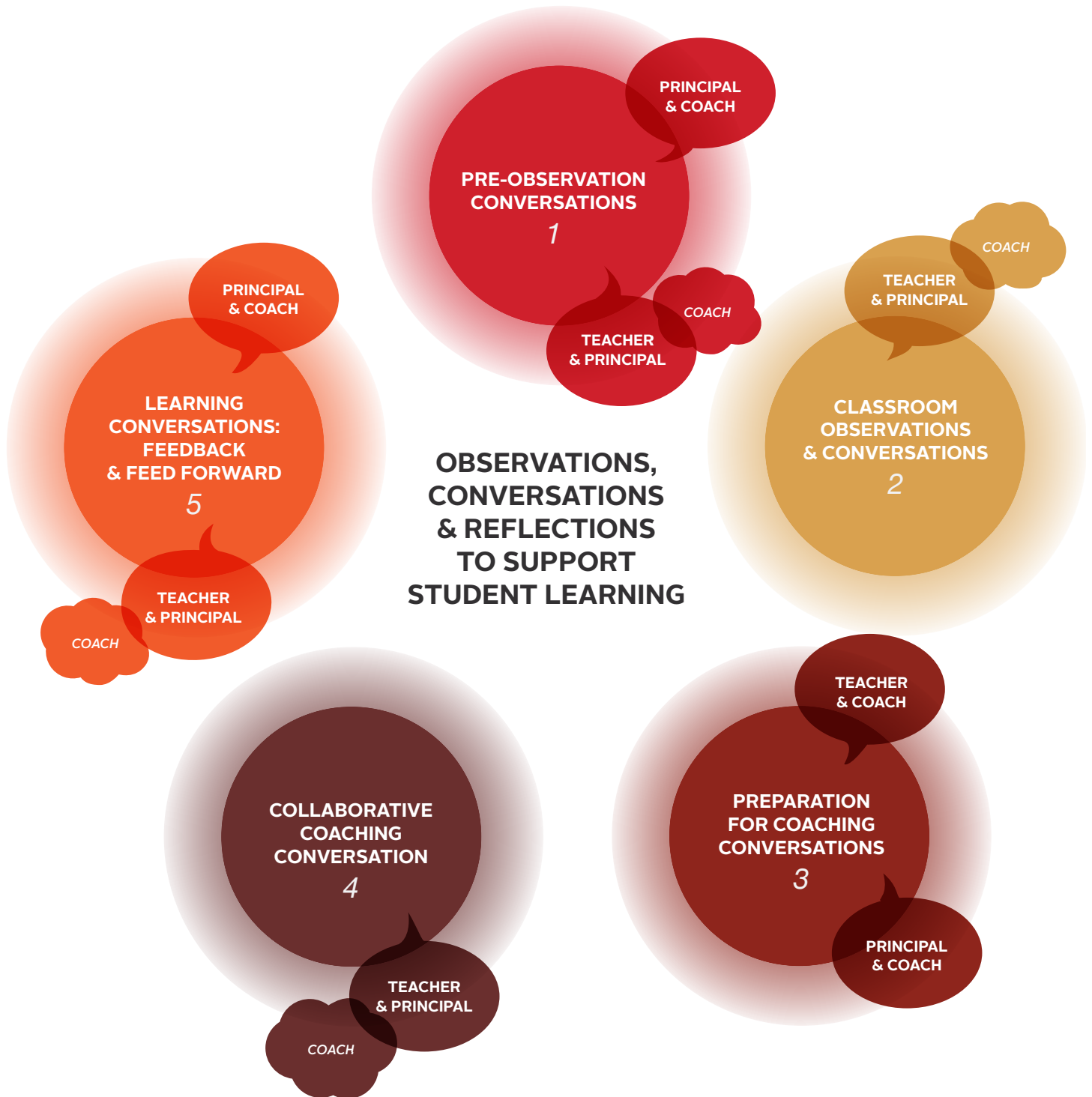


Instructional Leadership in Assessment for Learning

Working with a Coach to Enhance Instructional Leadership Capacity



Working with a Coach to Enhance Instructional Leadership Capacity

Supporting sound classroom assessment practice is an important aspect of instructional leadership. The collaborative coaching framework in this booklet outlines a process for supporting instructional leaders with this important work.

Dylan Wiliam's five key formative assessment strategies* form the foundation of the assessment *content*. These same strategies also become the *process* that supports learning for everyone – students, teachers and instructional leaders.

This approach involves a series of embedded collaborative coaching conversations between instructional leaders and their coach**, and between teachers and their instructional leaders. These conversations are non-evaluative, and while various instructional leadership roles entail supervisory responsibilities, the coaching conversations in this model are designed to be collegial and formative.

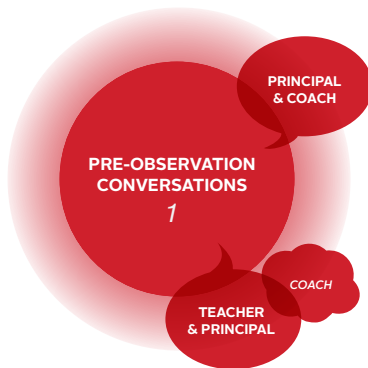
This process has the potential to foster positive professional relationships, support teacher professional learning in classroom assessment practice, and enhance instructional leadership skills. The success of this model is directly linked to the commitment of both the coach and the instructional leader to maintain a collegial tone.

A companion booklet, *Coaching to Enhance Classroom Assessment Capacity* is designed to guide collaborative conversations between instructional leaders and teachers without the involvement of a coach. Further support materials are available on the AAC website. Search for Instructional Leadership in Assessment within the Projects and Grants tab.

* The term 'formative assessment' is often used interchangeably with 'assessment for learning' or AFL.

** The role of coach may be filled by a peer, an external coach/mentor, or by an individual in a district office position.

Working with a Coach to Enhance Instructional Leadership Capacity



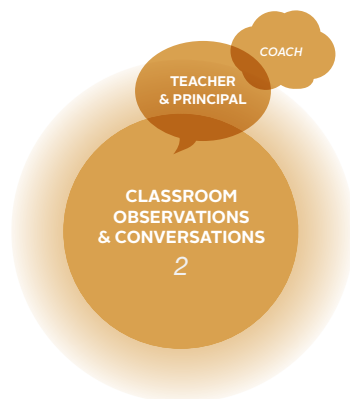
Principal and Coach

The principal identifies his/her instructional leadership goals to support teacher growth and student learning. These goals are based on Dylan Wiliam's five key formative assessment strategies. Together, the principal and coach talk about the upcoming process. What evidence will the principal look for in working towards the identified goals?

Teacher and Principal

The principal begins by asking the teacher to identify specific AFL strategies on which they would like feedback. The teacher formulates questions that will help the principal gather evidence of students' learning and understanding.

The principal shares his/her instructional leadership goals for the coaching process, and invites feedback from the teacher (to be provided in the final collaborative conversation).



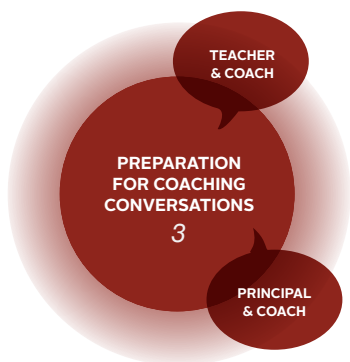
Teacher, Principal and Coach

The principal observes the lesson, focusing attention on the areas previously identified by the teacher. In conversations with students, the principal asks the questions formulated by the teacher to capture student voice and learning.

The coach also observes the lesson, focusing on the areas identified for feedback.

