

7. Assessment Suggestions

While summative assessment has a needed place and purposes, teachers are especially encouraged to use a variety of formative assessment strategies, in keeping with the First Peoples Principles of Learning and inquiry models.

Formative Assessment Strategies

Formative assessment is assessment for learning by providing ongoing and timely feedback to students, and at the same time allowing teachers to tailor instruction to the needs of students or groups. It is embedded in regular instruction and inquiry.

A variety of formative assessment strategies can also help document students learning, and be part of their ongoing portfolio of student work.

1. Informal Questioning

By asking timely and thought-provoking questions, teachers can informally assess students' understandings of concepts and processes and also guide their learning.

- Questions can focus students' reflection on the concepts, skills, goals and processes involved in an activity, providing teachers with information about their learning before, during, and after an activity or step in an inquiry.
- Most questioning, being timely, will be undocumented, but checklists could be used to assess certain concepts, skills or processes.

2. Performance Task

Performance tasks are used both to teach and assess. They may consist of a single task or a set of tasks.

- Students communicate their understanding of skills and concepts through a variety of modes: active demonstration, text, images, or models. If used for formative assessment purposes, these task could provide opportunities for self and peer assessment along with teacher feedback (as opposed to being used to generate a score or grade).

3. Graphic organizers

Students can represent their learning in a visual way using a variety of graphic organizers. Examples of graphic organizers include:

- Concept Map
- Cause and Effect
- Compare/Contrast
- T-Chart
- KWL
- Story Board
- Venn Diagram
- Sequencing Chart
- Classifying Chart
- Topic/Subtopic Web

4. Rubrics or other criteria referenced tools.

- Depending on the activity, teachers, students or both together can develop criteria to be assessed. They can be used for assessing understandings of concepts, project or reports, self-assessment or peer-assessment.
- Performance checklist

5. Journals and Portfolios

- Provide students with relevant topics or cues for their reflective journaling.
- Assess informally during the course of classwork.
- Have students assess their journals and portfolios at the end of the unit. Ask them to identify 5 or 10 sections that seem to be the most important for their learning.

6. Projects and Presentations

- Self and peer assessment can be used. Students can help set out the criteria for assessment.

Question Suggestions for Formative Assessments Using the 7Es

Environment

- What is special about the place we live? (in the context of the topic under study)
- How might place help you to think about the topic we're going to explore?
- What do you wonder about the place where we live?

Engage

- What do you already know, and what would you like to know about the topic, issue or idea? (KWL strategy could be used)
- Ask students questions that will help you to assess the level of students' understanding.
- Ask students questions that can lead to clearing up misconceptions in students' background knowledge.

Explore

- What is the big idea you want to explore?
- What questions do you have about this big idea?
- What one or two inquiry questions will you focus on?
- How will you go about investigating your question?

Elders

- How did working with Elders, cultural experts or other cultural sources add to your understanding of your question?
- Did you find out any relevant words or phrases from the local First Nations language?
- Ask questions that allow students to explain the processes they followed in their inquiry.
- Ask questions that enable students to connect their explanations with scientific knowledge and Traditional Ecological Knowledge.

Elaborate

- Help students develop new questions.
- Ask questions that guide students to apply their learning in new ways.

Evaluation

- Ask students questions that provide opportunities to show that they understand the key concepts studied.
- Ask questions that enable students demonstrate their learning progress.

Recommended Resources for Assessment

Conley, David T. "Toward Systems of Assessments for Deeper Learning." In *Rethinking Readiness: Deeper Learning for College, Work, and Life*. Harvard Education Press, 2017. Available online at <https://tinyurl.com/fnesc957>

Frey, Nancy, John Hattie, Douglas Fisher. *Developing Assessment-Capable Visible Learners, Grades K-12. Maximizing Skill, Will, and Thrill*. Corwin, 2018.

Rosenthal Tolisano, Silvia and Janet A. Hale. *Guide to Documenting Learning: Making Thinking Visible, Meaningful, Shareable, and Amplified*. Corwin, 2018.