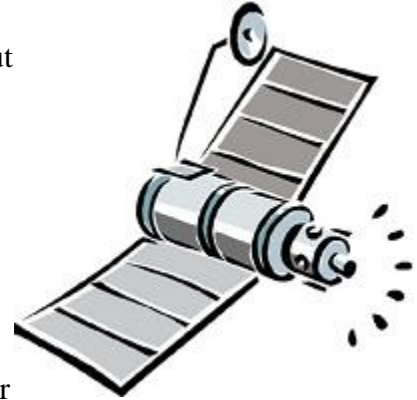


Four Types of Formative Assessment

Given students' varied learning styles and readiness levels, it is necessary to plan instruction to reach every student. Only then can we ensure that content/instruction for a student is individualized. In order to appropriately differentiate learning experiences, educators must engage in consistent assessment. Data collected from assessment, particularly during unit implementation (formative assessment), will inform instructional choices and support student progress.

While **summative assessment** occurs at the end of a unit to evaluate student mastery, formative assessment occurs throughout the unit to drive instruction.

Formative assessments allow the teacher to gather a constant flow of information about what students are learning. This information is the foundation for instructional adaptations that meet students' exact needs.



It's like the satellite signals from GPS continually looking to see how the driver is progressing and offering a new path if the driver gets lost. The most effective global positioning systems utilize a variety of data sets. The same is true for educators. A teacher who is well versed in formative assessment is able to gather reliable data through a variety of techniques employed in diverse circumstances to get a complete picture of student performance.

Consider the four categories of formative assessment to ensure that you are appropriately varying your use of "in-the-moment" assessment strategies. For all of the examples provided, there are numerous technology applications you can use.

Temperature Gauges — Immediate, in-the-moment assessments that allow the teacher to get a sense of current student status. This often takes place while the teacher is presenting a lesson.

Based on student responses, the teacher is able to adjust the lesson content and pacing, and identify any urgent student needs.

Examples: Adjective Check-In, 3-Finger Check-In

Breakpoints — Brief assessments given at a stopping point in instruction (such as the end of the class period or lesson). Data collected from breakpoint assessments allows the teacher to step back and revise the instructional plan.

Based on student responses, the teacher is able to plan instructional activities, *small-group mini-lessons*, and more.

Examples: Exit Cards, One Sentence Summary, Pre-Assessment, Higher-Order Questioning, Quizzes

Student-Directed Assessments — Self-evaluative student reflections, giving the teacher insight into learners' perceived needs.

Based on student responses, the teacher is able to direct students to appropriate resources such as small-group or one-on-one instruction, websites, learning activities, and how-to sheets.

Examples: Checklists, Self-Assessment on a Rubric, Peer Evaluation, Student Journals

Comprehensive Assessments — Systematic data collection on individual skill and concept attainment.

Based on student response, the teacher can offer targeted small-group instruction, re-teach core concepts, and provide additional resources.

Examples: Rubrics, Tests, Facilitation Grids, Individual Conferences/Oral Interviews, Student Folders, Notebook/Portfolio Check