



Planning with the End in Mind

Dimension #2: Planning for Assessment and Instruction

Effective assessment practice is evident when teachers...

select methods for gathering evidence of student learning that are consistent with the learning outcome. The outcomes also guide the selection of appropriate instructional strategies and teaching/learning resources.

▶ Observations and Conversations: Effective Assessment Practices

<https://aac.ab.ca/video/observations-and-conversations-effective-assessment-practices/>

Video Summary

A teacher designs her instructional plan to include opportunities for observations and conversations. Although this video is set in a junior high mathematics classroom, the assessment principles from this video are applicable to other grades and subjects.

Key Points

- The teacher asks questions and observes students at work to determine what students are ready to do or learn next.
- The teacher circulates to provide timely feedback and to differentiate for student needs.
- Note how the students value the opportunity to have conversations with the teacher.

Discussion Question

- Consider where timely feedback might be included in an upcoming student assessment task. What additional planning might be required?

Connection to TQS Assessment Indicators

- accurately reflect the learner outcomes within the programs of study
- provide a variety of methods through which students can demonstrate their achievement of the learning outcomes



Connections to LQS Instructional Leadership Indicators

- 6 (a) building the capacity of teachers to respond to the learning needs of all students
- 6 (c) ensuring that student instruction addresses learning outcomes outlined in programs of study
- 6 (e) demonstrating a strong understanding of effective pedagogy and curriculum
- 6 (g) ensuring that student assessment and evaluation practices are fair, appropriate, and evidence informed

Using the Video to Support Your Own Professional Learning

1. Review the video: [Observations and Conversations: Effective Assessment Practices](#).
 - Use the *Key Points* and *Discussion Question* to guide your reflection.
 - What connections can you make to your past/current classroom practice?
2. Engage in background reading and study.
 - *Assessment Conversations: Engaging with Colleagues to Support Student Learning* (pp. 19 – 27).*
3. Anticipate challenges.



Potential Challenge	Potential Response
“Where do I find the time for observations and conversations when I have so much curriculum to cover?”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observations and conversations give real-time assessment information. With this type of credible assessment information, you can make instructional decisions that will allow you to use your available time more effectively. • When planning lessons, consider how to organize your class to allow for observations and conversations with students while they are working.
“If the students are supposed to write an essay or do a multiple choice exam, how can I justify letting one student give me the information in a conversation?”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within the Alberta Programs of Study, many of the outcomes cannot be measured by selected response questions. Unless an outcome requires a specific type of response, students should have options in how they demonstrate their learning. • While students need to learn how to work with multiple choice items, it is not necessary nor is it desirable to model classroom assessment around provincial exam formats.

As a school leader, provide time at a staff meeting for teachers to work in grade/department teams to examine a set of learner outcomes for a current unit of study, and consider what assessment methods might be most appropriate.

Using the Video to Support Professional Conversations (Assessment Team and/or Staff/Department Meeting)

1. Encourage assessment team/staff members to focus on the **Key Points** and the **Discussion Question** as they design assessment experiences for students.
2. Encourage team members to be prepared to share their experiences (successes and challenges) at the next assessment team meeting and/or the next staff/department meeting.



Remember the value of working towards building a culture of formative assessment within your school, beginning with your leadership role. See Section 2 (p. 11) for more information.

* *Assessment Conversations: Engaging with Colleagues to Support Student Learning* is an additional recommended resource published by AAC. It was not funded by this project, and is available for purchase from AAC.