

Formative Assessments

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Time Frame 45-60 session(s)

Essential Question(s)

- How can formative assessments help guide instruction?
- What differences are there between formative assessment and summative assessments?

Summary

Formative Assessments are opportunities for teachers to evaluate student understanding and areas of need during the process of learning, rather than at the end of a unit. In this session, participants will identify formative assessment strategies for various grade levels or content areas. After exploring possible strategies for formative assessments, teachers will apply strategies to their own content areas and begin building formative assessments.

Learning Goals

- Participants will be able to identify the differences between formative and summative assessments.
- Participants will be able to select instructional strategies that support gathering student data in order to adapt instruction.

Attachments

- Authentic Learning and Teaching—Formative Assessments.pdf
- First Word Last Word—Formative Assessments.docx
- First Word Last Word—Formative Assessments.pdf
- Formative Assessment Article—Formative Assessments.docx
- Formative Assessment Article—Formative Assessments.pdf
- Formative Assessments.pdf
- Formative Assessments—Formative Asessments.pptx
- Inside Out Document.pdf
- Instructional Strategy Note Sheet—Formative Assessments.docx
- Instructional Strategy Note Sheet—Formative Assessments.pdf
- Synectics Formative Assessment Example—Formative Assessments.docx
- Synectics Formative Assessment Example—Formative Assessments.pdf

Materials

- Post-it notes
- Pens/pencils
- Seconds timer
- First Word Last Word (attachment)
- Synectics Formative Assessment Example (attachment)
- Formative Assessments PowerPoint (attachment)
- Formative Assessment Article (attachment)
- Instructional Strategy Note Sheet (attachment)
- Authentic Learning and Teaching (attachment)
- Inside Out (attachment)

Engage

Presenter's Note

Have handouts and materials available on table for participants. All participants should receive a copy of "Authentic Learning and Teaching," "First Word Last Word," "Instructional Strategy Note Sheet," "Inside Out" and "Synectics Formative Assessment Example."

Welcome participants to the professional development session formative assessments.

Ask the question, *How do you know, in your classroom, when students are learning?* Have participants turn to an elbow partner and discuss the question. Have participants share what their partners said.

Change to the slide to "First Word Last Word." Inform participants that First Word Last Word is an instructional strategy that engages prior knowledge and evaluates knowledge at the end of a lesson. Participants will use the handout from the center of the table, "First Word Last Word," to write words that come to mind when they hear or see the word "ASSESSMENT." Participants will use each letter to create new words that either mean assessment or have something to do with the feeling the word invokes. The words do not need to begin with the letter, like it would in an acrostic, but rather the letters can be represented in the beginning, middle, or the end of the word. Provide a few minutes for completion, and inform participants that it is okay to not have them all filled out. This is an individual task. Once a few minutes have passed and participants are finishing up their lists, have a few share out some of the words they wrote down.

This activity will be revisited at the end of the session to access the growth in knowledge, so inform participants to keep it handy.

Possible Responses

"A - Annual, S - Skills, S - State, E - Evaluation, S - teSt, S - Stressful, M - Measurement, E - exit Exam , N - kNowledge, T - Timed"

Explore

Change to the **"Instructional Strategies" slide**. Inform participants that several new instructional strategies will be introduced to them throughout the session. These strategies are tools to support higher-order thinking in an authentic way. Encourage participants to use their strategies notes sheet to jot down ideas for how they would personalize a strategy to be a tool in their classroom. Once all the new strategies are modeled, the presentation will allow time to reflect on how to use the strategies.

Show the **"Objectives" slide** and briefly share the objectives for the session. This will provide a road map of where you will go together during the session and let participants know what to expect from the session.

Change to the **slide with the linked video**. Go over the "Guiding Questions" on the slide before starting the video. Ask participants to look for the answers to those questions.

- "How is the assessment in the video different than traditional assessment?"
- "How could the data gathered from this strategy be used to guide instruction?"
- "How can students use this strategy to assess their own understanding?"

Play the 2:19 minute video for participants.

After the video, change to the **slide "Paired Verbal Fluency.**" Instruct participants to find an elbow partner and assign A and B roles. Participants will take turns responding to the three guided questions. At the signal for the first round, person A will answer the first guided question and person B will listen for 15 seconds. Then after the signal, person B will answer the same question while person A listens for another 15 seconds. The second question will be answered in the same format for the second round, but person B will go first the second round and person A will go second. In the second round, each person has 30 seconds to answer. The third round is conducted the same as the first round, person A answers first then person B, but each person will have 50 seconds to answer the third question. Each round is granted more time due to the increased difficulty of each question. When using this strategy in class, you would want to scaffold your questions so that each one gets progressively more challenging. Paired Verbal Fluency is a way to structure and support collaborative discussions.

If time allows, have a few participants share a little of what they talked about during their discussions for each question.

Presenter's Note

Did participants not have enough time to finish their thoughts or answers? It is okay if this happens. This helps participants and students in the classroom learn to become more concise in thoughts and conversations. The time provided each round can be altered depending upon how much time is available during the activity. As an alternative, each round could be 20, 40, and 60 seconds, respectively.

