

Center for Assessment ccee
California Collaborative
for Educational Excellence

Module 2: Formative Assessment: High-quality discussions between school leaders and teachers about formative assessment processes

*Micro-Course 3:
Supporting teachers to accelerate learning using formative assessment processes in the classroom*

This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](#). Educators and others may use or adapt. If modified, please attribute and re-title. Version 1.0 | Updated January 2022 | Developed By:
Carla Evans & Jeri Thompson
National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment

1

Center for Assessment ccee
California Collaborative
for Educational Excellence

Warm-Up

If you were to ask teachers what they need in order to use **formative assessment** information to monitor/adjust their instruction and improve student learning, **what do you think they would say they need the most?**


© 0 2

2

Center for Assessment ccee
California Collaborative
for Educational Excellence

What Do Teachers Need Most



- This is a complex question and one that likely varies within and across schools and districts.
- However, it is likely that teachers will mention something about time...



Time to do what? *to make sense of the data; to collaborate and discuss with other grade level/content area teachers; to confer with students; other...*

© 0 3


3

School Structures

There are many school structures that can provide teachers with more **TIME** to collaborate, work together, and process student thinking together.



- ★ common planning time
- ★ professional learning communities
- ★ grade level meetings
- ★ professional development sessions



© 1

4

4

Tools & Resources



In this module, we are going to discuss a few tools and resources that can be used by school leaders to support teachers in using formative assessment information to monitor/adjust instruction and improve student learning.

1. Student work analysis protocol
2. Formative assessment discussion tool for school leaders
3. Professional learning about the art of conferring with students

© 1


5

5

Student Work Analysis



- Student work **provides a window** into how students construct meaning of key concepts and skills.
- By analyzing and interpreting student work through a clear and systematic process, **teachers can improve instructional decisions** for individuals and groups of students, and ultimately impact student achievement.



© 1

6

6



Another Supporter

Overly prescriptive grading policies can work at cross purposes with formative best practices. Examples of what to do/not do:

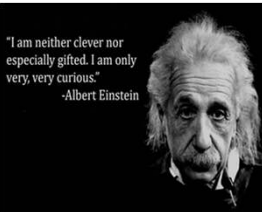
- **Do not:** Require teachers to enter a certain number of grades/week or quarter for each student.
- **Do:** Encourage teachers to provide written comments on assessments used for formative purposes rather than grades. And not include formative assessments in gradebooks!

© 11

10

Professional Learning about Art of Student Conferalls





"I am neither clever nor especially gifted. I am only very, very curious."
-Albert Einstein

Conferring is a conversation with a purpose. We center our actions on **genuine curiosity** toward **student thinking** instead of focusing on students' behavior, the assignment, or the answer.

Munson, J. (2018). *In the moment: Conferring in the elementary math classroom*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

© 11

11

Conferring as Formative Assessment Data





Figure taken from Munson, 2018, p. 7

© 11

12

The Conferring Process



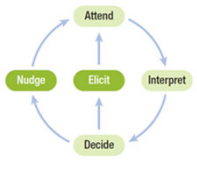
Interpret:

- Where are students in a continuum of understanding?
- What strategies are students trying?
- What are they struggling with and why?
- Where are they in their process?

Elicit student thinking to make it visible and probe reasoning:

- Beyond what students did to why they did it and why it makes sense.

Nudge student thinking or work forward




The conferring process, beginning with attending. The lighter cells are ways teachers think while conferring, and the darker green cells are actions teachers take.
Figure taken from Munson, 2018, p. 7

© ⓘ
13

13

Eliciting & Probing Starter Questions



Eliciting & Probing Moves: Getting Started, Following Up, Targeting
Taken from Munson, J. (2018). In the Moment. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Eliciting: Getting Started

- What are you working on?
- Tell me about your thinking.
- What are you all thinking?
- How did you get started?
- What are you trying?
- What have you done so far?

Eliciting: Following Up


- Say more about that.
- What did you do first?
- What did you do next? And then what did you do?
- Can you show me what you did?
- How did you get that?
- What is happening in this task (or story)?
- What do you understand (about this task)?

[Download the starter questions](#) taken from Jen Munson's book, *In the Moment*.

© ⓘ
14

14

Active Listening



With all this talk about the conferring process—teachers may ask: *Am I eliciting, probing, or nudging?* Who cares! Remember to help teachers keep the main thing the main thing. And **active listening** is one of the keys to help a teacher stay focused on what is truly important in terms of moving student thinking forward.

Wait time after asking a question so that students have the time and space to come up with a response.

Ask students to “say more” about what they tell you. And repeat what they say to check that you’re hearing them correctly.

Ask questions to elicit student thinking; what students understand, do not yet understand, misunderstand, what they are trying to figure out, etc.

© ⓘ
15

15

Center for Assessment **CCEE**
Center for the Study of Assessment
for Educational Excellence

Productive Stances & Roles

Unproductive Stances

- Focus on something other than student thinking
- Center on students' behavior, the assignment, or the answer.
 - ✓ Catching kids being off task
 - ✓ Focusing on completing the task the right way
 - ✓ Looking for errors, not understanding
- Teacher control

Productive Stances

- Get curious about what your students are thinking
- Genuine curiosity leads to open, authentic questions
 - ✓ Ask questions you don't know the answer to
 - ✓ Make few assumptions about what students are thinking
- Teachers aren't trying to control student thinking, just understand it

A stance is "the attitude and beliefs that affect how we approach our teaching, but it quietly and consistently changes the course of every interaction we have with students...Sometimes the words sound like the teacher is trying to support student thinking, but the tone, body language, and pace of the interaction say something very different. Students read and respond to these cues." (Munson, 2018, p. 32)

© 1 16

16

Center for Assessment **CCEE**
Center for the Study of Assessment
for Educational Excellence

Setting the Conditions

Not all tasks are the same for eliciting student thinking or making student thinking visible:

- Rich instructional performance tasks
- Open-ended problems with multiple solutions
- Tasks that elicit application of disciplinary practices

© 1 17

17

Center for Assessment **CCEE**
Center for the Study of Assessment
for Educational Excellence

Micro-Course 3 Outline

Module 1

- Accelerating Learning: Supporting high-quality formative assessments in the classroom

Module 2

- Accelerating Learning: High-quality discussions between school leaders and teachers about formative assessment processes

Module 3

- Accelerating Learning: Supporting teachers as they create or select formative assessments during or after instruction

Module 4

- Accelerating Learning: Supporting teachers as they involve students and their peers in the formative assessment process

© 1 18

18



Reflection Questions

1. Explain a couple ways that you can support teachers to make appropriate decisions that improve instruction and student learning?
2. To what extent does your school have structures in place to promote teacher collaboration? What changes, if any, would you like to work towards in this respect?
3. How could you help teachers use student work analysis to monitor/adjust their future instruction?
4. How could you use teacher observations/evaluations and professional development to promote teacher use of formative assessment information?
5. What is one key takeaway and one lingering question you have after listening to this module?

© 2019

19
