



# **Focus on Formative Assessment**

## **Module 2: Clarify the Learning Destination**

### **An AAC Professional Learning Module**

**Updated June 2020**

**AAC Member Content**



The research is clear.

***Formative assessment***

improves learning – not  
testing, not report cards, but  
feedback!

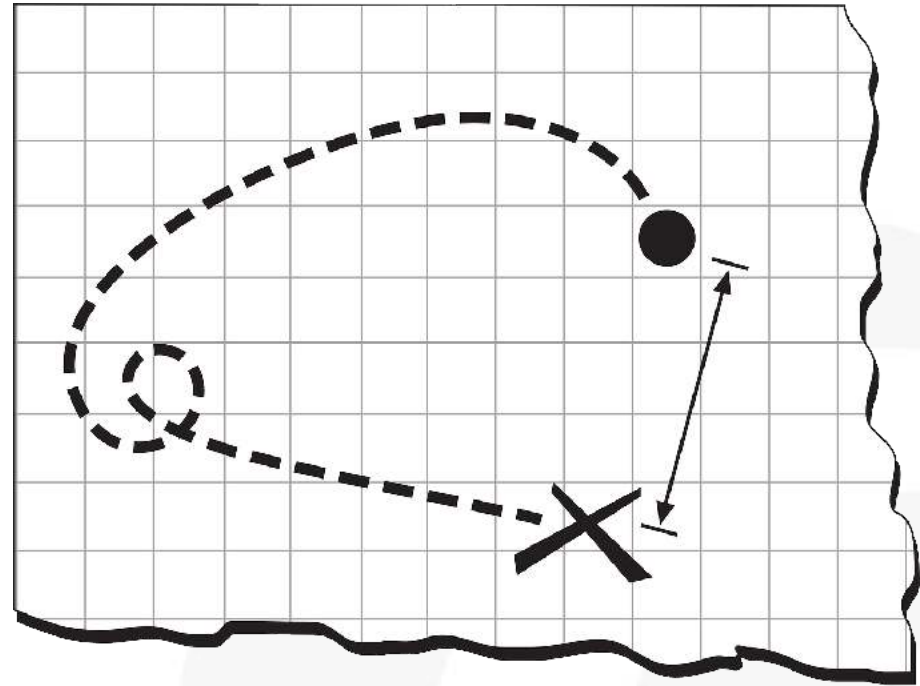
## 4 things to help you achieve the profound results promised by research into formative assessment:



- **Clarify the learning destination, for yourself as well as your students.**
- Provide many opportunities for practice and descriptive feedback.
- Gather on-going evidence of student learning.
- Involve students deeply in the assessment process.

**We need to build a culture of formative assessment!**

# Clarify the Learning Destination



What processes might you use to clarify the learning destination for your students?

# First things first...

Are *you* clear on the learning destination?

- Begin with the Program of Studies. Are you clear on what the learner outcomes are asking of students?
- **Hint:** Focus on the verbs first, not the nouns!

## Science, Grade 5

**Apply** and **evaluate** a variety of techniques for separating different materials.

## Math, 20-3

**Model** and **draw** 3-D objects and their views.

## Social Studies, Grade 1

**Make predictions** based on organized information.

## ELA, Grade 7

**Experiment** with figurative language to **create** visual images.

# First things first...

Are *you* clear on the learning destination?

- Why is it important for students to reach the destination? Is this the learning that really matters?
- Do *students* understand why it's important?
- What will it “look like” when students reach the destination? What are the qualities of excellent work?

