

## FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

### The Parent's Perspective on Formative Assessment

Parents, students and teachers all have different roles in the partnership and want different things from the partnership to reflect these roles. Normally the parents need to know a lot more from the teacher than the teacher needs to know from the parent. If there is an effective learning-focused partnership between teachers, students and parents, then each of three will know a number of things:

#### The parents will know –

- \* What the school and teacher are trying to achieve –
- \* That the teacher takes the education of their child very seriously and is strongly motivated to do whatever is necessary to enable their child to learn
- \* That on a daily basis, the school works for the child

#### Parents want to know –

- \* That their child is safe, happy and learning at school –
- \* That their child feels respected, accepted and that he or she belongs –
- \* That the teacher holds high expectations for their child's ability to learn –
- \* That the teacher takes responsibility for the quality of teaching, the learning, and the student's achievements, and does not attempt to blame the parents for poor learning by their child
- \* What is being taught- from big picture to small picture; the school must deliver the national curriculum
- \* How it is being taught: Parents need to know the pedagogical approach the school uses and why they use it
- \* How he or she can provide support; the teacher and school need to be clear about how they would like the parents to support the teaching and learning and should help facilitate this for the parents or help them learn how to do it.
- \* How the school informs about progress and achievement; Most importantly, parents want to know how their child is showing growth

*Absolum M. (2011), Clarity in the Classroom- Using Formative Assessment for Building Learning- 'Chapter 10 Building Partnerships with Family' (p.202-303)*

Key Points from Reading:	This Makes me Think:

## The Student Voice in Formative Assessment

*Research conducted as part of the Erasmus + ATS2020 project in Irish schools with Junior Cycle students*

### **School A:**

Our teacher gave us feedback while we were working in our groups in the classroom. She came on to the tables and asked us questions about the work we had done and we could ask her questions. This was good because you didn't have to ask in front of the class. I liked it too because I did better in my homework. I think that is because I was clearer about what I was meant to be doing.

### **School B:**

Reflecting on the grades that you got for tests and projects was really handy. Like, before I would just get back my test and go – oh yeah- Ok- I got a B or whatever. When we learned how to reflect on our grades it made you think about why you got the grade. Like before, I would just throw it into my bag and not look at it but now I was looking at it, seeing what I did well and seeing what I could have done better. That helped me to see where my weaknesses were so that I could try to improve.

### **School C:**

Reflecting on my learning in these classes definitely helped me to improve. We also set goals for ourselves and we would reflect on how well we had prepared and then we would compare this to the feedback that we got from the teacher. We spent a bit of time in each class at the start reflecting on the previous class and this helped if you wanted to ask questions about things you weren't sure of.

### **School D:**

When the teacher gives us feedback he picks out some things that we did well and some things that we could have done better. Sometimes, he makes us go and find the things that we think we did well and the things that we could have done better by looking at the success criteria for the work. This is good because it makes it clear to me as to what he wants us to do so I have a better chance of doing better.

Key Points from Reading:	This Makes me Think:

## The Teacher Voice in Formative Assessment

### School A:

So the formative feedback really allowed students for the first time ever to see that they were moving. It wasn't about moving from 50% to 60%, but more about improving and moving towards perfection. This helped to move the learning forward for each individual student and ultimately made each student more responsible for their own learning. We also really tried to get parents involved through the use of technology – so for example when we were doing a topic like the consumer, we would let parents know and try to get them involved and asking questions as well. Reflection also helped the students to be more aware of what they were learning, and not just what but how they were learning and how they learned best.

### School B:

Giving each student feedback can be time consuming. To be honest, it was daunting at first as I was concerned about the workload. Now I try to give feedback as they go in class, with questions to check where they are at and to see that they understand and I listen in on the conversations that they have during groupwork or thinkpair-share. I give written feedback periodically and try to focus on highlighting something they did well, something that could be better and then I give them some pointers on how to improve. The combination of oral and written feedback works well and I can see more progress in the students. Showing them how to improve makes the feedback more effective.

### School C:

I found that combining student reflection with feedback was more effective than just giving the students feedback. I tried a number of ways to do this. So when I gave written feedback I would give the students some time at the start of the class the next day to read the comments and to ask me questions if they needed to. I also asked them to set a new goal for themselves based on the feedback that I gave them and this helped a lot because each student had their own goal. Another thing I tried was using a colour code - I highlighted something good in their work in green and then asked them to say why it was good and then I used orange for something that needed to be improved and again they had to say why this needed to be improved.

Key Points from Reading:	This Makes me Think: