



Assessment in Action

Formative Assessment

Dimension #7: Formative Assessment to Inform Instructional Practice

Effective assessment practice is evident when teachers...

are able to interpret evidence of learning to determine next steps for students.

▶ Planning Effective Questions

<https://aac.ab.ca/video/planning-effective-questions/>

Video Summary

A high school science teacher discusses how he uses ‘hinge questions’ in class to guide his instructional decisions. Although this video is set in a high school science classroom, the assessment principles from this video are applicable to other grades and subjects.

Key Points

- Effective questions provide teachers with information about how well students have grasped key concepts and skills.
- This information allows teachers to make adjustments to their instruction.

Discussion Questions

- What are the characteristics of effective questions that can provide teachers with information about student learning in real time?
- How could we create time to allow teachers in our school to collaborate and develop these effective questions?

Connections to TQS Assessment Indicators

- generate evidence of student learning to inform teaching practice through a balance of formative and summative assessment experiences
- provide accurate, constructive and timely feedback on student learning



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:** Review the video: [Planning Effective Questions.](#)
 - Use the *Key Points* and *Discussion Questions* 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. 44 – 46; 55).*
3. **Anticipate challenges.**



Potential Challenge	Potential Response
<i>"How will I know if my questions are effective?"</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus on the outcomes when creating the questions to ensure you are clear about what you want your students to know.• Effective questions should give you information about students' misconceptions or cause students to think.• Consider using group discussion for challenging open-ended questions, especially as concepts are introduced.
<i>"This feels overwhelming. It's hard to come up with good questions."</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Start small with one upcoming lesson. Work with a colleague to 'test drive' some questions. Anticipate the type of responses students may give, and then fine-tune the questions.• Try the questions out with your students. Their authentic responses will help you fine-tune your questions even further.

As a school leader, provide time for teachers to work together to create purposeful questions.

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 Questions** 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.