



Assessment For Learning: Moving Beyond the Strategies

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What Does *Assessment for Learning* Mean to You?



Moving Beyond the Strategies

- Recent research research in England found that teachers in an Assessment for Learning project often reflected what they called the “letter” of AfL, focusing on the surface techniques, rather than the “spirit”, based on a deep understanding of the principles underlying the practices. Only about 20 percent of the teachers in this “Learning How to Learn” study were using AfL in ways that were designed to help students develop as learners.

ASSESSMENT AS LEARNING

Using Classroom Assessment
to Maximize Student Learning

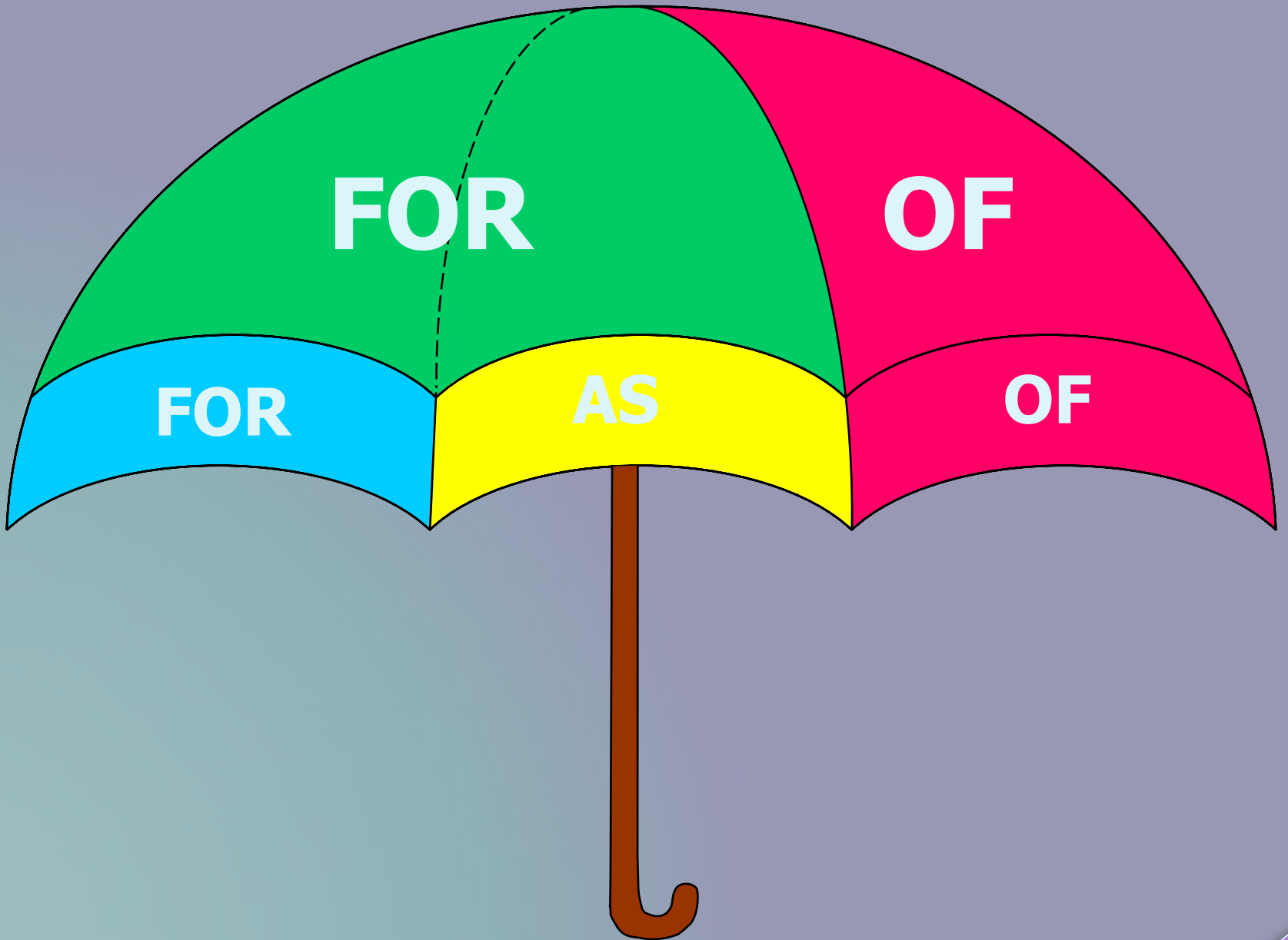
Second Edition

Lorna M. Earl



Purposes of Classroom Assessment

- ◉ **Assessment for learning**
- ◉ **Assessment as learning**
- ◉ **Assessment of learning**
- ◉ **Balance and Tensions in Assessment Purposes**



