



### *Lens on Learning Theory*

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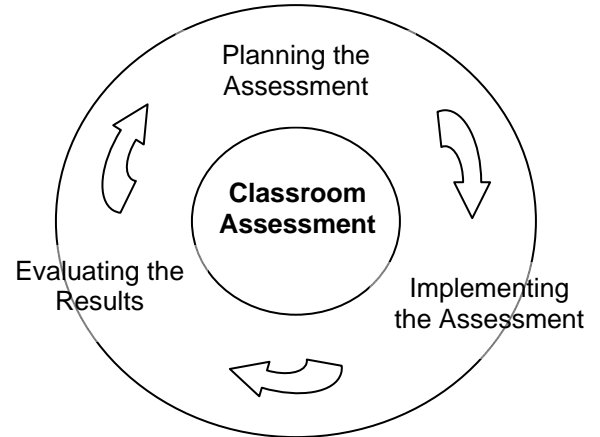
Formative assessment provides feedback to the teacher and the student during the learning process (as opposed to summative assessment, which evaluates learning at an end point). Formative assessment is **assessment for learning**, and should be an integral part of the teaching and learning process.

Research shows that an increase in formative assessments can produce significant learning gains (Black and William, 1998) if it is properly planned, implemented and evaluated.

☑ Formative assessment should be linked to identified and communicated **learning objectives and assessment criteria**.

☑ Formative assessment should be used as a feedback mechanism to identify learning gaps **for both the teacher and the students**.

- Teachers must use the results to make the necessary adjustments to instruction.
- Students must use the results to identify the knowledge and/or skill gaps that they need to address to improve summative evaluation results.



Adapted from: Angelo, T. A., & Cross, K. P. (1993). Classroom Assessment Techniques. Jossey-Bass

### *Reflection on Practice*

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1. What are the learning objectives that you are trying to assess?
2. What type of formative assessment will provide meaningful, efficient feedback to both the teacher and the students related to the objectives?
3. How can the assessment activity be made time-efficient (i.e. minimal or no marking, doesn't take up too much class time)?
4. How might the results of the formative assessment impact on your instruction?

### *Expanding Your Teaching Toolkit*

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Here are some ideas that we've come up with. We can't wait to hear your ideas. Either e-mail them to us or post them in Learning Now's Pedagoggle Discussion.

**Idea #1:** Have student A explain a concept or describe a process to student B.

- The teacher will get feedback on his/her explanation of the concept.
- Students will clarify their thinking as they verbally express the concept.
- Other students can provide feedback on the explanation (i.e. confusing, incomplete, too much detail, adequate, excellent)

**Idea #2:** Oral multiple choice questions where students vote on the correct answer.

**Idea #3:** Online quizzes that students complete multiple times, until they feel they have an adequate grasp of the material.

**Idea #4:** Quiz questions/problems that students answer/solve as a team, competing with other teams (i.e. Who Wants to Be a Millionaire, Family Feud, etc.).

**Idea #5:** Quick responses to general questions such as the following:

- What were the key points of this topic?
- What aspects of the topic are still unclear?
- What is a question you still have after today's class?

Responses can be written on an index card, posted in Blackboard (i.e. Burning Questions discussion), consolidated in groups and posted around the room for discussion, etc.

**Idea #6:** Self-assessment tools such as rubrics, checklists, and rating charts, where students can assess their own performance.

**Idea #7:** Peer-assessment activities where students provide feedback on each other's performance using a clear and structured outline of assessment criteria (i.e. rubric, checklist, rating chart).

**Idea #8:** Students receive an index card and divide it into 4 quadrants.

**In quadrant A**, students identify one thing that the instructor is doing that is helping them learn and should stay the same. **In quadrant B**, students identify one thing that the instructor is doing that is not working for them, and that they would like to see changed. **In quadrant C**, they identify one thing that they are doing themselves that is helping them learn and that they would recommend to other students. **In quadrant D**, they write down one thing that they might do themselves to improve their learning in this subject.

**Idea #9:** Think-Pair-Share. The teacher poses a problem or series of questions to students based on the instruction. Students formulate an individual response; compare it to a partner's response; and then compare it against a model of excellence. Students then share challenges, barriers, or questions related to achieving the ideal response.

## ***More Information and Ideas***

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### **On the Web**

Boston, Carol (2002). The concept of formative assessment. *Practical Assessment, Research & Evaluation*, 8(9). Retrieved October 2009 from <http://PAREonline.net/getvn.asp?v=8&n=9> .

Iowa State University. *Classroom Assessment Techniques*. Retrieved October 2009 from: <http://www.celt.iastate.edu/teaching/cat.html>

### **In the Centre for Teaching and Learning**

Angelo, T. A., & Cross, P. K. (1993). *Classroom assessment techniques: A handbook for college teachers*. Jossey-Bass. Available in the CTL library.

Huba, M. E., & Freed, J. E. (2000). *Learner-centered assessment on college campuses: Shifting the focus from teaching to learning*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon. Available in the CTL library.