

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT PROCESS ● TOOLKIT

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FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT PROCESS TOOLKIT

The purpose of this toolkit is to increase capacity for educators to leverage the formative assessment process to inform personalized instruction and more effectively work with students to build competency.

What is the formative assessment process?

Formative assessment is a planned, ongoing process used by all students and educators, during learning and teaching. The formative assessment process supports students in becoming self-directed learners through:

1. **Clarifying learning intentions** within a broader progression of learning. This requires educators to identify what they are trying to assess which helps keep the instruction on track.

What does clarifying learning intentions look like?

- Providing and referencing learning intentions that are clearly identified and communicated to students throughout the lesson or series of lessons that are part of a coherent sequence of learning
- Focusing on what students should know, understand, apply, or be able to do by the end of the lesson or a series of lessons, in student-friendly language
- Understanding and recognizing common student misconceptions when planning and creating learning intentions
- Including opportunities for students to internalize, explain, make connections to prior learning, and monitor their own progress within a collaborative classroom culture.

Clear learning intentions allow learners to answer the following questions:

- What am I learning today?
- Why am I learning this?

2. **Identifying success criteria** within a broader progression of learning. Understanding how

learning progresses allows educators to adjust instruction for individual students based on how each student is progressing through their learning.

What does carefully-crafted success criteria look like?

Success criteria that are clearly aligned to the learning intentions and written in student-friendly language allow students to know, understand, apply, or demonstrate their knowledge or skills by the end of a lesson or a series of lessons.

Clear success criteria allow learners to answer the following questions:

- How will I know that I learned it?
 - Does what I have learned align with the learning intentions?
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3. **Eliciting and analyzing evidence of student thinking** allows the educator to put the student and their abilities at the center of the assessment process.
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What does eliciting and analyzing evidence of student thinking look like?

- Identifying, communicating, and/or creating the success criteria that is clearly linked to the learning intention(s) for the lesson or series of lessons by providing exemplars, checklists, and/or rubrics that support student learning
 - Including opportunities for students to help develop, practice with, and/or apply the success criteria as they monitor their own progress
 - Using multiple forms of evidence of student thinking and learning that may include questioning that focuses on the “why” or requiring students to explain their reasoning to demonstrate their thinking, hands-on activities, performance tasks, entrance and exit tickets, white boards/clickers, and/or large and small group work that allow the teacher to clearly identify and adjust instruction during the learning
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Eliciting and analyzing evidence of student thinking allow learners to answer the following question:

How can I demonstrate my understanding of the learning intentions through multiple and varied opportunities?

4. **Engaging in self-assessment and peer feedback** provides students an opportunity to think metacognitively about their learning and to offer feedback about learning to others. This allows students to deepen thinking while solidifying their learning. If done right, the formative assessment process can increase student agency. When students interact with the results of their formative assessments, they can make choices about how to move forward in their learning.
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What does engaging in self-assessment and peer feedback look like?

- Engage students in self-assessment tasks that allow for revision and metacognition about their individual learning.

- Provide students with meaningful goal setting by providing exemplars, self-assessment questions, checklists, and/or rubrics that support student learning during the lesson.
- Design structured and supportive peer feedback tasks that allow students to both complete the task and provide feedback that supports meaningful learning as students provide and receive feedback.
- Afford ample time is allowed for students to both give and receive feedback with the goal of improving the quality of the work and to apply the feedback to their individual learning.

Engaging in self-assessment and peer feedback allows learners to answer the following question:

Where am I successful and where do I need more support?

5. **Providing actionable feedback** allows students to review, revise, and assess their understanding as part of the process of learning.

What does providing actionable feedback look like?

- Provide descriptive feedback outside of a score or grade.
- Address the needs of each student by providing meaningful feedback that directly and clearly communicates the student's strengths and areas of growth.

Providing actionable feedback allows learners to answer the following question:

What can I do to move my learning forward?

6. **Collaboration** is the key to building a classroom culture in which educators and students are partners in learning.

What does collaboration look like?

- Reinforcing to students that they are a contributing partner in their learning.
- Giving students more opportunities to respond and interact with their learning.
- Facilitating engagement-driven and strong classroom management.
- Fostering a growth mindset, where neither students nor educators are afraid to know the results of instruction.
- Viewing educators as valued partners by students.

Providing opportunities for meaningful collaborations allows learners to answer the following questions:

- What type of environment can I be most successful in?
- How do I want to use feedback to improve my learning?

WHAT IT IS AND WHAT IT ISN'T

The formative assessment process is:

- Informing learning, rather than measuring or summing up learning
- Creating an intentional learning process, where educators are engaged with their students to gather information **during** the learning process to improve achievement
- Focusing on what students will learn
- Moving learning forward for all learners from where they are
- Engaging all students in learning

The formative assessment process is NOT:

- A test item, a test, a quiz, or a series of tests/quizzes — these can be data points used within the formative assessment process.
- A pre-packaged program or set of techniques educators adopt and enact.
- A checklist of what students can't do or don't know.
- A tool to sort learners or to improve programs.

The formative assessment process includes:

- Focusing on specific standards to define specific learning intentions and success criteria as a roadmap for success, ensuring students can set learning goals — increasing their desire to move forward.
- Connecting the dots between instruction and student understanding so students know what, why, and how they are learning.
- Providing data-informed instruction that generates good data, rich discussions and conclusions, and allows for meaningful actions by BOTH students and educators.
- Acknowledging the assets each student brings to the classroom and using those assets to build new, personalized learning experiences.
- Leveraging an ongoing process of gathering and interpreting data to provide a path to move learning forward for all students.

INCORPORATING FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT PRACTICES

Evidence-Based Practices that support gathering evidence:

- [Appropriately Challenging Goals](#) (E.S. 0.60)
- [Belonging](#) (E.S. 0.46)
- [Classroom Discussion](#) (E.S. 0.82)
- [Clear Learning Intentions](#) (E.S. 0.44)
- [Constructivist Teaching](#) (E.S. 0.92)
- [Cooperative Learning](#) (E.S. 0.53)
- [Deliberate Practice](#) (E.S. 0.49)
- [Differentiation with UDL Focus](#) (E.S. 0.51)
- [Engagement](#) (E.S. 0.41)
- [Explicit Instruction](#) (E.S. 0.59)
- [Feedback via Technology](#) (E.S. 0.55)
- [Formative Assessment Process](#) (E.S. 0.40)
- [Goal Commitment](#) (E.S. 0.44)
- [Mastery Learning](#) (E.S. 0.67)
- [Metacognition](#) (E.S. 0.52)
- [Positive Peer Influence](#) (E.S. 0.53)
- [Prior Ability and Achievement](#) (E.S. 0.73)
- [Problem-Solving Teaching](#) (E.S. 0.61)
- [Scaffolding](#) (E.S. 0.52)
- [Self-Directed Learning](#) (E.S. 0.67)
- [Self-Reported Grades](#) (E.S. 0.96)
- [Strong Classroom Cohesion](#) (E.S. 0.66)
- [Success Criteria](#) (E.S. 0.64)
- [Teacher Clarity](#) (E.S. 0.85)
- [Teacher Credibility](#) (E.S. 1.09)
- [Teacher Estimates of Achievement](#) (E.S. 1.29)
- [Teacher Expectations](#) (E.S. 0.58)
- [Teacher-Student Relationships](#) (E.S. 0.62)
- [Transfer Strategies](#) (E.S. 0.75)

Formative assessment strategies that can be incorporated in curricular design include:

- Think-Pair-Share:
[Getting-the-think-pair-share-technique-right](#)
[Think-pair-share](#)
- Agreement circles:
[Agreement Circles example 1](#)
[Agreement Circles example 2](#)
- Socratic circles
- Annotated student drawings
- Card sort
- Chain notes
- Concept maps:
[Concept maps example 1](#)
[Concept maps example 2](#)
- Four corners
- Entrance/exit tickets:
[Entrance/exit tickets example 1](#)
[Entrance/exit tickets example 2](#)
- Guided reciprocal questioning
- K-W-L charts
- Graphic organizers—Four Square Notes
- Check for understanding: Dipsticks
- Interviews
- Assessment guide rubrics
- Checklists
- Misconception checks
- Questioning strategies; Verbal or written prompts exploring current understanding
- Developing and using models
- Constructing explanations
- Engaging in argument from evidence

