

# Feedback Teacher Guide

Illinois Classrooms in Action has provided resources on Formative Assessments.

<http://www.ilclassroomsinaction.org/formative-assessment.html> These resources include graphic organizers, examples, and suggestions for formative assessment that occurs before, during, and after instruction, as well as tech resources. This Formative Assessment Feedback Kit supports teachers in providing feedback to students. With the shift away from direct instruction toward student-centered and task-based instruction comes a need to evaluate student work with rubrics and provide meaningful feedback to students.

Included in this kit is a:

- ★ One-page reference document that delineates productive and unproductive feedback characteristics
- ★ A peer feedback tool and sentence starters
- ★ A self feedback template
- ★ And this user guide to help you implement formative assessment and feedback into your classroom as seamlessly as possible.

## Productive and unproductive feedback characteristics

While a score of 63% on a math assignment may tell us something about a student's understanding, it does not tell us much. In order for assessment to be productive, we have to provide formative assessment opportunities to students, but also provide them with feedback that will help them decide where they are, where they want to be, and how to get from one to the other. This one-page document is used to consider how your beliefs can impact the usefulness of the feedback you provide. Use this one-pager as a self-assessment of what you are currently doing, a discussion tool in professional learning, or as a way to identify areas of personal growth in providing feedback to students.

## Peer Feedback

Peer feedback offers many advantages. It allows students a chance to get timely suggestions for improvement, usually within the same class period. Peer feedback is not only beneficial to the student receiving comments, but also the student providing the feedback. "People providing the feedback benefit just as much as the recipient, because they are forced to internalize the learning intentions and success criteria in the context of someone else's work, which is less emotionally charged than one's own" (William, 2006, p.6). When teachers collect peer feedback, they have an opportunity not only to see how well the reviewee understands the work, but also how well the reviewer understands the learning target and success criteria.

The Peer Feedback Tool helps build a positive classroom culture by identifying the expectations in giving constructive rather than critical feedback. The use of this tool, along with using strategies that encourage students to talk, providing equal opportunities for students to share their ideas, and valuing students voice will develop a culture where students feel comfortable being vulnerable sharing their work, be open to receiving peer comments, and value the feedback of their peers to deepen their understanding. Teachers can work on this starting on the first day of school by encouraging students to talk, allowing them to work in groups, to think-ink-pair-share, etc. Teachers can have classroom discussions that value multiple opinions and methods and demonstrate that mistakes are the soil for new learning to grow.



The Peer Feedback Tool is intended to be used by students as a reminder of how to give productive feedback when they are engaging in peer assessment, but this should not be the first time that students have discussed peer feedback. Students' use of this tool will evolve over the school year. At the beginning of the school year, the Peer Feedback Tool can be used to introduce students to the characteristics of productive peer feedback. Using the tool, teachers can model how to give and receive constructive feedback. Eventually, as students have had practice in using the Peer Feedback Tool, the tool can be used as a reminder of how to give productive peer feedback and the type of feedback students should expect to receive from their classmates.

Before having students do peer assessments, have students get comfortable using sentence starters when communicating with each other "I agreed when you said \_\_\_\_\_, but disagreed about \_\_\_\_\_." Once students get used to using these sentence starters in class discussion, they are ready to translate them to conducting peer assessments and providing peer feedback.

Learn more about setting up a culture with these resources:

- Video: My Favorite No <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=srJWx7P6uLE>
- Creating a Positive Classroom Climate with Krystal Clifton <https://youtu.be/STcUVS7wY1Y> and Slides <http://bit.ly/CreatingPosClassEnv>
- SEL Page of resources: <http://www.ilclassroomsinaction.org/sel.html>
- Collaborative Conversations Sentence Stems [http://www.illinoisliteracyinaction.org/uploads/4/0/7/1/40712613/6\\_collaborative\\_conversation\\_sentence\\_stems\\_jb.pdf](http://www.illinoisliteracyinaction.org/uploads/4/0/7/1/40712613/6_collaborative_conversation_sentence_stems_jb.pdf)
- Collaborative Learning Guide [http://www.ilclassroomsinaction.org/uploads/1/2/0/9/120982154/collaborative\\_learning\\_guidea\\_1\\_.pdf](http://www.ilclassroomsinaction.org/uploads/1/2/0/9/120982154/collaborative_learning_guidea_1_.pdf)

## Self Feedback

Externally provided feedback is imperative for developing students' internal voice, training their thoughts as they work through tasks. Self feedback will further develop these metacognitive processes. "The skills of monitoring and assessing one's own learning are essential to self-regulation, ...which is a hallmark of an effective learner." (Heritage, 2010, pg 93) Through self assessment, students are led to monitor their learning and consider where they are in the journey toward the learning target defined by the teacher.

Self feedback develops a sense of responsibility for your own learning, and a responsibility to share that with your teacher. Self feedback asks students to assess where they are, where they need to be, and how they are going to get there with respect to the learning goal. Much like teacher and peer feedback, self feedback should be specific to the task and the learning goals for that task, as well as actionable and ongoing.

Evaluating their own understanding is not only useful to the student, but provides the teacher with enlightening data as well. Detailed information about students' level of understanding, areas where they are confident and areas where they are struggling, helps teachers make decisions on how to spend subsequent instructional time.



Self feedback can be facilitated a number of ways. Strategies could be as simple as students indicating their understanding of a task with a thumb up, thumb sideways, or thumb down. While simple, this requires the student to do a quick inventory of what they know, and the teacher is able to quickly evaluate the level of understanding in the class. Or, students might complete a reflection such as the Self Feedback template. A strategy like this provides the students and teacher with a more detailed evaluation of what they are understanding, what they need help with, and possibly even how best to support them along the way.

## **Closing**

In general, if we, as teachers, have no intention of providing feedback to students, we should strongly consider why we are assigning a task. Tasks can be assigned with the intention of peers providing feedback to each other, or with tools for students to address their own metacognition, but the process and goal should be clear to the student, as well as to others who may be helping the students reach their goals.

## **References**

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- Heritage, M., & Stigler, J. W. (2010). *Formative assessment: Making it happen in the classroom*. Thousand Oaks, Calif: Corwin.
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