Using formative assessment in English –Secondary

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?

In the curriculum there's actually quite a big step between some of the each of the levels, and then also within levels, some of the terminology is quite difficult to understand at times.

So therefore, the rubric actually allows teachers to delve in and understand what those content descriptions really mean and then break it down further into the little parts that they need to teach within that content description to stretch students and grow them across levels.

So the rubric actually really deconstructs what needs to happen and therefore helps them really target and move forward in what they want to achieve.

Out of my class of 25, I might have five who can sort of move on. But it's those kids who are just stuck at a very prosaic level approaching an essay that I'm concerned about.

Have you talked about how this sort of generating a response with big ideas part is something that we probably teach every time and maybe we don't need to be teaching every time, certainly not to every kid.

Having this as an early test that is not attached to their knowledge of the bigger text might inform our practice because...

Yeah, we can say, "You guys actually already know how to do this," provided you've got the background knowledge of the text itself.

What were some consideration when writing or using the rubrics?

Another key thing is to have a range of texts that you're showing because students are going to engage with those texts in very different ways.

Students take information in, and how do you assess their reading without assessing their capacity to write or their capacity to speak if you're doing it a different way?

And so one of the challenges that my group and I have found in constructing this rubric is, what are the elements of reading that we're analysing?

What are the elements of writing that... And so the teasing out of those two interwoven

skills is difficult and challenging. But I think if we can separate them out for students, it makes the process that they're going through much clearer and hopefully therefore much more manageable.

How does formative assessment impact student learning?

A challenging aspect of formative assessment in English, particularly at the higher end, is they write a lot and so it automatically slows down the process of being able to give feedback because you have to read a page and a half and you can't do that in class right then and there.

However, again, this rubric seemed to make us able to go to the parts of the essay that we were looking for quite quickly and find whether it was there or not without having to read the whole page.

So that was great.

And we love our rubric today because we've been looking at students' work samples that... Oh, God, they haven't written much and all these things. But we've been looking for what they have done instead of nitpicking what they haven't.

- Yeah.

- And that's been a bit of a shift for me.

Yep.

Teachers would mark very carefully what they map their students onto the rubric.

For senior students in schools I work in, we actually share that rubric explicitly with the kids and then over the next few weeks when they're focusing on their writing, it becomes a common goal. And the kids can actually go, "Well, actually, I know that I'm at this level. These are the things I can do. I'm going to be working on this, and actually I'm going to try to get to two or three steps."

So they're not limited by, "Oh, this is your next goal, this is the next step."

Here is the rubric. What can you achieve in various aspects around that?