FOR

OF

FOR

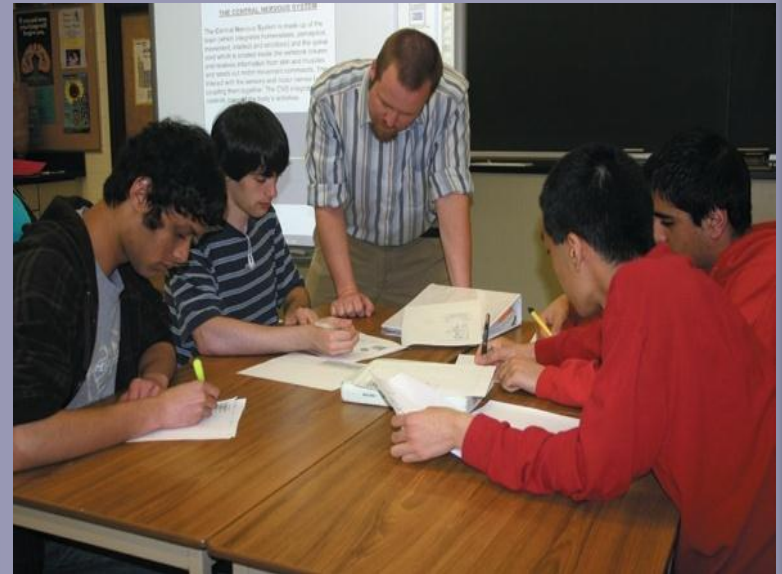
AS

OF

Assessment for Learning

“Assessment for learning is any assessment for which the first priority in its design and practice is to help teachers promote students’ learning.”

Earl, 2003



Assessment as Learning

“Assessment as learning is a metacognitive process in which students take ownership for improving their own learning. It involves students setting learning goals as well as monitoring, reflecting upon, and adjusting their own learning, often in response to feedback from the teacher and their peers.”

Earl, 2003



Assessment of Learning

Assessment of learning is assessment used to confirm what students know, to demonstrate whether or not the students have met the standards and/or show how they are placed in relation to others.

Earl, 2003



3 Powerful Insights about How People Learn

(Brandsford et al. 1999)

- ★ People come to learning with preconceptions about how the world works. If their initial understanding is not engaged, they may fail to grasp the new concepts and information that are taught or may learn them superficially and revert to their preconceptions in real situations.

- ◉ Jojo Story

Using Assessment to Identify What They Believe To Be True

- ◉ Prior Knowledge
- ◉ Preconceptions
- ◉ Misconceptions
- ◉ The “Case of the Pool Table”

3 Powerful Insights about How People Learn

(Brandsford et al. 1999)



To develop competence in an area of inquiry, people must:

- have a deep foundation of factual knowledge
- understand facts and ideas in the context of a conceptual framework
- organize knowledge in ways that facilitate retrieval and application

