

Module 1: Formative Assessment:

Supporting high-quality processes in the classroom

Micro-Course 3:

Supporting teachers to accelerate learning using formative assessment processes in the classroom



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Warm-Up

What **recurring questions, topics, or themes** emerge when you talk to teachers about formative assessment processes?

What questions do you have about **how to promote high-quality formative assessment processes** within your school/district?

Defining Formative Assessment Process

“...a planned, ongoing process used by all students and teachers during learning and teaching to elicit and use evidence of student learning to improve student understanding of intended disciplinary learning outcomes and support students to become self-directed learners.”

Council of Chief State School Officers (2018, p. 2). Revising the Definition of Formative Assessment. Retrieved from <https://ccsso.org/resource-library/revising-definition-formative-assessment>

Two Main Types of Classroom Assessment Processes

	Summative Classroom Assessments	Formative Classroom Assessments
Purpose	Document student achievement of state content standards at a point in time (assessment <i>of</i> learning)	Elicit evidence of student learning to adjust teaching and learning to better meet students' needs (assessment <i>for</i> learning)
Administration	Typically administered at the end of a unit of instruction	On-going; occurs before, during, and after instruction
Feedback Mechanisms	Graded and reported to parents and students	Not graded; feedback shared with students

Misconception Alert



- Assessments are **not** formative or summative **by design**, they are formative or summative **based on use**.
- The same exit ticket, quiz, test, or performance task can be used **summatively** or **formatively** (as long as student thinking is made visible and students are involved in the process).

Embedded Formative Assessment Strategies

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

William, D. (2018). *Embedded formative assessment, 2nd ed.* Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree Press.

Embedded Formative Assessment Strategies

	Where the learner is going	Where the learner is now	How to get there
Teacher	<p style="text-align: center;">Big Idea:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">“Evidence about student learning is used to adjust instruction to better meet students’ needs. In other words, teaching is adaptive to the learner’s needs.”</p>		
Peer			
Learner			

William, D. (2018). *Embedded formative assessment, 2nd ed.* Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree Press.

Discussion Tool for School Leaders

School leaders can use this tool in at least two ways.

1. During **classroom observations** to focus attention on one or more of the embedded formative assessment strategies. The key questions can be used as prompts for school leaders, **highlighting the types of evidence to look for** during the classroom observation with respect to each of the formative assessment strategies.
2. During **informal discussions** or **professional development** with a teacher or groups of teachers about the types of formative assessment practices they use in their classrooms related to each of the five embedded formative assessment strategies. The gathered information could be synthesized and shared across teachers in a school (or district) to **promote innovation and best practices**.



Formative Assessment Process Discussion Tool for School Leaders

Instructions: School leaders can use this tool in at least two ways. First, school leaders can use this tool during classroom observations to focus attention on one or more of the embedded formative assessment strategies. The key questions can be used as prompts for school leaders, highlighting the types of evidence to look for during the classroom observation with respect to each formative assessment strategies. Second, this tool can be used by school leaders during informal discussions or professional development with a teacher or groups of teachers about the types of formative assessment practices they use in their classrooms related to each of the five embedded formative assessment strategies. The gathered information could be synthesized and shared across teachers in a school (or district) to promote innovation and best practices.

Embedded Formative Assessment Strategies ^[1]	Key Question	Observed or Discussed Formative Assessment Practices
Sharing learning intentions and success criteria	<i>Is it clear what students are trying to learn? Has the teacher illustrated what success, or hitting the target, looks like?</i>	
Engineering effective discussions, tasks, and activities that elicit evidence of learning	<i>How does the teacher use strategic questions, readiness pre-assessments, tasks/activities, and/or other formative assessment techniques to identify student learning progress before, during, and/or after instruction?</i>	

Discussion Tool for School Leaders

Formative Assessment Process Discussion Tool for School Leaders

Instructions: School leaders can use this tool in at least two ways. First, school leaders can use this tool during classroom observations to focus attention on one or more of the embedded formative assessment strategies, highlighting each formative assessment strategy in informal discussions. Second, school leaders can use the types of five embedded formative assessment strategies and shared

The key questions are listed on the slides for each strategy in gray boxes.

Each of the five embedded formative assessment strategies is explained.

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Engineering effective discussions, tasks, and activities that elicit evidence of learning	<i>How does the teacher use strategic questions, readiness pre-assessments, tasks/activities, and/or other formative assessment techniques to identify student learning progress before, during, and/or after instruction?</i>	

Potential observed or discussed practices are provided for each of the five embedded formative assessment strategies.

What might a teacher do?

Learning Intentions & Success Criteria

The **learning goals**, sometimes called “**learning targets**,” should be aligned to and derived from the broader curricular goals and state standards.



