

ASSESSMENT. for learning as learning of learning

Dylan Wiliam, *Embedded Formative Assessment*, highlights the importance of formative assessment as a tool to improve teacher practice and ultimately improve student learning.

Unpacking formative assessment			
	Where the learner is going	Where the learner is	How to get there
Teacher	Clarifying, sharing and understanding learning intentions	Engineering effective discussions, tasks, and activities that elicit evidence of learning	Providing feedback that moves learners forward
Peer		Activating students as learning resources for one another	
Learner		Activating students as owners of their own learning	

1. Clarifying, sharing, and understanding learning intentions and criteria for success.

When students understand the learning intentions and what success looks like in the activity they are engaged in.

Dylan Wiliam identified that success criteria based on process, can constrain as well as enhance learning. Too careful planning of process can prevent students from finding truly insightful solutions that we have not envisaged.

Sometimes it is a good idea not to tell students what they are expected to find during the

lesson! Learning intentions and success criteria could be viewed as floors rather than ceilings! Testing students to see if they have learned only what we have taught them narrows their capacity to show what they have really learned. It is important that students know where they are going, and what counts as quality work, but there cannot be a simple formula for doing this. Teachers professional judgement is paramount!

2. Engineering effective classroom discussions, activities, and learning tasks that elicit evidence of learning. Before we can begin to teach students, we need to find out what the students already understand through assessment of, as and for learning. Students' everyday work should be designed to provide evidence of understanding. The difference between our students will become of how we teach.

A good teacher:

- ▣ Establishes where the students are in their learning
- ▣ Identifies the learning destination
- ▣ Carefully plans a route
- ▣ Begins the learning journey
- ▣ Makes regular checks on progress on the way
- ▣ Makes adjustments to the course as conditions dictate

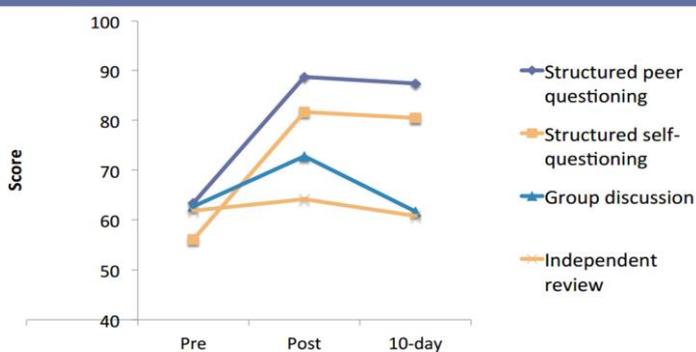
3. Providing feedback that moves learning forward. Feedback should not look backward at where students have come from. Feedback should provide the next steps.

4. Activating learners as instructional resources for one another. Students should be helping one another learn. Sharing strategies and understandings means that students are learning not just one way, but many ways. Diversity is an asset! Individualised learning is being taken over by group learning. Increasing the amount of talk, questioning and engagement, increases learning.

5. Activating learners as owners of their own learning. Increasing the cognitive level

of engagement makes students active learners. Sharing levels of understanding with students allow them to determine and explain what they already understand, and what they are ready to learn next.

Impact on achievement



King, A. (1991). *Applied Cognitive Psychology*, 5(4), 331-346.