THE FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT PROCESS AND PERSONALIZED COMPETENCY-BASED LEARNING (PCBL)



[Utah's PCBL Framework](#) outlines ways to help the learner and the educator know how to direct learning based on the evidence revealed through formative assessment practices. This provides a relevant and personalized learning experience driven by what is actually needed, as shown through the formative assessment data. Formative assessment practices build evidence, informing educators on how to best support individual learner's interests, and needs.

CULTURE OF LEARNING

Creating a culture where students and educators view formative assessment data positively allows educators to see opportunities for personalizing instruction as needs are revealed. Educators and students become less competitive or intimidated by this evidence, and are more able to use data as a roadmap to evaluate competency, and support collective efficacy between students and educators to ensure needs are met, and capacity for growth is increased.

LEARNER AGENCY

Students have ownership of their learning and respond to the evidence revealed through formative assessment to continue in ways that maximize growth in a personalized way. When students have the opportunity to engage in self-assessment, their capacity to advocate for their own learning increases. Their ability to engage in paths that lead to success increase and as a result they are more capable life-long learners.

DEMONSTRATED COMPETENCY & ASSESSMENT

Formative assessment is a mechanism by which students can define and engage in paths that build their ability to deepen knowledge and connect new knowledge to what they have learned previously. This creates a personalized path expanding and multiplying connections to relevancy throughout their learning as it applies to their own experience, circumstances, and learning goals.

CUSTOMIZED SUPPORTS

The formative assessment process empowers educators and students to benefit from individualized and customized supports. Individualized and customized supports help learners move toward a greater depth of knowledge and at a pace that is appropriate. Students and educators engage with the data to build capacity for greater teaching and learning.

SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Supporting students to be drivers of their own learning requires educators to create an environment where students feel safe to learn, make mistakes, try again, support one another and understand that learning is a process where effort is rewarded. Utilizing formative assessment in settings designed to support students' academic and social and emotional learning aid in reducing risk factors caused by Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). This includes students setting learning goals, evaluating when goals are met, and determining what else might be needed to be successful.

RESOURCES

Connecting the formative assessment process to other USBE created resources:

- ▶ [High Quality Instruction](#): Step 4 explores the design and use of formative assessment practices that are student-centered, with multiple methods for demonstrating competency
- ▶ [High Quality Instruction Canvas Course](#): Step 2 explores planning instruction around desired goals and outcomes. These materials demonstrate how we can use differentiated, personalized strategies — opening multiple pathways to each outcome with needed accommodation of differences and scaffolding to ensure success. Learner-centered instruction allows students to activate background knowledge. Incorporating student agency drives engagement.
- ▶ [High-Leverage Practices](#): HLP 1, Use student assessment data, analyze instructional practices, and make necessary adjustments collaboratively to improve student outcomes.
- ▶ [Utah Effective Teaching Standards \(UETS\) Standard 2 Instructional Design Clarity: Element 3 Learning Progression](#): These materials demonstrating how educators can develop a comprehensive understanding of where students have been, where they are now and where they are going using strategically sequenced learning experiences aligned within and across grade levels. This knowledge ensures that instruction is designed to facilitate mastery of success criteria, and reminds educators to maintain high expectations for all learners, even while taking unique learner characteristics into account.
- ▶ [Utah Portrait of a Graduate Competency Model Rubrics](#): The P-20 Rubrics provide a model for creating intentional learning opportunities for students in alignment with the Utah Portrait of a Graduate. For each competency, the rubrics function as learning progressions through the continuum from Pre-K through post-secondary studies. The rubrics support student agency and self-assessment of their current application of knowledge and skills. The model rubrics are intended to be adapted by local communities to align with their LEA and school instruction. By having models available, the state promotes local implementation and supports access to the Utah Portrait of a Graduate for all stakeholders in PreK-12 education.
- ▶ [Utah Compose](#): Utah Compose is a formative assessment tool that is provided free of charge to all public school teachers and students in grades 3-12. It is a web-based writing program designed to help Utah public school students in grades 3-12 improve writing through practice, immediate feedback, and guided instructional support.

