



## The FE Toolkit: A Magazine for Grade 1 Teachers

### ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING (AFL)

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#### IN-FOCUS

John Hattie, in *Visible Learning* 2009, argues that effective feedback to students MUST contain the following three ingredients:

- An understanding of the desired goal
- Evidence about their present position in relation to that goal
- Guidance on the way to close the gap between the two

It should:

- Focus on what is being learned (success criteria)
- Occur as students are doing something
- Give information on why criteria met/ not met

#### Aristotle

*'We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence then, is not an act, but a habit'.*



#### Assessment for Learning or Formative Assessment?

The literature tends to use these terms interchangeably (see Wiliam, 2011, pp39-40 for an exception to this). The underlying principle is that assessment is undertaken **during the learning process** to give students and teachers an idea about how well the student is doing. The outcome of the assessment helps the teacher decide how to adjust their teaching to better meet learner needs.

#### Assessment Corner

#### Simple ways to test learning

##### The Mid-Unit Assessment

Waiting till the end of the unit to assess students may not help you identify misconceptions or difficulties that students have, and by this time it is too late!

- Include a short assessment half-way through your unit.
- Ensure that the questions are 'BIG' questions – ones that are pivotal to the unit, and which underpin the student's future knowledge development.
- Put time aside in your scheme of work for re-visiting and reflecting on the assessment outcomes.
- Concentrate on 'finding faults and fixing' for every student.
- Give each student a target to work towards.



## NATIONAL FE CONFERENCE 2016

Join us at this year's National FE Conference, hosted by Newbubbles Ltd. Another dazzling gala of speakers from the world of politics, academia and the FE community.

The UK's most talked-about FE Conference



Newbubbles Ltd

**Lord Andrew Adonis**

**The architect of Tony Blair's schools academy system is putting FE under the microscope at this year's conference!**

# LEADING ASPIRATION

A National Conference for Further Education

**Thursday 24 March 2016, Thistle Hotel, London Heathrow**

**A fantastic gala of speakers...**



**Natalie Bennett**  
Leader - Green Party



**Prof. Alison Fuller**  
Institute of Education



**David Russell**  
CEO - Education &  
Training Foundation



**Nick Lindford**  
Editor - FE Week

Newbubbles Ltd is proud to join forces with FE Week as our media partner for this year's conference.



## Who is Lord Adonis?



Lord Adonis was Tony Blair's Chief Education Advisor and served in Labour's policy unit 1998-2001 and became Head of Policy, Prime Minister's Office, in 2001-3. He almost single-handedly created the Schools Academy System, which continues to be a significant government priority under David Cameron.

A fierce critic of comprehensive schools, he saw these as emblematic of the culture of low expectations and standards that he felt bedevilled children's state education. From a working class background himself, before escaping to boarding school on a state scholarship and then to Oxford, Adonis wanted the same opportunity for all working class children, and set the seeds for the gradual dismantling of comprehensive schooling as we know it. A highly controversial figure, he now turns his attention to the plight of the FE sector. For many, it could be an uncomfortable ride!

## Speakers

The list of speakers at the Newbubbles 2016, National Conference on **24th March 2016** is another Who's Who of the FE sector:

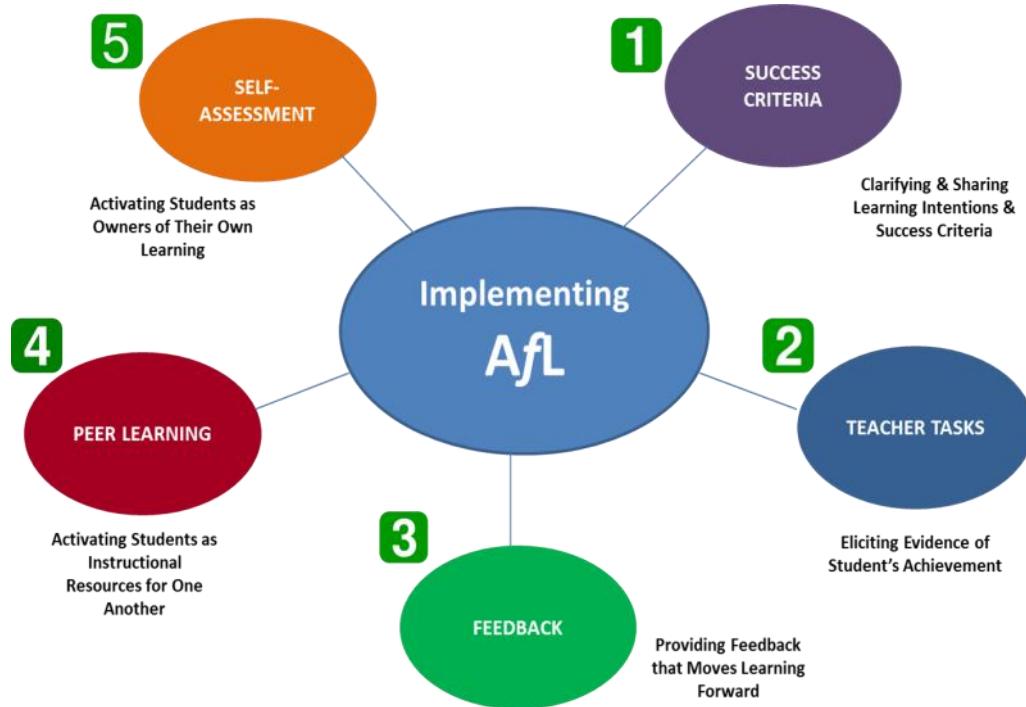
- Dr Jonathan Tummons
- Richard Moore HMI – Senior OFSTED Inspector
- Richard Atkins, Principal – Exeter College
- Dr Matt O'Leary
- Helen Groves
- Dr John Lea (AoC HE Project Manager)
- Dr Jim Crawley - Chair, Teacher Education in Lifelong Learning (TELL)
- Jay Stewart - Gendered Intelligence

# THE FE TOOLKIT

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## FIVE STRATEGIES FOR AFL

In 'Embedded Formative Assessment', Dylan Wiliam (2011) sets out five strategies that describe the practice of assessment for learning:



### Key Study: Inside the Blackbox

In 1998, Professors Paul Black and Dylan Wiliam wrote a celebrated article entitled: "*Inside the Black Box: Raising Standards Through Classroom Assessment*" that highlighted the importance of using formative assessment (AfL) techniques to improve learner achievement.

Note: assessment becomes formative when it is used to help teachers make changes to their instructional practice to better support learner needs.

#### Main Findings:

- Conventional marking strategies provide limited useful guidance on how work can be improved.
- Teachers (Black & Wiliam focused mostly on schools) did not regularly share advice on how to use formative assessment methods .
- Using formative assessment (AfL) methods can boost performance by more than one GCSE grade or improve the rate of learning by more than 25% (effect sizes of between 0.4 to 0.7).
- Formative methods raise overall performance and especially for low achievers.
- Grading / giving marks does not support student improvement. For many students, grades simply reinforce a self-view of low ability, which causes de-motivation, lowered self-esteem and inhibits future learning. Grades only work for students who get good grades!
- In classrooms with a culture of grading, students tend to avoid difficult tasks and are less likely to volunteer to answer questions or take roles with additional responsibilities.
- It is better to have frequent short tests than infrequent long ones.

On feedback, Black & Wiliam (1998, p7) offered the following advice:

"feedback to any [student] 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 [students]"

## Implementing AfL

Wiliam (2011) explains how to implement his five strategies in the following way:

**1. Success Criteria:** How do students come to find out what they are doing and where they are going? Wiliam's 'learning intentions' seem very close to what FE teachers understand 'learning outcomes' to be, and he makes the following observation: don't be over-prescriptive, ensure sufficient generality so that learning can be transferred to similar tasks, focus on the process of learning (e.g. skills, thought processes) rather than content, and use the vocabulary of the discipline whenever appropriate, not a dumbed down or 'student-friendly' version. **Activities:** (i) have students (in pairs, small groups) review samples of student work and discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the samples; (ii) have students discuss exemplars, and to deduce why these are considered as such.

**2. Teacher Tasks:** It is essential that teachers explore students' thinking before assuming that students have understood something. Asking 'Big' questions can tell a teacher whether it is a prudent to move on to the next stage of the syllabus or whether a topic will need to be re-visited. Some knowledge provides the foundation for later learning, so 'Big' questions are used to test 'bedrock knowledge'. **Activities:** (i) random-nominated questioning: If a student says 'don't know', get answers from the rest of the group, and go back to the original student and say 'Which answer do you prefer?'; (ii) Think-Pair-Share - the teacher poses a question or loaded statement 'Russia was the cause of World War I' and students discuss in pairs and small groups before being engaged by the teacher.

**Feedback:** Praise effort and relative distance-travelled, not absolute performance against an expected standard, avoid grading where possible, use comment-only feedback, ensure feedback is action-driven leading to an improvement (the +1 effect), teach students how to give each other feedback.

**Peer Learning:** Peer-to-peer tutoring can be as powerful as 1:1 tutor instruction (Wiliam, 2011). Two key features are necessary: *group goals* and *individual accountability* (Slavin et al, 2003). **Activities:** (i) peers scrutinise each other's work before submitting it; (ii) peers evaluate each other's work by giving 'two stars and a wish'; (iii) Groups of students set each other end-of-topic questions.

**Self-Assessment:** Some research (e.g. Fontana & Fernandes, 1994) shows that self-assessment can double the rate of learning. Students are motivated by goals that are specific, within reach and offer a challenge. **Activities:** (i) Traffic Lights - What I Know Well (Green), What I Can Almost Do (Amber), What I Need Help With (Red); (ii) Paraphrasing - one minute summary, the top 3 points, the muddiest point, Journal - Q: How I have developed today.



Paul Black



Dylan William

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### THE NEW OFSTED FRAMEWORK 2015



**"If education is the key to unlocking the well-being and prosperity of our nation, then our future success rests in the hands of great leaders".**

