Formative Assessment – Collect evidence

[Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority. The logo for the Victoria State Government. Formative Assessment – Collect evidence.]

NARRATOR: Hi, I'm Pam. I will be presenting this video about how to collect evidence.

[A flow chart with three stages: Plan, Assess, Review. The Plan stage lists "describe a learning continuum," "develop a formative assessment rubric," and "design a task," unpacking parts 1 and 2 of the Guide to Formative Assessment Rubrics of the Victorian Curriculum, F to 10. The Assess stage lists "collect evidence," "moderate," and "interpret and uses evidence," unpacking part 3 of the guide. The Review stage lists "improve rubrics," "refine learning continuum," and "refine task," which is part of review and refine for best practice.]

NARRATOR: Collect evidence is the first video within the Assess section of the formative assessment videos. This video relates to part three of the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority Guide to Formative Assessment Rubrics. When it is time to collect evidence, you should already have a task and administration guidelines matched to a learning continuum and a rubric. The purpose of this video is to discuss the collection of formative assessment data.

When collecting evidence, the teacher assesses the student's performance using the formative assessment task and associated rubric. The rubric identifies the actions within the performance that should be noted and provides teachers with a consistent way of coding the performance using the different quality criteria. Rubrics can be used to record teacher judgements, irrespective of whether the judgements are being made during the performance, as often happens when students say or do something, like an oral presentation or a physical skill, or after the performance, as typically happens when students write something or make something, like an essay or a product.

[An example rubric design, with a learning continuum along the top and four subsequent phases. Each phase corresponds to a set of quality criteria. Additionally, below the continuum is a column for organising elements, matched up with columns labelled "Action" and “Insufficient evidence”. All four phases and their respective criteria are highlighted.]

NARRATOR: Here is a learning continuum and rubric for Digital Technologies. For each student, you need to decide the quality with which they have performed each action. Each action has its own row within the rubric, and the criteria within that row describe the different qualities possible for that action. They are written as thresholds of learning and, therefore, are not a checklist - so a judgment needs to be made. A student at a higher criterion is assumed to have achieved or surpassed the lower criteria.

When using rubrics to guide judgements, teachers should use evidence that can be observed - what students do, say, make or write - to make a judgment as to the criterion which best describes the quality with which the student performed each action. Remember, that assessment is probabilistic and you should not labour over minor lapses in student demonstration of each skill. You are making an on-balance judgment across the task. For example, if during an English task, a student has made an error in one sentence but not in any of the others, then the teacher may decide that this error was the result of carelessness rather than a lack of skill. The overall judgment captures the most probable description of what the student has achieved. The on-balance judgement should capture what the student can achieve without assistance from anyone else, unless the criteria specifically includes reference to assistance.

Recording evidence in a format that is easily accessible is a challenge and teachers typically develop their own way of recording evidence using rubrics. There are two main formative uses within the classroom. The first is giving feedback to students and the second is planning, teaching and learning. Both of these require a specific record of each criterion the student has achieved. It is not sufficient to record only an overall score or a number of achieved criteria because this will not enable detailed feedback or planning to take place. The method of recording you choose should also give you a way to see patterns in the class to inform future teaching and learning for a whole class. For example, using individual sheets for each student is helpful for providing feedback to students, but it is not helpful for identifying trends to inform future teaching and learning decisions. This means that you might need an alternative way of recording, such as a spreadsheet, to allow patterns to be identified.

[Several criteria under the four phases are shaded, as well as one of the boxes under “Insufficient evidence”.]

NARRATOR: In this example, the teacher has recorded the evidence on a copy of the rubric. This is a useful format to provide student feedback. Notice that the criteria that have been achieved by the student have been shaded. In the first action, the first two criteria were achieved. Although the lower criterion is shaded, 1.1, as well as the higher criterion, 1.2, the rubrics are considered to be cumulative and the lower criterion could be assumed. This is the same for the fourth action. For the third action, the teacher assessed the student as showing insufficient evidence, meaning that there was not enough evidence to make an on-balance judgement that the student could achieve the criterion 'Displays acquired data on a digital device'.

Now you are ready to decide on a recording method and assess your students using this method. Use your task and administration guide to plan your evidence collection.

[More information available at vcaa.vic.gov.au. Authorised and published by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority.]