

# Formative Learning

by  
Dr. Connie Kamm



The formative assessment process includes the following components that involve both educators and students in a cycle of learning:

1. Educators identify and unpack standards and establish a learning progression as well as models of what the final learning outcomes look like.
2. Educators pre-assess their students to determine each student's level of mastery of concepts and skills in relation to the determined standards.
3. Students and educators collaboratively generate specific success criteria that are in alignment with the standards.
4. Students determine their personal learning goals, and through a series of learning experiences, they demonstrate their mastery of concepts and skills stated in the standards.
5. Based on the evidence of student learning, educators give frequent, focused feedback that guides students' learning and builds their confidence as they master new learning.
6. Within this learning cycle, educators provide ample opportunities for students to self-assess their progress based on the specific success criteria.
7. Students are also provided with the opportunity to peer-assess using the success criteria. Educators provide clear guidelines for peer-assessment, only requiring students to give feedback to one another on criteria that the students are prepared to address.
8. To more thoroughly guide student learning, educators give specific and timely feedback throughout the process. In addition, educators employ a variety of research-grounded instructional practices providing learners with alternate ways to master the concepts and skills identified in the standards.
9. Students are given many opportunities to apply the standards-based success criteria as they revise their work according to the feedback they have received. One major component of formative learning is providing students with multiple opportunities for success.
10. Educators assess student learning in order to determine next steps in the learning cycle.

## Just Try

**Try,  
Try more.  
Try one more time.  
Try it a little differently.  
Try it again tomorrow.  
Try and ask for help.  
Try to find someone who has done it.  
Try to determine what is working.  
Just keep trying.**

**From the University Teaching  
Hospital School for Special  
Needs Students  
Lusaka, Zambia**