Key Questions: *Is it clear what students are trying to learn? Has the teacher illustrated what success, or hitting the target, looks like?*

Learning Intentions

What Might a Teacher Do?

- Write the learning goal(s) for students to see.
- Talk with students at the beginning of every lesson (and during the lesson, as appropriate) about the learning goal for the day and how it connects to the big idea of the unit.
- Ask students to generate connections from the lesson to the big idea of the unit.
- Other...



Success Criteria

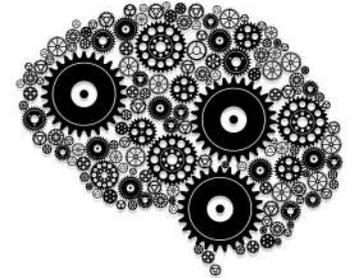
What Might a Teacher Do?

- Use exemplar student work or student work with flaws from previous years to discuss strengths/weaknesses in light of unit goals and success criteria.
- Discuss the final performance task for the unit and the success criteria (rubric) used to evaluate the quality of their thinking on that task.
- Other...



Elicit Evidence of Student Learning Progress

To elicit evidence of student learning, **the teacher must engineer effective discussions, tasks, observations, and activities to make student thinking visible.** This information is then used to differentiate and inform future instruction.



Key Question: *How does the teacher use strategic questions, readiness pre-assessments, tasks/activities, and/or other formative assessment techniques to identify student learning progress before, during, and/or after instruction?*

Evidence of Student Learning Progress

What Might a Teacher Do?

Tasks and activities that produce evidence of student learning

- Give a short, focused readiness pre-assessment in order to differentiate instruction.
- Design a series of tasks and activities that are tightly aligned to the learning goals and provide evidence of student progress toward those goals.
- Systematically reviews student work products during the lesson to provide insight into most or all students' progress or indicates how they will be reviewed and how the information will be used to inform instruction.
- Other...



Cont'd: Evidence of Student Learning Progress

Classroom Questioning Techniques

- Open ended discussion questions in whole group, small group, or think-pair-share settings.
- Student conferrals that elicit and nudge student thinking or work forward.
- Other...

Extend Student Thinking During Discourse

- Provide responses to student ideas that help the students explore their ideas more deeply and thoughtfully.
- Provide feedback during class discussions and encourage more elaborate answers, as well as students asking probing questions of the teacher.
- Other:



Feedback that Moves Learning Forward

The Quality & Type of Feedback

Related to the learning targets and success criteria.

Actionable, descriptive, and specific.

Appropriate to the student's zone of proximal development (i.e., Goldilocks principle--not too far out ahead, not too far behind, but just right)

The Source of Feedback

Teacher

Student Self-Assessment

Peer

The Purpose of Feedback

Inform instruction (monitor and adapt)

Adjust student learning goals

Motivate and improve student learning

Key Question: *How does the teacher provide students with actionable, descriptive and specific feedback about their progress related to the learning targets and success criteria?*

Feedback that Moves Learning Forward

What Might a Teacher Do?

- Provide written feedback or confer with the student on the quality of the student's thinking and work product in relation to the learning targets and success criteria.
- Ask students to self-assess and reflect on their learning goals; set new learning goals.
- Create opportunities for peers to give feedback to each other on the quality of each other's work and suggestions for improvement.
- Other...



Peers as Learning Resources

Collaborative Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Students must work interdependently, not divide and conquer (group goals)● Individuals must be held accountable for their contributions
Reciprocal Teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Students become the teacher in small group settings
Peer Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Students are not grading/evaluating each others work, but providing feedback that helps their peers improve the quality of their work

Key Question: *How does the teacher activate peers as learning resources for one another?*

Peers as Learning Resources

What Might a Teacher Do?

- Assign collaborative work (e.g., project, task, activity, question, problem set, etc.) for students to complete interdependently.
- Ask a student to lead a small group of other students in teaching a certain concept or skill.
- Create opportunities for students to provide written and/or oral feedback that helps their peers improve the quality of their work in relation to the learning goals and success criteria.
- Other...



Students as Owners of their own Learning

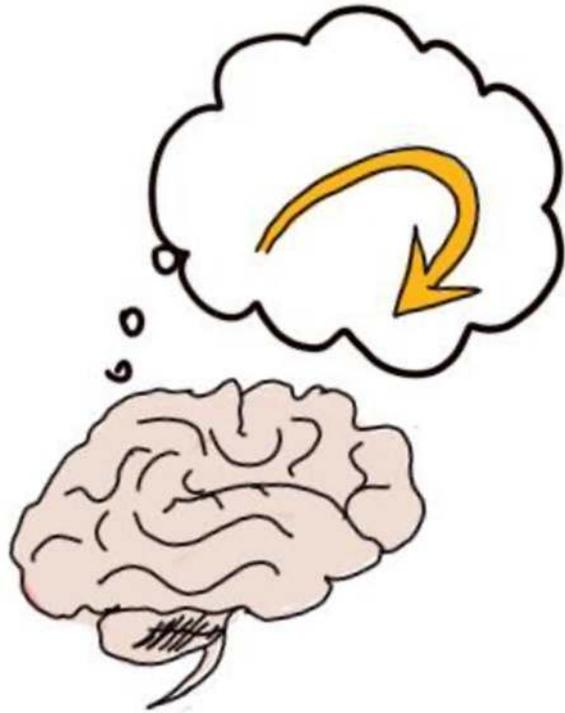
*“For students to be **actively involved in their learning**, they must understand a learning goal, aim for it, and use assessment evidence along the way to stay on course” (p. 3).*