Michael Wilshaw, Chief Inspector

*The Future of Inspection: Understanding the Changes, June 2015*

#### A Summary of the Changes:

- Inspection frameworks for schools, colleges, independent providers and early years have been harmonised into **ONE single framework**.
- Inspection handbooks will be written for each sector** and contain the detail and context (i.e. age range) that inspectors and practitioners will be working to.
- A greater focus on **leadership and management**.
- The return of '**capacity to improve**' as a key index of 'college effectiveness'.
- An even **greater emphasis on college self-assessment** and accurate reporting of performance.
- A stronger focus on the '**student experience**'.
- An **increased emphasis on safeguarding** and the extent that curriculum provision is meeting employer needs.
- Four instead of three key aspects**, and re-jigged so that they appear in the following order in the inspection report: (1) Leadership & Management (2) Teaching, Learning & Assessment (3) Personal Development, Behaviour & Welfare (4) Outcomes for Children & Learners.
- Judgements of **Personal Development, Behaviour & Welfare** will include for information on student progressions (e.g. into employment, HE, higher FE etc). It will also be specifically focused on: (1) emotional welfare (2) physical well-being (3) healthy eating (4) moral development (5) PREVENT - avoiding radicalisation.
- Good and outstanding providers will be subject to **shorter inspections** (2 days for FE providers) and led by an HMI.
- The presumed standards for each provider is **GOOD**, but If the status of the college is judged as being higher or lower than **GOOD**, inspectors may call in a larger team for a full inspection. **Rapid improvement or rapid decline will be triggers for a large-scale inspection**.
- Subject Sector Areas (SSAs) will no longer be graded**. Instead, grades and inspection summaries will be given to: (1) 16-19 study programmes (2) adult learning programmes (3) apprenticeships (4) traineeships (5) provision for learners with high needs (5) provision for full-time 14-16 year olds.
- 7 out of 10 inspectors will be leaders **working in the FE sector** (in theory!).
- Whilst every effort will be made to ensure that inspectors have **subject-specific knowledge** of their inspected area, this is **no longer a guarantee!** (Then again, to what extent was this the case anyway?)



#### Embedding AfL

Zita Lysaght's (2015) paper entitled '*AfL for Self-Regulation*' surveyed the assessment practices of 476 teachers in Irish state education.

**Criteria: Sharing Learning Intentions (Outcomes) & Success Criteria**

##### Most Embedded Practices:

- Learning intentions are shared with students in a 'user friendly' way, for example by asking them to guess 'what happens next'
- Students are reminded about the links between what they are learning and the 'big picture'.
- Success criteria are differentiated to students' needs (e.g. individually tailored goals or objectives).

##### Least Embedded Practices:

- Students are given responsibility for checking their learning against the success criteria of lessons (e.g. using learning logs or checklists).
- Prompts used by teachers to remind students of learning intentions / success criteria during class (e.g. using WALT— We Are Learning To; or WILF— What I Am Looking For). These can be posed as questions to learners: e.g. at the start of exercises—'What Are We Learning Here?' and then later 'What Are You Still Looking For?'

**Criteria: Providing Feedback**

##### Most Embedded Practices:

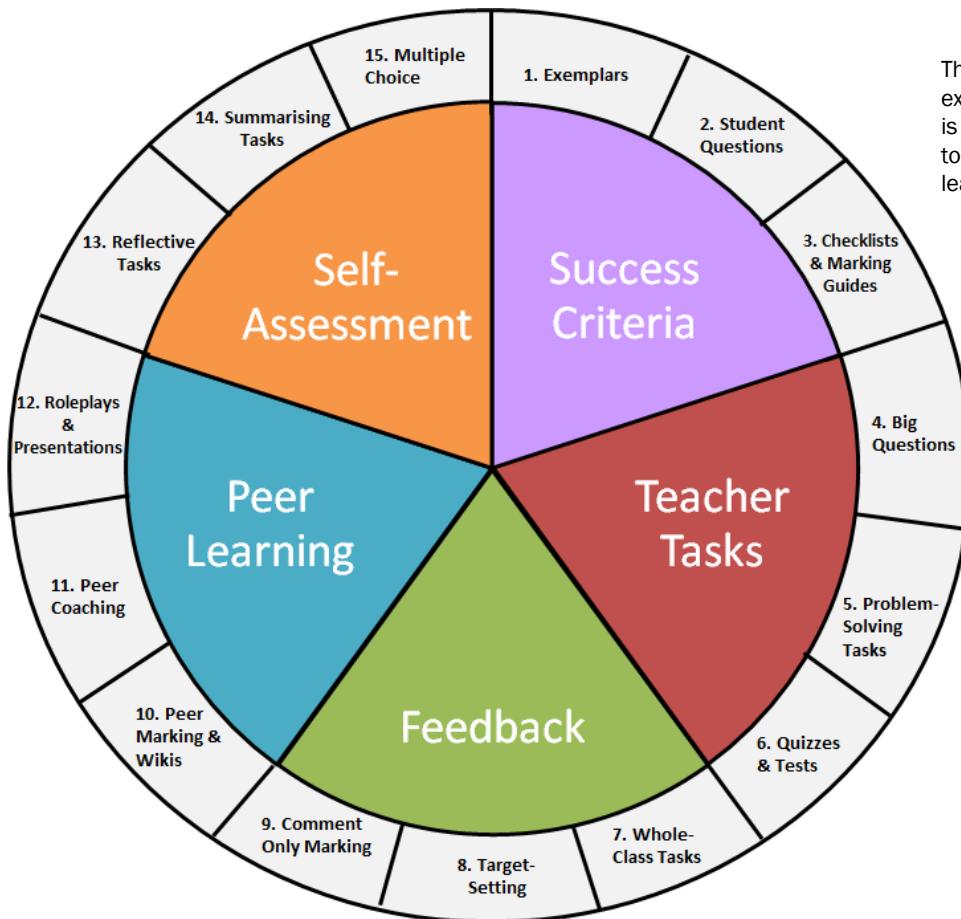
- Feedback to students is focused on learning intentions (outcomes) and success criteria
- Teacher-made tests are used diagnostically to identify strengths and learning needs.

