

as Partners in Evaluation

Karen Beutler & Katina Papulkas

“Your inquiry question can be answered with a yes or no answer. What other words might you use to make it richer and broader? Have you thought about using the prediction and imagination sections of the Question Matrix?”

By offering specific feedback and suggestions for improvement, they are allowing the student to take ownership for their learning and improve their chances of achieving a greater mark on their final evaluation.

- ◆ In Stages Two and Three, a variety of formative assessment strategies along with explicit feedback can be utilized to bring students to the next level: checklists, rating scales, anecdotal notes, tracking sheets and conferencing. The number of prompts or suggestions in feedback will be dependent upon the student and the steps needed to move them forward.

“Your list of resources is current and will guide you in answering your inquiry question. Have you considered reviewing a resource with an opposing viewpoint?”

For struggling students, ESL or Spec. Ed., you may want to simplify the language and be direct in the feedback.

“Instead of the Venn diagram to process your information, a comparison chart will help you to organize it.”

- ◆ In Stage Four, the final stage of the research process, students transfer and share their learning. It is at this point that students use the rubrics provided for self and peer assessment of their final products with the opportunity to revise their work. During the conference, the classroom teacher will share the final evaluation with the student and give prompts for self-reflection and improvement. It is the student's responsibility to review the feedback and self-reflect in order to set goals for future projects. Teachers, together with the TL, must remember that only the evaluation by the classroom teacher is recorded for academic purposes.

Final Thoughts

Assessment should be meaningful and connect to the criteria on the final evaluation; therefore, it should be structured with purpose. Ask yourself these final questions: “Why are we assessing?” “What are we assessing?” “Who should perform the assessment?” and “What tool is most effective?”

Assessment will inform teachers about lesson delivery and practice – when to move ahead, or identifying the need to go back and review. However, assessment and explicit feedback together will empower students to take responsibility for their learning and ensure the summative evaluation demonstrates their true level of achievement. ■

Below are our references that you may consider adding to the professional section of your resource centre.

Brookhart, S.M. (2008). *How to Give Effective Feedback to Your Students*. Virginia: ASCD.

Fisher, D. and Frey, N. (2007). *Checking for Understanding – Formative Assessment Techniques for Your Classroom*. Virginia: ASCD.

Lew, L and Shoemaker, B.J. (1998). *Great Performances – Creating Classroom-Based Assessment Tasks*. Virginia: ASCD.

Popham, J. (2008). *Transformative Assessment*. Virginia: ASCD.

Wormelim, R. (2006). *Fair Isn't Always Equal – Assessing & Grading in the Differentiated Classroom*. Maine: Stenhouse Publishers.