



Planning with the End in Mind

Dimension #1: Clarifying the Learning Destination

Effective assessment practice is evident when teachers...

use age-appropriate language to help students come to an understanding of the learning destination.

▶ Developing a Shared Understanding

<https://aac.ab.ca/video/developing-a-shared-understanding/>

Video Summary

A teacher describes how she uses rubrics and exemplars to help students understand the learning goals. Although this video is set in a junior high school English Language Arts classroom, the assessment principles from this video are applicable to other grades and subjects.

Key Points

- The teacher clarifies the learning goal for herself before planning for instruction and assessment.
- Students use rubrics and exemplars to understand the characteristics of quality work.
- Note how the students respond to the process the teacher has implemented.

Discussion Question

- The process used by the teacher required an investment of time for planning, collecting exemplars, and working with students. Why might this investment of time be worthwhile?

Connection to TQS Assessment Indicators

- accurately reflect the learner outcomes within the programs of study
- 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:** [Developing a Shared Understanding](#).
 - 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. 15 – 18).*
3. **Anticipate challenges.**



Potential Challenge	Potential Response
“I know excellent work when I see it, but I don’t know how to describe it so my students will understand.”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with colleagues to brainstorm the qualities of excellent work at your grade level.
“How will I find the time to collect exemplars for all my summative tasks?”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin with a current assignment. Rather than waiting until students have completed the assignment, gather samples of student work in progress (with names removed or with student permission) and use a document camera to have a class discussion about strengths evident and areas for growth. This process requires a safe and supportive environment. • Begin to take pictures of student work at varying levels of quality and store it in a digital portfolio for use in later years.

As a school leader, model the process of developing a shared understanding by showing a variety of samples of unit plans or report card comments. Be clear about your expectations for staff and provide opportunities for teachers to discuss why some of the samples do or do not meet the expectations.

The discussion guides for two other videos in this collection, [Developing Common Understanding through Collaborative Marking](#) and [Establishing the Conditions for Peer Feedback](#) may be of interest.

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.