##### Least Embedded Practices:

- Feedback given utilises previous student achievements and progress in class.
- Close-the-gap feedback (for skills, knowledge, attitude) is used to set actions for improving.

## THE ASSESSMENT WHEEL

Tully (2015) has adapted Wiliam's 5 AfL criteria to produce an assessment wheel which identifies 3 common assessment practices that teachers can employ to implement each of the criteria into mainstream practice:



The choice of AfL methods is not exhaustive, and indeed the AfL wheel is designed so that it can be adapted to each organisation's specific learning context.

Adapted from an idea by David Sladkey (2013)

© Paul Tully 2015

### Drop Us A Line!

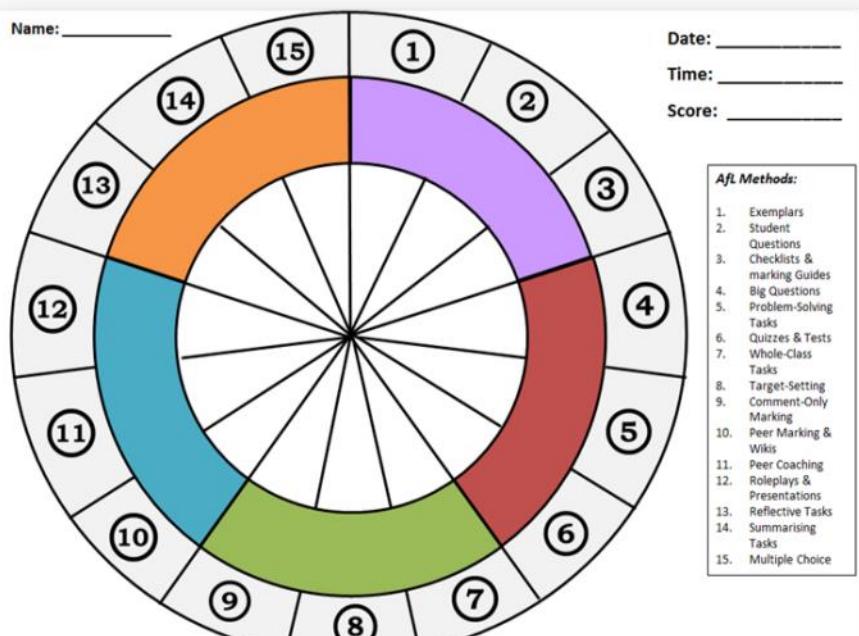
If you would like more information or direct trainer input about how to employ the Assessment Wheel in your organisation, please e-mail Emma Jackson at: [gradeonetraining@newbubbles.com](mailto:gradeonetraining@newbubbles.com)

### A Great CPD Tool

The Assessment Wheel can be used as a CPD tool for both individual teachers and teaching teams.

- Copy the template opposite and use one for each teaching week or teaching month.
- Each time one of the activities is used in class, colour in the white segment. Over a period of time, it is possible to track how teachers/ teaching teams are using AfL techniques in their classrooms (score = number of shaded areas).
- You might use one card per class, per week, for an end of topic, or a mid-year / end-year self-assessment.
- For CPD managers and Teaching Managers, compare individuals, courses and departments at strategic points in the academic year to health-check your AfL delivery.
- For teachers looking to improve from grade 3 to grade 2 or grade 1, especially when student progress is an issue, the AfL wheel is an excellent way of diagnosing and improving AfL teaching strategies.

### AfL Card Template



## ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING ACTIVITIES

### 8 Assessment for Learning Tasks to Get You Thinking!

#### Medal & Mission

**Aim:** A process for extending and challenging the learner to make improvements to their skills and knowledge

- Ensure task goals are clear and understood by the student.
- When the student has completed the task, ask them to self-assess against the task criteria.
- Teacher feedback should acknowledge competent performance (medal).
- Teacher feedback should include an action for improving their task performance (mission).

#### Loaded Questions

**Aim:** A stretch & challenge questioning technique that checks and reinforces understanding of vocabulary

- Loaded questions is a phrase coined by Tully in 2012.
- When the teacher asks a question, the student is asked to include specific vocabulary or concepts in their answer. It works on the principle that mastery of vocabulary = richer subject understanding.
- The teacher poses a question and then asks the student to use X, Y or Z in their answer. If the answer is only partially given, another student 'tops up' with a new 'loaded' answer.

#### A, B, C, D

**Aim:** A self-assessment activity in which students use A, B, C or D to denote their understanding of a new concept

- A keyword, concept, topic or question is provided to students.
- The A, B, C, D prompt is now provided on which students self-assess their understanding of this item (A - I could teach others about; B - I know something about; C - I know a little about; D - I know nothing about).
- It might be a way of streamlining a specific exercise or better still, a way of getting the As to explain what they know to everyone else (peer coaching).

#### 'Might'

**Aim:** A questioning technique designed to encourage more students to participate in the answer

- When questioning, insert the word 'might' to give students greater opportunity to think and explore possible answers.
- Example: 'What is the meaning of democracy?' becomes 'What might the meaning of democracy be?'
- The first question infers a single answer known by the teacher whereas the second is inherently more open and the student feels on safer ground when giving an answer.

#### Exemplars

**Aim:** To help students identify outstanding practice in their discipline

- Collect together examples of good practice from a previous student year (get consent first & remove names).
- *Idea 1:* Ask current students (individually or in pairs) to highlight those areas that mark the assignment out as outstanding and draw up a checklist of good practice.
- *Idea 2:* Ask students to discuss what good practice might look like first, devise checklist and then apply to exemplar, and add to checklist anything that the exemplar illustrates.

