

Figure 4.8: In-Class Formative Assessment Strategies for Student Action

Strategy One: Provide a Clear and Understandable Vision of the Learning Target

Share with your students the CCSS content standard cluster, learning targets, and prior-knowledge-understanding expectations in advance of teaching the lesson or unit, giving the assignment, or doing the activity. Provide students with scoring guides written in student-friendly language. More importantly, develop and design scoring criteria and rubrics for problems assigned in class.

Strategy Two: Use Examples and Models of Strong and Weak Work

Use models of strong and weak student work—anonymous student work, work from life beyond school, and your own work. Begin with work that demonstrates strengths and weaknesses related to problems students will commonly experience, especially the problems or tasks that require student demonstrations of understanding. Ask students to discuss with peers the strengths and weaknesses of given solutions or strategies used to obtain a solution to problems posed in class or on a common assessment instrument.

Strategy Three: Offer Regular Descriptive Feedback

Offer descriptive feedback instead of grades on work that is for practice during and after the unit. Descriptive feedback should reflect student strengths and weaknesses with respect to the specific learning targets they are trying to achieve in a given assignment. Feedback is most effective when it is timely and identifies what students are doing right as well as what they need to work on next to act on that feedback.

Strategy Four: Teach Students to Self-Assess and Set Goals

Self-assessment is a necessary part of learning, not an add-on that we do if we have the time or the “right” type of students. Self-assessment includes asking students to do the following:

- Identify their strengths and areas for improvement for specific learning targets throughout the unit
- Offer descriptive feedback to classmates
- Use your feedback, feedback from other students, or their own self-assessment to identify what they need to work on and set goals for future learning and then take action on those goals

Source: Adapted from Stiggins et al., 2007, pp. 42–46.