. The steps or activities should be represented in lesson plans.
- One of the activities recommended at the end of this lesson involves a tool for self assessing formative assessment practices.

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- Teachers should expect the following from instructional leaders and administrators:
 - periodic monitoring of the quality of teachers' assessment practices and tools;
 - support of professional development in the area of student assessment, professional development that is on-the-job, ongoing, and collaborative;
 - time for teacher teams to collaborate – at least a 90-minute block of time weekly; and,
 - schoolwide grading policies that are fair and promote student motivation to learn rather than inhibiting it.

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- These activities ask you to evaluate your own formative assessment practices and identify obstacles to formative assessment with your colleague.
- Other activities listed in the Lesson 2 Supplement involve further study of formative assessment through the reading of works by several experts and researchers of the subject.

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- This document by Wylie and Lyon presents a great deal more information on formative assessment.
- Other works referenced in the Lesson 2 Supplement are by some of the formative assessment gurus. The Black and Wiliam article is the one that brought widespread attention to this effective instructional practice starting over two decades ago.