- ▶ **UTIPS:** The Utah Test Item Pool Service (UTIPS) is a formative assessment tool provided to all Utah K–12 educators for use in any subject area (e.g., Career and Technical Education (CTE), Social Studies, Health Education, etc.) at any grade level. [Statewide UTIPS links](#).
- ▶ **[Elementary ELA Core Guides:](#)** The USBE ELA Elementary Formative Assessments are located on the ELA Core Guides. Click on the Core Guides tab.
- ▶ **[Secondary ELA Core Guides:](#)** The USBE ELA Secondary Formative Assessments are located on the ELA Core Guides. Click on the Utah Core Standards tab.
- ▶ **[Science Formative Assessments within Core Guides:](#)** The USBE Science Formative Assessments are located on the Science Core Guides. Click on the Core Guides tab.
- ▶ **[UEN Math eMedia Hub \(includes Math Formative Assessments for Middle Grades\):](#)** The USBE Math Formative Assessments are located within the 6-8 Major Work Clusters and other instructional resources for mathematics.
- ▶ These **Assessment Literacy Canvas Courses** will help educators gain knowledge about how to assess what students know and can do, interpret the results of these assessments, and apply these results to improve student learning and program effectiveness. As educators’ progress through the course modules, they will learn about the assessment cycle and how to be an assessment literate educator. Each module will take 60–75 minutes to complete. A reflection journal is included for participants to record their learning and engage in module activities. Participants complete Modules 1–7 in sequential order. Modules 8–10 should be completed after Modules 1–7, in any order. There are two ways to engage in these courses:
 - **[Assessment Literacy Facilitator’s Canvas Course:](#)** can be facilitated by a district or school and are designed to be interactive and include activities and discussion prompts.
 - **[Independent Assessment Literacy Canvas Course:](#)** self-directed learning course for educators to complete at their own pace.
- ▶ **[Social and Emotional Learning Technical Assistance Document:](#)** The technical assistance document provides guidance for adults serving youth that is foundational for student success. Through Social Emotional Learning, students can reduce the impact of ACEs in their lives and reduce the impact of future traumatic experiences by building [Protective Factors](#). According to the [American Psychological Association](#), building Protective Factors such as resilience can reduce the impact of trauma and improve a child’s ability to thrive. Trauma-informed educators are mindful of effects of trauma on learning and social interaction in and out of the classroom.

Additional USBE curated resources —*All these resources were vetted by USBE on (5/23/23):*

- [Q&A: Misconceptions About Formative Assessment](#)
- [Should Formative Assessments Be Graded?](#)
- [Formative Assessment: What Do Educators Need to Know and Do?](#)

- [Formative Assessment Keys to Success: A Resource for District Leaders, School Leaders, and Teacher Leaders](#)
- [Using Formative Assessment to Bring Clarity to the Classroom](#)
- [Promoting Learning and Achievement Through Self-Assessment](#)
- [The 40 Reflection Questions](#)
- [How Can Students Self-Assess When Educators Do all the Grading and Work?](#)
- [9 Things You Can Do to Support Student Agency With Formative Assessment](#)
- [Student Self-Assessment Practices That Work](#)
- [Helping Students Track Their Own Progress](#)
- [Post-Lesson Reflection: What Do Students Think They Learned?](#)
- [Seven High-leverage Formative Assessment Moves to Support ELLs](#)
- [53 Ways to Check for Understanding](#)
- [6 Tips for Managing the Feedback Workload](#)
- [Transferring Ownership of Writing to Students](#)

Personal Competency Based Learning Resources:

- Additional resources to further your learning around Personal Competency Based Learning can be found on the [PCBL eMedia Hub](https://emedia.uen.org/hubs/pcbl): <https://emedia.uen.org/hubs/pcbl>

Formative Assessment Books — *All these resources were vetted by USBE on (5/23/23):*

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