Key Question: *How does the teacher activate students as owners of their own learning so they know where they are going, where they are now in the process, and what they need to do next to stay on track?*

Connected to **self-regulated learning** (e.g., metacognition and motivation)



Metacognition



Metacognition, or “thinking about one’s own thinking,” is the internal dialogue taking place in the mind of a learner.

Students as Owners of their own Learning

What Might a Teacher Do?

- Think aloud and model for students what they are thinking so students can hear their internal dialogue and internalize that process for themselves over time.
- Ask students to reflect in writing or discuss with others about their understanding of the learning goal, how they are progressing toward that goal, what evidence supports their opinion, what they are learning about themselves as a learner, what they need to do next to stay on track, a question they need to ask the teacher or a resource they need to seek out in order to move on in their learning, etc.
- Other...



Additional Teacher Practice Evidence

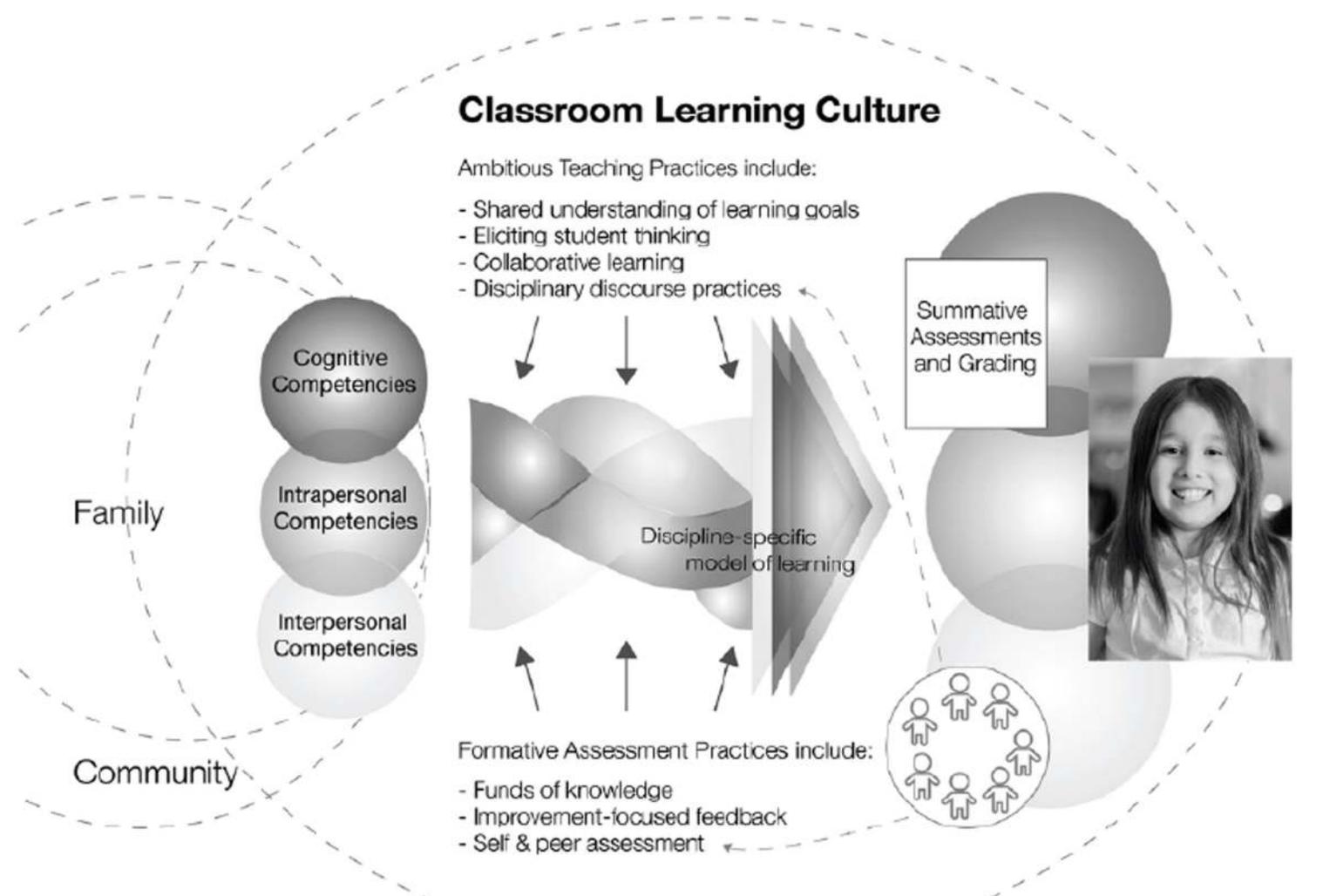
There are other ways a teacher can demonstrate these five formative assessment strategies.

