Formative Assessment Resource Bundle

I. Formative Assessment Resource

II. References
Beliefs

In order to reap the benefits of formative assessment, teachers and students must operate with the following beliefs (Popham, 2011):
- Every student can learn and achieve academic growth.
- The primary purpose of assessment is to improve student learning.
- The responsibility to improve learning is shared by both teacher and students.

The Formative Assessment Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps</th>
<th>How to do it</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Create a sequence of learning</td>
<td>• Develop an understanding of the learning goals for a unit.</td>
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<td>• Create a progression of learning activities that will lead to student mastery.</td>
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<td>• Identify points in the learning sequence where it would be most advantageous to gauge student understanding.</td>
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<td>2. Design a formative assessment</td>
<td>• Determine who will see and use the results from the assessment.</td>
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<td>• Make sure that the assessment format aligns to the learning goal, will show students' understanding and skill, and will provide enough information about student understanding to take action.</td>
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<td>3. Use the data</td>
<td>Make adjustments:</td>
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<td>• Determine what could be considered evidence of student understanding or misunderstanding.</td>
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<td>• Create a plan of action to remedy possible misunderstandings (e.g. whole class reteach lesson, mini-lessons for the whole class or small groups) by establishing adjustment triggers.</td>
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<td>Provide feedback:</td>
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<td>• After students complete the assessment, evaluate their responses.</td>
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<td>• Provide thorough, individual, corrective feedback to students that will lead to an increase in learning.</td>
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Options for Assessment Format
It is important to pick a formative assessment that aligns to the unit objectives and suits the learning experience.

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<tr>
<th>Format¹</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Limitations</th>
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| Written | Selected Response | An assessment type that offers multiple options that students must select correct answers from (e.g. multiple choice, binary choice, matching, or questionnaire with scale items). | • Easy to score.  
• Can be used to assess a lot of learning goals in a short amount of time. | • Difficult to gauge understanding of more complex concepts/thinking. |
| Constructed Response | An assessment type that asks open or closed-ended questions where students must produce their own answers (e.g. essays, short answer questions, and open-ended questionnaires). | • Can be used to assess more complex thinking. | • Challenging when assessing a lot of learning goals at once.  
• Time-intensive for scoring. |
| Performance | Checklists | A list of attributes to observe for in a performance or product. | • Used to assess behavior and product outcomes.  
• Used by students to evaluate self or peer performances/products. | • Challenging when assessing a lot of learning goals at once.  
• Difficult to gauge understanding of more complex concepts/thinking.  
• Time intensive to ensure rater-reliability with students. |
| Rating Scales | Rubrics that score either an overall skill/performance (holistic) or individual criteria (analytic). | • Used to assess behavior and product outcomes.  
• Used by students to evaluate self or peer performances/products. | • Time-intensive, as it takes a lot of time to conduct and evaluate the assessment.  
• Time intensive to ensure rater-reliability with students. |
| Personal communication | Interview, Conference, or Discussion | Students explain their thinking and actions as they perform a task or after a task has been performed. Classroom, small group, and one-on-one discussions can also illuminate student understanding. | • Flexible, and allows for follow-up questions.  
• Can be used to foster personal contact and interaction between the teacher and student.  
• Can be used to assess more complex thinking or understanding. | • Time-consuming.  
• Hard to document results from the interaction. |

¹ Complex learning goals may require multiple assessment formats to assess all aspects of student understanding.

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Formative Assessment

References


Brookhart, S. (2008). *How to give effective feedback to your students*. Alexandria, Georgia: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development


Thompson, T. (1997). Do we need to train teachers how to administer praise? Self-worth theory says we do. Learning and Instruction, 28, 49-64.


