The Formative Assessment Process

The Formative Assessment Process is a deliberate process used by teachers and students during instruction that provides actionable feedback that is used to adjust ongoing teaching and learning strategies to improve students’ attainment of curricular learning targets/goals.

Where am I going? Where am I now? How am I going to get there?

Clarify
- Determine **Learning Goals**—what students will know by the end of the lesson. The goals describe “big ideas” or concepts and reflect academic standards. Learning goals are written in student-friendly language, beginning with, “I understand.”
- Establish **Success Criteria**—the evidence that teachers and students use to determine how students are progressing toward the learning goals. They are also written in student-friendly language, beginning with “I can.”

Elicit
- Engage in a learning event or activity that prompts and generates evidence of learning. Evidence should be tightly aligned to the learning goals and guided by success criteria.
- Consider student needs, interests, and learning styles when deciding how to elicit evidence so that students can demonstrate their understanding in different ways to meet the success criteria. Use multiple sources of evidence to draw accurate conclusions about student learning.

Interpret
- Review the evidence to determine students’ progress toward learning goals and success criteria. Interpreting is about analyzing evidence of learning, and identifying the gap between where students are and where they need to be. Students can analyze evidence of their own learning and discuss their interpretations with teachers and peers.
- Interpreting evidence is not a single event but part of an ongoing process throughout instruction.

Act
- Teachers determine and initiate appropriate instructional next steps. These may not be the same for all students and must take into consideration each student’s readiness, interests, and learning preferences.
- Students receive feedback that is specific about what they need to do next in the learning process.

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