Possible Responses

How is the assessment in the video different than traditional assessment? "The teacher is walking around the classroom and informally assessing students' knowledge and ability to solve the given problems." How could the data gathered from this strategy be used to guide instruction? "Teacher can immediately correct any individual misunderstandings. However, if there are multiple students having the same trouble, she can reteach or give extra guided practice on said skill(s)." How can students use this strategy to assess their own understanding? "As you see in the video, there is a young lady who helps correct the mistake of another student in the check stage. Through this process, she is able to assess that she has mastered the skills being taught. Also, explaining and teaching others is a higher level of learning and reaching a deeper depth of knowledge. The teacher can see that she understands the content and is able to help guide others in their learning journey."

Explain

Change to the **slide "Inside Out,"** associated with the Inside Out instructional strategy.

Have participants form groups of three with people sitting near them. Pass out the "Formative Assessment Article" that is separated into three parts. Participants are going to do a modified Inside Out and Jigsaw activity for this reading following the instructions below:

- Participants will get into groups of three with people sitting near them already.
- Give participants a minute to individually jot down any prior knowledge they already have about formative assessments in the innermost circle.
- Give participants the time needed to JigSaw and read the text. Each member reads a different section of the text (Part A, Part B, and Part C).
- Once they have completed the reading, participants write down additional new knowledge or understanding they did not have previously in the designated parts labeled on their "Inside Out" handout. Group members who read Part A will share out the important information from their portion of the reading. Then the person who read Part B will follow and Part C will continue after. Each time a group member shares out their information the other group members will write down that information in the designated circles.
- Allow some groups an opportunity to share out some of the new ideas they learned from the reading.

This strategy is great for formative assessments because it allows teachers to hear students verbally process information meaningfully. Teachers gain an understanding of which students understand the information.

Extend

Change to the **slide titled "Synectics."** Introduce Synectics as an instructional strategy that encourages higher-level, abstract thinking. Synectics provides an opportunity to get students or participants to think outside the box. Teachers will be able to see new connections made and hear new explanations, that normally wouldn't be possible with a typical assessment. Teachers can see the depth of knowledge in these connections and explanations.

Change to slide nine, and provide this example of how to use Synectics in a history class. "The Constitution is like a tricycle because it divides the government into three branches and because a tricycle has three wheels." Mention the possible scaffolding opportunity in the classroom by deleting one of the examples and allowing students to come up with their own ideas.

Change to **slide 10** to show the examples they will now explore. There are copies of this handout on the tables for them to write on as well. Each participant will pick one of the four provided options to connect summative assessments to, and do the same thing with formative assessments using the other four options provided.

Possible Responses

"Summative Assessments are like the speed limit because all information gained will be based on the limits set by the teacher." "Formative Assessments are like shoe shopping because it is not one size fits all. Sometimes you have to try on multiple pairs of shoes before you find the perfect one that fits."

Presenter's Note

Not every student will "get it" or understand, but it allows the students to teach and help make connections that would not normally be possible or expected. This strategy provides an opportunity to get students to think outside the box, and it pushes abstract thinking. Teachers will be able to see new connections and explanations made that normally wouldn't be possible with a typical assessment. Teachers can assess a student's depth of knowledge in the connections being made and in the students' explanations.

Evaluate

Presenter's Note

TREK evaluations will be used in place of the evaluation activity when available. If you don't have access to a TREK evaluation continue with the activity below.

Change to **slide 11**, "First Word/Last Word." Ask participants to find their first activity handout, "First Word, Last Word." Using this handout, participants will modify or add to their list of previous words that they associated with assessments. Ask participants, "How did your outlook or connections change after the professional development session?" "Can assessments be quick and fun for teachers and students?"

Allow a few participants to share out the modifications they made to their lists.

Possible Response

"A -connecting concrete to Abstract thinking, S - Skills, S - Scaffolding, E - formativE, S -Synectics, S -Self assessing, M - Meaningful, E - Engaging, N - fun, T -depTh of knowledge"

Move to the next **slide, "Instructional Strategies**." Allow participants three minutes to fill in their "Instructional Strategy Note Sheet." Ask them, "Which two strategies used today to explore formative assessments are your favorite and why?" Have participants share out.

Change to the **"Authentic Teaching" slide**. Participants will use the "Authenticity Rubric" provided on the tables to assess which four components of authenticity were strongest and which were the weakest. Participants will meet with an elbow partner and share their thoughts. Then allow time for participants to share thoughts with the whole group.

If time allows, show **slide 14**. Participants may get into content area groups to collaborate and design formative assessments they could use with their students.

Slides 15 and **16** are only to remind participants that the K20 Center offers more instructional resources on the LEARN and K20 Center web pages.

Change to the **slide, "How did we do?"** Time to evaluate with participants. Reflect on the objectives from the session using the questions on the PowerPoint.

Follow-up Activities

Research Rationale

Formative assessments are a formidable tool used to develop and guide intentional instruction. These assessments are integrated in the teaching and learning process. They allow teachers to identify gaps in learning and problems during a student's learning process. Formative assessments can be used to help design intervention lessons for struggling students. They are given throughout the learning process and differ from summative assessments since they are not only used just at the end of the unit. For that reason, formative assessments provide continuous evidence for teachers to know what comes next in the learning process for each student, and they clarify each student's learning journey (Stiggins & DuFour, 2009). Formative assessments are also great teaching and learning tools to help personalize instruction for individual student needs and learning. When a student can self assess and become aware of their own learning needs and struggles, they take greater responsibility over their own learning and academic progress.

Resources

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