#### 'Question Time'

**Aim:** Often referred to as 'student questions', this exercise requires students to set questions for each other

- *Idea 1:* Set pairs of students a piece of academic reading and then devise 5 questions that their partner must answer.
- *Idea 2:* Get groups of students to develop test questions for an end of topic review, and then run it as a whole-class quiz.
- *Idea 3:* Introduce a 'question box' into each lesson and spend the last 5 minutes getting students to write down one question they want the teacher to cover next time.

#### 'Big' Questions

**Aim:** A questioning technique that is used at crucial check points along the lesson/ topic to confirm progress

- A Big Question is a pivotal question, one in which students must be able to answer before progressing to the next stage of the lesson or topic (Dylan Wiliam calls these 'hinge questions'). Multiple choice questions are one way of posing effective 'big' (hinge) questions.
- It should take students no longer than 2 minutes to answer and no more than 30 seconds for teachers to analyse.
- Students are asked to explain any incorrect responses.

#### Comment-Only Marking

**Aim:** To provide students with a focus for making progress that doesn't involve awarding grades

- Grades reward or punish student egos – they rarely lead to a commitment by the student to improve.
- Spend as much time commenting on the skills required to produce the work as you might on the content.
- Include two questions for students to engage with - questions to clarify, to challenge or to prompt more detail.
- Use a marking key with symbols to denote areas for 'fixing'.

# WHOLE-CLASS ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUES



## Testing Individuals as a Whole Group



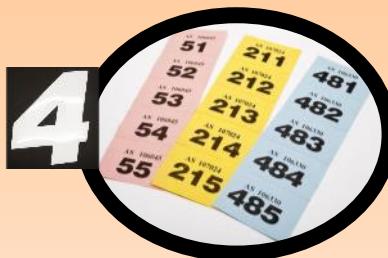
## **Names From A Hat**



## Traffic Light Cards



## **Thumbs Up — Thumbs Down**



## Raffle Tickets

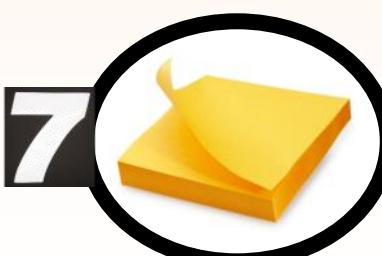


# **One Sentence Summary**

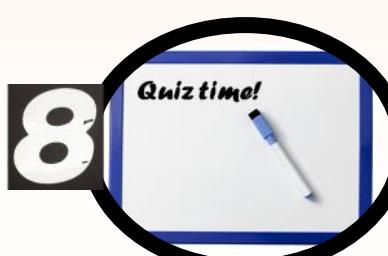


# Random Number Picker

([www.classtools.net](http://www.classtools.net))



# **Post-It Notes**



## **Mini-Wipeboards**

Spot-Quizzes

In 1996, the celebrated educationalist Bruce Tuckman wrote an influential paper entitled '*Using Spotquizzes as an Incentive to Motivate Procrastinators to Study*'.

Tuckman defines a spotquiz as a mini-test, composed of 5-7 questions that is set for students at the beginning of each lesson. The spotquiz covers material from the previous session (or sessions) to which the current lesson is related.

The term ‘procrastination’ often refers to people who think of reasons not to do something. In this case, it refers to students who resist or reject the need to take control of their own learning (self-regulation). This may have several causes: low self-belief in one’s capability, external factors impinging on the student, apathy induced by a habit of blaming others for one’s current situation, or low motivation due to the lack of an immediate reward for engaging in learning.

Tuckman found that teachers who use regular spotquizzes with *high procrastinators* (in college students) increases student motivation, desire to achieve and actual performance to a much greater extent than the setting of homework assignments.

Tuckman summarises by saying: "For those students who have a marked tendency to procrastinate, incentive motivation would appear to provide the needed inducement to self-regulate. Regular testing of assigned material appeared to be a necessary stimulus for causing serious and timely studying by those students who, when on their own, have a marked tendency to procrastinate".

## PEER ASSESSMENT

Giving another student feedback on their work is not easy. It needs to be approached with care and delicacy. These peer assessment guides have been adapted from [www.teachingessentials.co.uk](http://www.teachingessentials.co.uk) – they provide a useful rubric for conducting peer assessment.

## Perfect Peer-Assessment



www

### What Went Well

- Give your partner a positive comment
- What did they do well? What did they enjoy the most?



### Even Better If...

- What could your partner do to improve their work?
- Give them clear and honest feedback about what to improve



### Next Steps...

- Select one thing for your partner to improve on
- Give them a specific target for the next piece of work

**Tips:**

- Be positive and helpful when commenting on your partner's work
- Be as detailed as you can with each comment
- Use your partner's work to justify and evidence your comment
- If you are writing action points for your partner, write them as detailed sentences

**Sentence Stems:** Students will need guidance on how to peer assess another student's work. Follow this simple framework – again, adapted from an idea at [www.teachingessentials.co.uk](http://www.teachingessentials.co.uk). You can get students practising how to use these sentences in a mock peer task as a way of getting them into the habit of giving each other feedback.