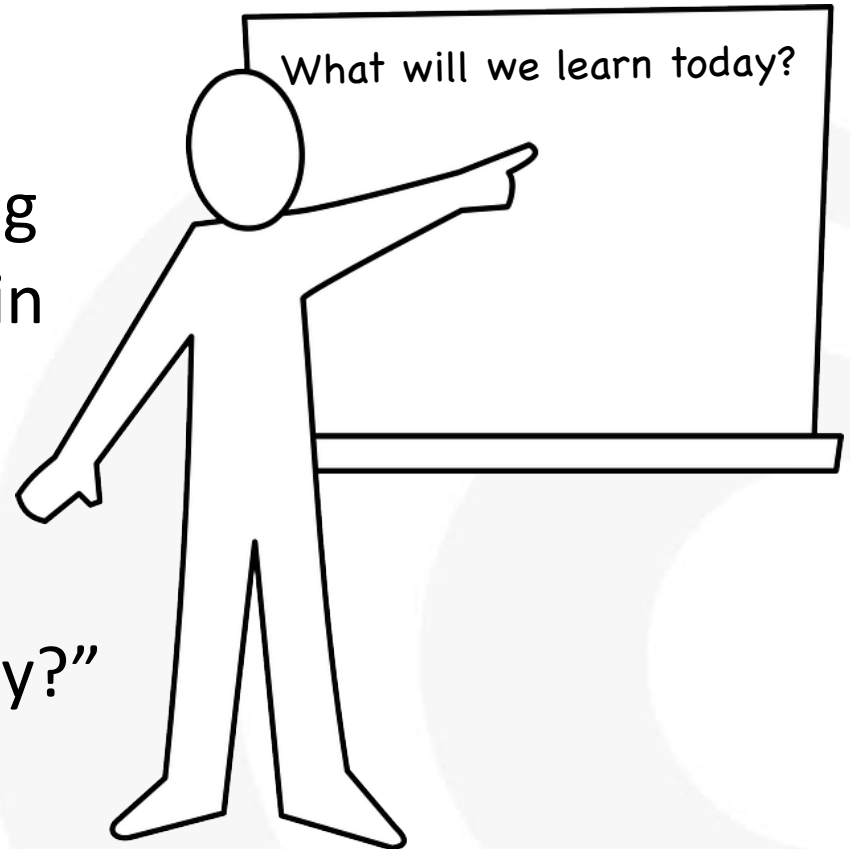
**Reflect on an activity you plan to do with your students.**

Why is it important? What is the learning that really matters?

# Once you're clear on the destination yourself, clarify it for your students!

For example...

- Consider explicitly sharing the learning destination in the form of an “I can” statement, or by answering the question, “What will we learn today?”



**But remember:** an “I can” statement is only helpful if you do something with it!

Level	Excellent	Proficient	Adequate	Limited *
Criteria	Provides a <b>purposeful</b> retelling that makes <b>skillful</b> connections among story elements.	Provides a <b>focused</b> retelling that makes <b>meaningful</b> connections among story elements.	Provides a <b>simplistic</b> retelling that makes <b>basic</b> connections among story elements.	Provides a <b>superficial</b> retelling that makes <b>few if any</b> connections among story elements.

- “Unpack” the assessment criteria on the rubric with students, focusing your energy on understanding the qualities of work at the **excellent** level.

Students have little to gain from understanding the qualities of adequate work!



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### Try your hand:

What *are* the qualities of an excellent retelling of story events?

Or choose an assessment criteria of your own to “unpack.”

- Collaboratively brainstorm a list of the qualities of excellent work.
- Use key points from the list to create an “anchor chart” for students to refer to as they work.

Be prepared to contribute your own items to the list, and to leave some student suggestions off the anchor chart.  
**You're the boss!**

- An excellent thesis statement...**
- \* **is focused:** the general topic is narrowed down
  - \* **is precise:** you made a clear claim about the subject
  - \* **is forceful and confident:** never include “I believe” or “I think”
  - \* **is arguable:** you have a point of view that is supported by evidence

- Examine exemplars at varying levels of quality. What makes the work strong? How might it be improved?
- Work collaboratively to improve the exemplars.



**Model effective  
feedback  
conversations!**

Probably your best source of exemplars to use with your students is their own work in progress (or *your* own work!)

What **classroom climate** is required if students are to feel comfortable volunteering their work for class feedback?



# Reflection

- What are you doing already to ensure *you* understand the learning destination, and how it connects to the curriculum?
- What are you doing already to support your students in understanding the destination?
- What is one new idea you will be considering now?

**Next Module:  
Provide Opportunities for  
Practice and Feedback**





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