Teacher and Coach

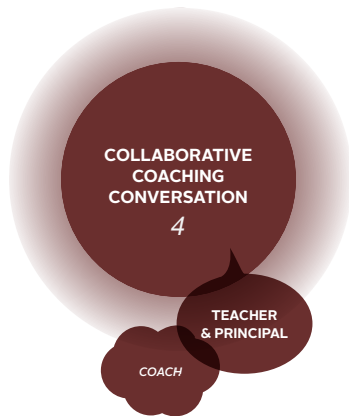
This is a time to touch base and reflect on the areas the teacher identified for feedback, citing examples of the AFL strategies they used in the lesson and the evidence of learning they collected.



Principal and Coach

In conversation, they review the AFL strategies requested by the teacher for feedback. They discuss positive approaches for the upcoming teacher-principal collaborative conversation — for example, “What assessment strategy would you like to begin our conversation with, thinking about the evidence of learning we observed in the class? This avoids a sense of implied evaluation in a question such as, “How do you think it went?”

To prepare for the teacher-principal conversation, the coach helps the principal identify other AFL strategies they observed during the lesson, and explore ways the teacher might use them to further support student learning. The principal's goal is to support and affirm the AFL strategies they observed, while also deepening and expanding the teacher's assessment practice.



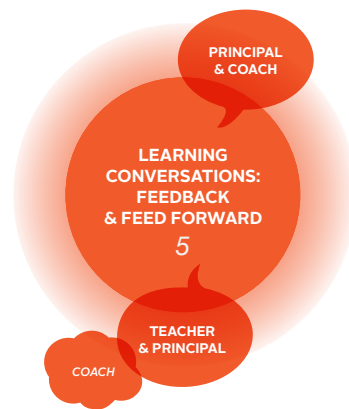
Teacher and Principal (coach as observer)

The conversation begins by focusing on the identified areas for feedback. To make the feedback meaningful, the principal should keep his/her observations positive, targeted, and specific.

Two approaches are helpful in guiding this conversation.

Name and Claim: Together, teacher and principal identify AFL strategies used in the lesson, and discuss ways they could be employed even more deeply.

Support and Stretch: In discussion with the principal, the teacher selects one or more other AFL strategies to focus on in future lessons and identify resources to support ongoing professional learning. Together, they schedule times for future lesson observations and collaborative coaching conversations.



Teacher and Principal (coach as observer)

The teacher provides the principal with feedback on the earlier coaching conversations, targeting the goals shared by the principal. This helps foster a collaborative professional relationship, in which constructive feedback is a two-way street.

Principal and Coach

This is a collaborative coaching conversation, using the same AFL strategies as the teacher-principal conversation—keeping the discussion positive, targeted and specific. They identify next steps in the principal’s work to enhance instructional leadership. The conversation also connects to the use of AFL strategies throughout the school’s professional learning community.

Collaborative Coaching Conversations carry assessment for learning strategies beyond the classroom and into the school community as a whole—informing practice, building leadership, and enhancing student learning.

Pre-Observation Conversations

PRINCIPAL
& COACH

What are my goals as an instructional leader?

How will I know I am making progress?

5 KEY FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES *Dylan William*

- 1** Clarifying, sharing, and understanding learning intentions and criteria for success
- 2** Engineering effective classroom discussions, activities, and learning tasks that elicit evidence of learning
- 3** Providing feedback that moves learning forward
- 4** Activating learners as instructional resources for one another
- 5** Activating learners as owners of their own learning

IN EVERY STEP OF THIS PROCESS, KEEP IN MIND DYLAN WILIAM'S FIVE KEY FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES.

Pre-Observation Conversations



What areas of assessment practice would you like to be the focus for feedback?

Our focus is always on student learning. What questions would you like me to ask your students?