## Peer-Assessment Starters

**Use these sentence starters when you are assessing someone else's work**



www

### What Went Well

- |                                   |                                  |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| • The things you did well were... | You should be very proud of...   |
| • I feel you did well with...     | The best part of your work is... |



### Even Better If...

- |   |                            |
|---|----------------------------|
| • To improve your work you need to...   | In future you might...     |
| • To make this even better you could... | You could go further by... |



### Next Steps...

- |                               |                                    |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| • Your next step should be... | The one thing I would advise is... |
| • I would focus on...         | Why not try...                     |

## Try This!

Mike Gershon's Assessment for Learning Guide (2013) offers teachers a smorgasbord of peer assessment techniques:

**Envoy:** Divide the class into groups and give each one a separate set of resources and topic to prepare. Groups elect envoys to work around the other groups teaching them the topic they have prepared in their own group.

**Peer Observers:** With group activities, nominate a member from each group to act as a peer observer. Give them a brief and a simple checklist to structure their observations, and then ask them to feedback on what they see and hear - if you want feedback on specific skills or discussion points, make these part of the checklist. Ask observers to give feedback to: (i) the group (ii) the whole class only; (iii) both the group and the whole class. You can also ask observers to set goals for each group member.

## It's No Democracy!

Dylan Wiliam (2011) makes it clear that it is the teacher's **given responsibility to set the criteria** for the student's success—it is not for the students to dictate this. He writes: "It is important to note that developing learning intentions and success criteria with students is most definitely not a democratic process. The teacher is in a privileged position with respect to the subject being taught and knows more about the subject than the students do, and it would be an abdication of the teacher's responsibilities to let whatever the students feel should be valued be adopted as the learning intentions" (Wiliam, 2011, *Embedded Formative Assessment*, p59). Wiliam does however state that **discussion is crucial** – allowing students the opportunity to talk to the teacher and to others about the meaning of the criteria is essential in the process of clarifying their understanding of what is expected.

## SELF-ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUES

### Sexy Self-Assessment

*It is important to be honest when you self-assess your work. Follow these steps to master the skills of self-assessment.*



#### I Know / I Need to Know

- Explain what you have learnt from the lesson or topic
- Explain what you still need to learn more about

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#### What Went Well

- What did you do really well in your work – pick only the positives
- What single thing stands out for you?



#### Even Better If...

- What could you improve about your work?
- Be honest and describe what specific aspects need to be worked on

*Tips:*

- Be as detailed as you can with each comment

Adapted from [www.teachingessentials.co.uk](http://www.teachingessentials.co.uk)

### Work on Improving!

#### Evaluation



Does it make a difference whether feedback is given orally or in writing?

**Boulet, Simard & De Melo (1990)** compared three groups of Canadian music students learning to write their major scales.

*Method:*

Each group did not differ from the other in terms of musical knowledge & previous achievements. Group 1 - given written feedback, a list of weaknesses, and a work plan

Group 2 - given oral feedback on the errors made plus a chance to work on improvement in class

Group 3 - given no feedback

*Results:*

Group 2 scored significantly more highly on a re-test of their major scales than either Group 1 or Group 3

*Conclusion:*

Giving the feedback orally or in writing is far less important than giving students **an opportunity in class to use the feedback to improve their work**.

### Including All

Throwing questions out to the class is a favourite way of testing student understanding. But rather than accepting the first available answer as an indication of what has been learned, get into the habit of getting a number of answers, always checking with others whether they agree or disagree before revealing the actual answer.

### Self-Assessment and Peer Marking: Practical Strategies

- Students are given sheets outlining criteria for a task and then apply these.
- Students write down their own criteria (individuals/pairs/groups?) prior to task.
- Students (individuals/pairs/groups?) make presentation to class and invite comments.
- Teacher and student mark work independently - each proposes three amendments; they discuss the proposals.
- A poster of self-evaluation questions can be put on the classroom wall.
- Students do a test and make up an answer key (in a group) >>> other students use the answer key >>> discussion between students using key and those who made it up.
- Whole class or large group together - students present a piece of work for comments.
- **TRAFFIC LIGHTS: ( Peer-Assessment )** Students read each other's writing and apply colours: **green** means explanation better than assessor's; **amber** means it's of similar quality; **red** means assessor feel his/her answer is better. Then discussion of differences
- **TRAFFIC LIGHTS: ( Self-Assessment )** Pupil reads questions and marks each one **red**, **amber** or **green**. **Green** means that pupil is confident; **amber** means uncertain; **red** means that help is needed.
- Documentation given to students to record progress against established criteria.



## DIFFERENTIATED ASSESSMENT – AN ASSESSMENT MATRIX

One of the many benefits of attending a Newbubbles training event is that delegates get to work on and takeaway new tools and activities for immediate use in their classroom.

Delegates attending our ‘*Bringing Theory Alive*’ event in 2014 used a **differentiation matrix** comprising two categories of task (a) the **task content** (e.g. speaking) and (b) the **task structure** (e.g. pair). Putting these together in a grid allows teachers to unlock their creative thinking and generate an incredible range of exciting and novel activities / assessment tasks that can be used to deliver any topic. A ‘must-do’ for those difficult or sticky curriculum areas that are giving you cause for concern!

*This is a great teaching team exercise for your in-house CPD day - Why not give it a go?*

**Health & Safety** is the theme here, a common section of the syllabus in many subjects, but traditionally tired and uninspiring. It doesn’t have to be this way – as our delegates soon found by collaborating together to create this health & safety activity-assessment grid - 24 new, interesting and inventive tasks that can be deployed in any health & safety session whatever the subject!

