Using formative assessment rubrics in Critical and Creative Thinking

Transcript

(GENTLE MUSIC PLAYS)

In 2019 the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority partnered with the Assessment Research Centre at the University of Melbourne to provide professional learning for teachers to strengthen their understanding and use formative assessment rubrics.

**Why use formative assessment rubrics?**

This could actually come at the start of a unit to assess what students' knowledge and understanding is at before we begin. And so it's formative in a sense of, "This is what you need to do to improve, "but also be diagnostic, so that I know, as a teacher, where my students are at before we even start the unit.

**What were some considerations when writing or using the rubrics?**

Some of the terminology that we thought we'd kind of ironed down and got it really clear and really objective wasn't. And even as we discussed it today when we met, as different teachers we recognised that we'd had the same issues in interpretation, so that was really pleasing. And we've gone back and made some tweaks to some of the wording in the rubric.

And so what we did today is we just came back and we just said, "OK, let's think about this more simply," and "What's it actually going to look like in the classroom?" So it was more, today, about focussing on, "How are we going to use this as an assessment tool?" And once we looked at it from that perspective, we could see some of the errors or some of the things that we hadn't thought about clearly the first time around and we were able to go back and make some changes, thinking more about how this is going to look in the classroom for our students. So coming at it with more of a student perspective. And once we sort of put that hat on, that's when, I think, we made significant progress with our rubric today.

I remember when I was working on action 3, and I got to 3.1 and I got to 3.3 in the rubric and I started marking and I looked at it and I said, "The students are getting 3.3 but they're not getting 3.1." And I said, "They need to be flipped," straightaway. And today, when we came back, all the teachers that were using it, we all said the same thing.

We're like, "Yeah, this is a completely different skill." We thought it was a simpler skill when we wrote it, but we realised through assessment that that's a much more complex skill. And we recognised today that not only did it need to be at the top of the rubric, we thought that wasn't even complex enough. We actually took it out and we said, "That's actually a completely separate skill." So those little things in the rubric only sort of showed up through the assessment process.

**How does formative assessment impact student learning?**

Sometimes students have the knowledge, and by assessing their critical and creative thinking, you're rewarding their thinking. Like, you can actually assess it, it's just that sometimes students can't express themselves, you know, in traditional kind of forms through writing or verbally or whatever it might be. That was really powerful.

As I went through the teaching process, I actually taught it with two classes and it was really great because I could work out, as I went along, some potential problems that arose with the task.

And it was really interesting to see some of the students pick up on the problems and the students and I would often have that time in the exact same moment where we would realise where there was a little bit of a flaw, either with the task or with the assessment rubric.

But that was really powerful. And the students actually really enjoyed that and it was a part of their learning process. And their feedback to me was not one of sort of being troubled by it, but they really sort of encouraged it and they said, "This is really great, 'cause you get to learn as well." So they were really open to it and they liked that idea of looking at a task, looking at the assessment rubric and, you know, making improvements together and making suggestions.