5 KEY FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES *Dylan William*

- 1** Clarifying, sharing, and understanding learning intentions and criteria for success
- 2** Engineering effective classroom discussions, activities, and learning tasks that elicit evidence of learning
- 3** Providing feedback that moves learning forward
- 4** Activating learners as instructional resources for one another
- 5** Activating learners as owners of their own learning

Classroom Observations & Conversations



5 KEY FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES *Dylan William*

- 1 Clarifying, sharing, and understanding learning intentions and criteria for success
- 2 Engineering effective classroom discussions, activities, and learning tasks that elicit evidence of learning
- 3 Providing feedback that moves learning forward
- 4 Activating learners as instructional resources for one another
- 5 Activating learners as owners of their own learning

Preparation for Coaching Conversation



TEACHER
& COACH



TEACHER

Reflect on the focus area(s) you selected for feedback.

What connections do you see between your assessment practices and the evidence of learning you saw in your students?

5 KEY FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES *Dylan William*

- 1 Clarifying, sharing, and understanding learning intentions and criteria for success
- 2 Engineering effective classroom discussions, activities, and learning tasks that elicit evidence of learning
- 3 Providing feedback that moves learning forward
- 4 Activating learners as instructional resources for one another
- 5 Activating learners as owners of their own learning

Preparation for Coaching Conversation



PRINCIPAL
& COACH

Principal and coach reflect on the assessment for learning strategies the teacher identified for feedback.

Consider how “Name and Claim” and “Support and Stretch” can guide the conversation with the teacher (see page 3).

Discuss how the students responded to the strategies.

What did the students say and do to provide evidence of learning?

What other assessment strategies did we observe during instruction?

5 KEY FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES *Dylan William*

- 1** Clarifying, sharing, and understanding learning intentions and criteria for success
- 2** Engineering effective classroom discussions, activities, and learning tasks that elicit evidence of learning
- 3** Providing feedback that moves learning forward
- 4** Activating learners as instructional resources for one another
- 5** Activating learners as owners of their own learning

Collaborative Coaching Conversation



Teacher and principal (with the coach observing) reflect on the assessment for learning strategies the teacher used.

Remember: this is a collaboration, not an evaluation.

Discuss how the students responded to the strategies.

What did the students say and do that showed that they were learning?

5 KEY FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES *Dylan William*

- 1** Clarifying, sharing, and understanding learning intentions and criteria for success
- 2** Engineering effective classroom discussions, activities, and learning tasks that elicit evidence of learning
- 3** Providing feedback that moves learning forward
- 4** Activating learners as instructional resources for one another
- 5** Activating learners as owners of their own learning

Learning Conversations: Feedback & Feed Forward



Reflect on the coaching and feedback process.

What did we each learn from our collaborative coaching conversations?

Moving forward:

What other assessment strategies might we focus on in our next coaching conversations?

What resources can provide ongoing support?

5 KEY FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES *Dylan William*

- 1 Clarifying, sharing, and understanding learning intentions and criteria for success
- 2 Engineering effective classroom discussions, activities, and learning tasks that elicit evidence of learning
- 3 Providing feedback that moves learning forward
- 4 Activating learners as instructional resources for one another
- 5 Activating learners as owners of their own learning

Learning Conversations: Feedback & Feed Forward



PRINCIPAL
& COACH

Reflect on the coaching and feedback process.

What did we each learn from our collaborative coaching conversations?

Moving forward as a principal:

What assessment strategies should I focus on in my own approach to working with teachers?

How can an assessment for learning mindset help my observation and feedback skills?

What support resources can help me incorporate assessment for learning strategies into my own instructional leadership?

5 KEY FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES *Dylan William*

- 1** Clarifying, sharing, and understanding learning intentions and criteria for success
- 2** Engineering effective classroom discussions, activities, and learning tasks that elicit evidence of learning
- 3** Providing feedback that moves learning forward
- 4** Activating learners as instructional resources for one another
- 5** Activating learners as owners of their own learning



(780) 761-0530
#700, 11010 - 142 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T5N 2R1
www.aac.ab.ca