



## Teaching and Learning

### Notable Quotes on Formative Feedback

**Assessment is derived from *assidere* to sit with or beside. It is something we do *with* and *for* a student, not something we do *to* them.**

(Wiggins, cited in Green, 1998)

"First feedback is most effective if it focuses students' attention on their progress in mastering educational tasks ..."

"If you can both listen to children and accept their answers not as things to just be judged right or wrong but as pieces of information which may reveal what the child is thinking, you will have taken a giant step toward becoming a master teacher, rather than merely a disseminator of information."

(Easley and Zwoyer 1975: p 25)

"Second, feedback should take place while it is still clearly relevant ... soon after a task is completed and that the student should be given opportunities subsequently to demonstrate learning from the feedback ..."

"Third, feedback should be specific and related to need ..."

"Praise should be used sparingly and where used, should be task-specific, whereas criticism (other than simply identifying deficiencies) is usually counterproductive."

(Crooks 1988: p 469)

**Crooks**

"Teachers use feedback to make programmatic decisions with respect to readiness, diagnosis and remediation. Students use it to monitor the strengths and weaknesses of their performances, so that aspects associated with success or high quality can be recognised and reinforced and unsatisfactory aspects modified or improved." (Sadler 1989: p 120)

"If pupils are to become competent assessors of their own work, as developments in metacognition tell us they should, then they need sustained experience in ways of questioning and improving the quality of their work, and supported experience in assessing their work in addition to understanding what count as the standard expected and criteria on which they will be assessed."

**Sadler**

"Formative assessment involves using assessment information to feed back into the teaching/learning process; some believe that assessment is only truly formative if it involves the pupil, others that it can be a process which involves the teacher who feeds back into curriculum planning." (Gipps 1994: p 124)

"Formative assessment is that process of appraising, judging or evaluating students' work or performance and using this to shape and improve their competence." (Tunstall and Gipps 1996)

**Tunstall and Gipps**

"The feedback needs to be of two kinds: in addition to better feedback after the performance, feedback must also be provided during (concurrent with) the assessment activities." (Wiggins 1998)

**Wiggins**

*"Assessment that can be formative is assessment that:*

- Is embedded in a pedagogy of which it is an essential part (eg constructivist).
- Shares learning goals with students.
- Involves students in self-assessment.
- Provides feedback which leads to students recognising the gap and closing it.
- Is underpinned by confidence that every student can improve.
- Involves reviewing and reflecting on assessment data.

*What is not formative is assessment that:*

- Simply adds procedures or tests to existing work.
- Involves only marking and feeding back grades or marks to students.
- Implicitly labels students and reduces their self-esteem.
- Is separated from teaching." (Harlen 1998: p 3)

**Harlen**

"We may need to teach less in order for the students to learn more. Teach less more carefully, and discuss it with our students. We need to clarify the purpose and expected outcomes of the tasks we design for students, and give them specific, clear and constructive feedback, and the chance to use that feedback to improve their own work." (Sutton 2000)

**Sutton**

"For assessment to function formatively, the results have to be used to adjust teaching and learning." (Black and Wiliam 1998: pp. 5-16)

"Feedback to any pupil should be about the particular qualities of his or her work, with advice on what he or she can do to improve, and should avoid comparisons with other pupils." (p 9)

"Opportunities for pupils to express their understanding should be designed into any piece of teaching, for this will initiate the interaction whereby formative assessment aids learning." (p 11)

"The dialogue between pupils and teacher should be thoughtful, reflective, focused to evoke and explore understanding, and conducted so that all pupils have an opportunity to think and to express their ideas." (p 12)

**Black and Wiliam**

"The simplest prescription for improving education must be "dollops of feedback" – providing information how and why the child understands and misunderstands, and what directions the student must take to improve." (Hattie 1999: p 9)

"Feedback is the information component whereas reinforcement is the evaluative component relating to information and motivation." (p 9)

"The incidence of feedback in the typical classroom is very low, usually in seconds at best per day." (p 9)

"A combination of goal setting plus feedback is most effective feedback and challenging goals are mutually supportive. The greater the challenge, the higher the probability of the student seeking, receiving and assimilating feedback information." (p 11)

"It is teachers that make the difference." (p 11)

**Hattie**

**Benefits of Co-operation:**

- Facilitating student learning and motivation and developing good interpersonal skills and relationships.
- Particularly appropriate for more complex tasks.
- Approaches that encourage active engagement of all individuals and that stimulate helping behaviours within groups most desirable.
- One of the benefits of cooperative learning is likely to be enhanced development of valuable peer and self-evaluation skills.

**Crooks**

"In assessing the quality of a student's work or performance, the teacher must possess a concept of quality appropriate to the task, and be able to judge the student's work in relation to that concept. But although the students may accept a teacher's judgment, without demur, they need more than summary grades if they are to develop expertise intelligently. The indispensable conditions for improvement are that the student comes to hold a concept of quality roughly similar to that held by the teacher, is able to monitor continuously the quality of what is being produced during the act of production itself, and has a repertoire of alternative moves or strategies from which to draw at any given point. In other words, students have to be able to judge the quality of what they are producing and be able to regulate what they are doing during the doing of it ...

Stated explicitly, therefore, the learner has to (a) possess a concept of the standard (or goal/reference level) being aimed for, (b) compare the actual (or current) level of performance with the standard, and (c) engage in appropriate action which leads to some closure of the gap." (p 121)

"Formative assessment includes both feedback and self-monitoring. The goal of many instructional systems is to facilitate the transition from feedback to self-monitoring." (Sadler 1989: pp. 121-2)

**Sadler**

### **Sharing goals and expectations with pupils:**

- It is important to find ways of communicating goals and expectations effectively with pupils.
- Using the language of aims and objectives is unlikely to be satisfactory.
- Using the teacher's criteria with students – not particularly helpful?

### **Two Strategies**

#### *One to one with a pupil:*

- Pupil chooses 'best' pieces.
- Pupil says what she likes most and least.
- Teacher does the same, choosing key criteria, according to the substance of the work.
- Discuss differences in teachers' and pupil's perception (metacognitive reflection) generalisation of knowledge and skills to other activities.

#### *Using exemplars of good quality work:*

- Discuss points that exemplify criteria of quality in concrete examples.
- Pupils gradually internalise the standards.
- Assessment genuine part of process of learning. (Harlen 1998: p 5)

**Harlen**

## **References**

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## **Staff Discussion on the Importance of Formative Feedback**

Use this suggestion with the *Notable Quotes* section.

### **1a. Why is Formative Feedback important?**

- ❖ Task management – think, pair, share, report back.

### **1b. *"Formative Assessment involves using assessment information to feed back into the teaching/learning process. Some believe that assessment is only truly formative if it involves the pupil ..."***

**(Gipps 1994)**

#### **What is your view?**

- ❖ Task management – group discussion.

### **2. What are the researchers saying?**

- ❖ Task management – in groups of three, take a different quote sheet each and highlight the key ideas.
- ❖ Summarise on a sheet of paper and share back with the whole group.
- ❖ Create from the summaries up to ten bullet points for future reference.

### **3. What are our next steps? (Include your comments here)**