### Health & Safety – Activity & Assessment Matrix

	INDIVIDUAL	PAIR	GROUP	WHOLE CLASS
SPEAKING	Provide images and true-false statements for students to answer	Develop and recite a poem about some aspect of health & safety	Show a picture of hazards/health risks and ask: “What’s wrong with this?”	Debating Competition: Give H&S scenario and budget and ask two teams to debate their solutions
READING	Give out list of logos, signs, symbols & badges for individuals to identify/match	Pairs of students have to identify faults with an erroneous risk assessment	Quiz on H&S using hand held voting technology, ‘Who Wants to be a Millionaire’ or ‘Blockbusters’	Marketplace: students in groups are given information to collect/ disseminate to rest of class for a later test on ‘whole’ information.
WRITING	Write a letter in response to a health & safety complaint	Put a list of health & safety actions in list of priority	Create a guide that outlines safe working practices for a particular role(s) in a given vocational area	Create a gapped handout where students have to fill in the missing gaps
DRAWING	Draw a risk or hazard that is present in a particular vocational setting/office	Create a new safety sign for a particular setting	Create a poster for children to understand basic safety messages in a given setting	Pictionary: guess the symbol from a drawing given by one of the students. Team exercise.
DOING	Carry out a risk assessment of a vocational setting which has a number of simulated risks/hazards	First Aid: Put your partner in the recovery position	Carry out a roleplay of a health & safety incident/ or a manager interviewing a worker about a H&S breach	Leg Runaround. Set up 4 stations (legs). Teacher reads statements and students decide on which leg (station) it related to. Legs could be topics.
TECHNOLOGY	Create a short video podcast using a mobile phone giving a health and safety tip working in a particular vocational setting	Film a short demonstration of another student using the correct PPE	Devise a ‘video report’ of a health & safety incident with key ‘witnesses’	Students participate in an online forum/wiki about a particular health & safety issue

### In the Spotlight — ‘Big Questions’

Dylan Wiliam (2011) highlights the use of BIG questions as essential tools for finding out what students have learned.

Procedure: *The Multiple Choice Method*

- The teacher asks students to hold up one, two, three, four or five fingers according to whether they think the answer is A, B, C, D or E (requiring every student to engage in this process, to think about the question and give a response).
- If every student has responded correctly, the lesson moves on; if not, the teacher revisits the topic in new ways.
- If there is wide variation in answers, students teach each other until everyone knows why one answer is correct (peer learning)

Devise these questions before your course has started!

Example Question: after teaching students about global warming, a teacher might ask: “What can we do to preserve the ozone layer?” and offer the students five alternatives:

- A. Reduce the amount of carbon dioxide produced by cars and factories**
- B. Reduce the greenhouse effect**
- C. Stop cutting down the rainforests**
- D. Limit the numbers of cars that can be used**
- E. Properly dispose of air-conditioners and fridges**

## AFL AND METACOGNITION:

### What is metacognition?

Most teachers are aware that if learners reflect on *how they learn*, they become better learners. The ability to think about one's thinking is what neuroscientists call **metacognition**.

Metacognition is not a 'scientific' or educational fad - it plays an important role in everyday life. As students gain awareness of who they are, what they like, who they admire, what they feel vulnerable to, etc, this 'inside' knowledge of their own mental state starts to influence and drive their future decision-making. Metacognition therefore has a profound impact on how students think about their world and how they prepare to learn.

When teachers cultivate students' abilities to reflect on, monitor, and evaluate their learning strategies, students become more self-reliant, flexible, and productive. Students improve their capacity to weigh choices and evaluate options, particularly when answers are not obvious. When students have difficulty understanding, those who have had practice developing their metacognitive skills come to rely on their reflective strategies to diagnose and fix difficulties.

### Strategies for Developing Metacognition:

- The classroom climate is marketed as a 'growth climate' where everyone can do well.
- Past schooling achievements, especially where students have not done well, are consigned to the past.
- Effort is praised and rewarded rather than absolute performance.
- Take time at the end of a challenging task to explore what 'confused' students.
- Teach students about their brain, their memory and the importance of practice in learning new things.
- Make students aware that learning something new is tough and does cause anxiety, but this is both natural and temporary.
- Provide opportunities to reflect on (1) key parts of the course (2) how learners are feeling about learning and (3) what learners are doing to learn new things. The question stem: "*How has my thinking changed about [X] changed since the beginning of the course*" is particularly useful.
- Ask learners to keep simple learner logs or records of how they are learning.
- Set learners tasks with moral dilemmas that require them to engage in discussion and challenge their own biases and belief-systems.
- Asking learners to 'think aloud' and report how they are approaching a task (including problems).

### Action Learning Sets - Planning for Reflection Time



### Action Learning Sets (ALS)

- are small groups of students who come together in a discussion to reflect on one or more key aspects of their learning.

#### Procedure:

- Use once per half-term, set an hour, ask students to plan for 4 x 15 minute questions the week before, and ensure at least two are on *how* the student is learning. Images or journals can be effective preparation aids for ALSs.

### Two Processes

Connie Malamed in the *eLearning Coach*, identifies two processes that support metacognition:

- 1) the knowledge of cognition
- 2) the regulation of cognition.

1. Knowledge of cognition has three components:

- knowledge of the factors that influence one's own performance;
- knowing different types of strategies to use for learning;
- knowing what strategy to use for a specific learning situation.