These resources provide additional examples:

- [Using Assessment for Learning Strategies on a Daily Basis](#) (pages 54-55)
- [Rubrics for the implementation of formative assessment processes](#) (pages 37-71)



Remembering the Systems Component



Formative assessment processes operate within a classroom assessment and instructional system.

Micro-Course 3 Outline

Module 1

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

Module 2

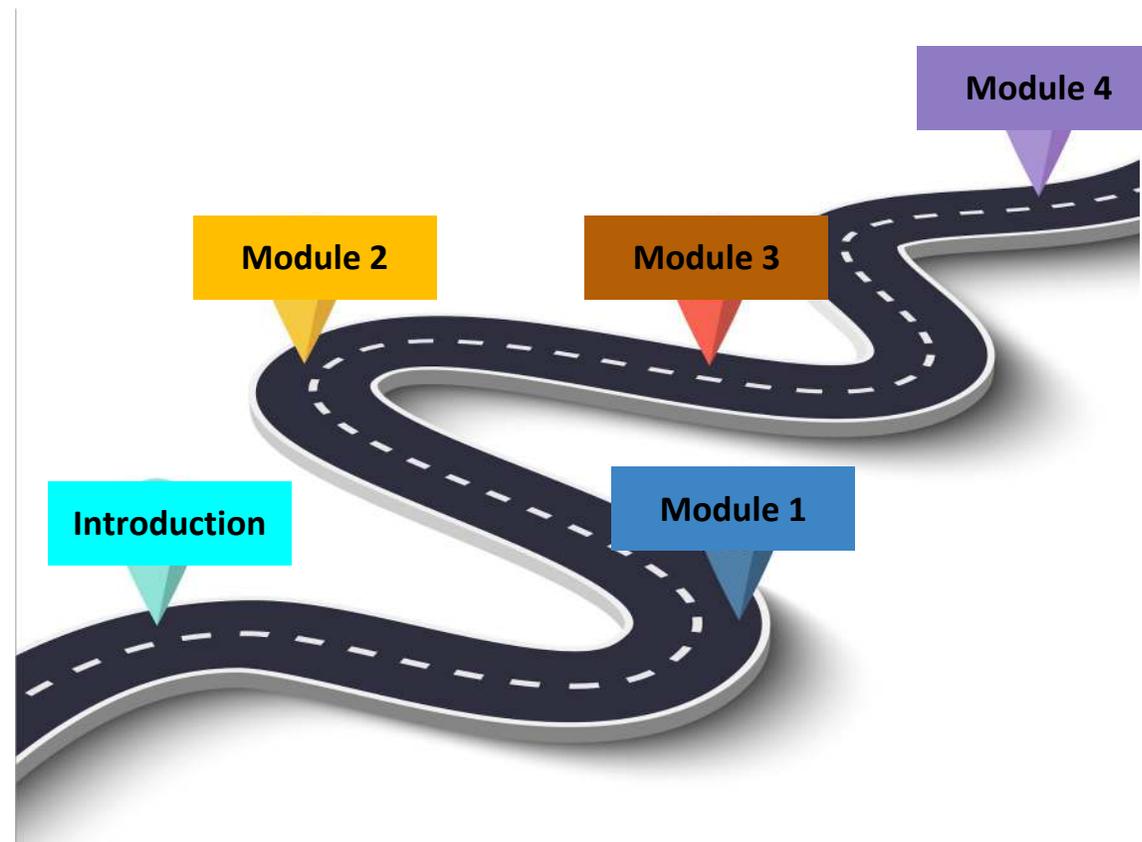
- **Accelerating Learning:** High-quality discussions between school leaders and teachers about formative assessment processes

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



Reflection Questions

1. Define formative assessment and explain how it differs from summative classroom assessment.
2. Why is the formative assessment process essential to improve teaching and student learning?
3. What are characteristics of high-quality formative assessment processes?
4. How could you apply the content of this module when thinking about the nature of feedback that teachers need to improve their professional practice? In other words, how do formative assessment processes also apply to the professional learning and growth of teachers?
5. What is one key takeaway and one lingering question you have after listening to this module?