Each of these three areas need to be actively considered in schemes of work.

2. Regulation of cognition involves:

- setting goals and planning;
- monitoring and controlling learning;
- evaluating one's own regulation (assessing results and strategies used).

To what extent are these three areas explicitly featured in your scheme of work?

### Using 'Wrappers'

In *Edutopia*, **Marilyn-Price Mitchell** defines a "wrapper" as a "short intervention that surrounds an existing activity and integrates a metacognitive practice".

Before a lecture, for example, give a few tips about active listening. Following the lecture, ask students to write down three key ideas from the lecture.

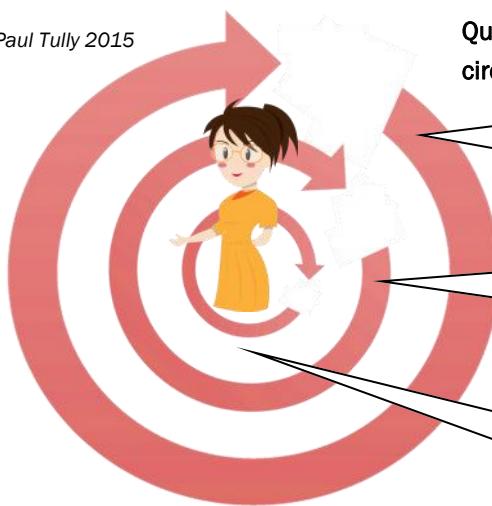
Afterward, share what you believe to be the three key ideas and ask students to self-check how closely theirs matched your intended goals.

When used often, this activity not only increases learning, but also improves metacognitive monitoring skills.

<https://www.edutopia.org/users/marilyn-price-mitchell-phd>

## Workshop Suggestions for Quality Managers

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### Questions for teachers to ask students as they circulate workshops, studios and laboratories.

**Early Walks:** Teacher sets task(s) and circulates  
What will you be doing first? Talk me through...?  
What do you anticipate to be the biggest challenge?  
How have you planned to do this?

**Mid-Task Walks:** Teacher is aware that students are working at different paces and complexity.  
What next? What else could you do? Why did you...?  
If X happened, what then? Have you tried...?

**Final Walks:** Teacher inspects final products  
How did you find...? How does this compare to...?  
What did you enjoy the most? Any surprises when...?  
Where was it most difficult? What did you do to...?

## NEWBUBBLES CPD EVENTS: 2016

### Newbubbles — Experts in Further Education!

Date	Event	Location	Trainer
15.10.15	Achieving Grade 1 in Employability Skills*	Croydon	Bradley Lightbody
20.10.15	Lesson Observation & Feedback Skills: The New Common Inspection Framework 2015*	Croydon	Bradley Lightbody
10.11.15	Achieving Grade 1 in Equality, Diversity & Welfare: The New Common Inspection Framework 2015*	Watford	Trevor Gordon
12.11.15	Achieving Grade 1 in English & Maths*	Manchester	Terry Sharrock
19.11.15	Outstanding Assessment Practices*	Manchester	Andry Anastasiou
24.11.15	Achieving Grade 1 in Leadership & Management: The New Common Inspection Framework 2015*	Watford	Richard Moore HMI
26.11.15	Achieving Grade 1 in Motor Vehicle*	Croydon	Dave Baber
01.12.15	Embedding Stretch & Challenge: Practical Approaches for FE Teachers*	Portsmouth	Tony Davis
03.12.15	Supporting Learners with Mental health Difficulties*	Croydon	Gareth Cronin
08.12.15	Achieving Grade 1 in Hospitality & Catering*	Croydon	Richard Moore HMI

\*Cost of this event is £169.00 + VAT

To book yourself onto an event, please e-mail [gradeonetraining@newbubbles.com](mailto:gradeonetraining@newbubbles.com).

If you can offer a training specialism and your background is in further education, we would like to talk to you. E-mail us at [gradeonetraining@newbubbles.com](mailto:gradeonetraining@newbubbles.com).



OFSTED Ready

### Feedback: Tips

In 1996 **Pat Tunstall** and **Caroline Gipps** developed a typology of teacher feedback by recording and classifying the feedback given by teachers to their students. They classified feedback as either:

**evaluative** – involving a value judgment

or

**descriptive** – describing what the student said or did, and providing guidance for improvement.

Evaluative feedback involves a judgment by the teacher based on implicit or explicit norms.

Evaluative feedback may take the form of:

- **Approval:** "That's a good essay." "You've done well."
- **Disapproval:** "That's not good enough."
- **Reward:** Gold stars
- **Punishment:** "Write it out again."

Descriptive feedback:

- focuses on identified learning outcomes and makes specific reference to the student's achievement.
- looks towards improvement.

An example of descriptive feedback:

- "That's a good introduction because you have covered the main points we discussed at the beginning. Now ... which points do you think you should expand on?"

An emphasis on evaluative feedback can affect how students feel about themselves. It can make the good students feel better (and possibly complacent) and the less able students feel worse (and the more sure that they will never be able to succeed).

Most teacher feedback interactions observed by Tunstall and Gipps were at the evaluative end of the continuum.

Ask teachers to:

- Describe the actual performance
- Encourage the student to self-assess their performance against the standard expected
- Set an improvement action

Further Reading

Next issue ...

How to Use Assessment for Learning

Mike Gershon (2013)

Embedding English Skills