Periodic Table

Periodic Table of the Elements

<http://chemistry.about.com>

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About Chemistry

1A																	8A				
1 H (1.008)																	2 He (4.0026)				
2 Li (6.941)	3 Be (9.0122)											6 C (12.011)	7 N (14.0064)	8 O (15.999)	9 F (18.9984)	10 Ne (20.1798)					
11 Na (22.98976928)	12 Mg (24.304)	13 Al (26.9815386)	14 Si (28.0855)	15 P (30.973762)	16 S (32.06)	17 Cl (35.453)	18 Ar (39.948)							29 Cu (63.546)	30 Zn (65.38)	31 Ga (69.723)	32 Ge (72.63)	33 As (74.9216)	34 Se (78.96)	35 Br (79.904)	36 Kr (83.798)
19 K (39.0983)	20 Ca (40.078)	21 Sc (44.955912)	22 Ti (47.88)	23 V (50.9415)	24 Cr (51.9961)	25 Mn (54.938045)	26 Fe (55.845)	27 Co (58.933195)	28 Ni (58.6934)	45 Rh (102.9055)	46 Pd (106.3676)	47 Ag (107.8682)	48 Cd (112.414)	49 In (114.818)	50 Sn (118.710)	51 Sb (121.757)	52 Te (127.6)	53 I (126.905)	54 Xe (131.29)		
37 Rb (85.4678)	38 Sr (87.62)	39 Y (88.905848)	40 Zr (91.224)	41 Nb (92.90638)	42 Mo (95.94)	43 Tc (98)	44 Ru (101.07)	45 Rh (102.9055)	46 Pd (106.3676)	77 Ir (226.107)	78 Pt (200.59)	79 Au (196.96657)	80 Hg (200.59)	81 Tl (204.3833)	82 Pb (207.2)	83 Bi (208.9804)	84 Po (209)	85 At (210)	86 Rn (222)		
55 Cs (132.90545196)	56 Ba (137.327)	57-71 Lanthanides	72 Hf (178.49)	73 Ta (180.94788)	74 W (183.84)	75 Re (186.207)	76 Os (190.23)	77 Ir (192.222)	78 Pt (195.084)	110 Df (168.9343)	111 Rh (186.207)	112 Cn (285)	113 Uut (288)	114 Uuq (289)	115 Uup (289)	116 Uuh (289)	117 Uuq (289)	118 Uuo (289)			
87 Fr (223)	88 Ra (226)																				
Lanthanides		57 La (138.90547)	58 Ce (140.12)	59 Pr (140.90766)	60 Nd (144.24)	61 Pm (145)	62 Sm (150.36)	63 Eu (151.964)	64 Gd (157.25)	65 Tb (158.92532)	66 Dy (162.50015)	67 Ho (164.93032)	68 Er (167.2593)	69 Tm (168.93032)	70 Yb (173.05448)	71 Lu (174.967)					
Actinides		89 Ac (227)	90 Th (232.0377)	91 Pa (231.03688)	92 U (238.02891)	93 Np (237)	94 Pu (244)	95 Am (243)	96 Cm (247)	97 Bk (247)	98 Cf (251)	99 Es (252)	100 Fm (257)	101 Md (258)	102 No (259)	103 Lr (260)					
Alkali Metal	Alkaline Earth	Transition Metal		Halogen	Noble Gas	Non Metal	Rare Earth	Semi Metal	Transition Metal												

Using Assessment to Make Connections

- ◉ Curriculum As Visible Targets For Learning
- ◉ Plan Learning; Plan Assessment and Expect the Unexpected
- ◉ Differentiation
- ◉ "The Case of The Literacy Hour"

Rubrics and Exemplars

- Clear criteria
- Tools for students to monitor their own progress
- Anchors or exemplars to *show* students what quality looks like.

Using Assessment to Differentiate Learning

From “Deficit” Explanations Of Diversity To “Inclusive” Strategies For All

Deficit Paradigm

What’s wrong with the child
Focus on deficits
Prescriptive
Diagnoses diversity
Tolerates differences
Reliance on external expert
Professionalized

Inclusion Paradigm

What’s wrong with the environment
Focus on strategies
Malleable
Values diversity
Embraces differences
Teacher/parent/student as expert
Personalized

(adapted from Philpott et al., 2004)

Emergent

Proficient

No practical experience. Dependent on rules.

Expects definitive answers. Some recognition of patterns. Limited experience. Still relies on rules.

Analytical. Locates and considers possible patterns. Has internalized the key dimensions so that they are automatic.

Uses analysis and synthesis. Sees the whole rather than aspects. Looks for links and patterns. Adjusts to adapt to the context.

Understands the context. Has a holistic grasp of relationships. Considers alternatives in an iterative way and integrates ideas into efficient solutions. Solves problems and makes ongoing adaptations automatically.

Stages in Growth from Emergent to Proficient

3 Powerful Insights about How People Learn

- A “metacognitive” approach to instruction can help people learn to take control of their own learning by defining learning goals and monitoring their own progress in achieving them.

- For students to be able to improve, they must develop the capacity to monitor the quality of their own work during actual production. This in turn requires that students possess an appreciation of what high quality work is, that they have the evaluative skill necessary for them to compare with some objectivity the quality of what they are producing in relation to the higher standard, and that they develop a store of tactics or moves which can be drawn upon to modify their own work.

- Sadler, 1989



Meta-cognition and Self-Regulation

- Human beings can:
 - reflect on their own thinking processes through internal conversations – monitoring their own understanding, predicting their performance, deciding what else they need to know, organizing and reorganizing ideas, checking for consistency between different pieces of information and drawing analogies that help them advance their understanding.
 - can stand back, monitor activities and make significant conscious and deliberate choices about their beliefs and their behaviour - learning and altering their responses based on new ideas or understanding.
 - *Perkins, 1995*

Becoming Meta-cognitive

- Like all complex learning, self-regulation requires years of practice, concentration, and coaching. It does not have a beginning and an end but rather continues to develop and to be honed across disciplines and contexts (Costa, 2006).
- And, it doesn't happen by chance. If students are to become meta-cognitive thinkers and problem solvers who can bring their talents and their knowledge to bear on their decisions and actions, they have to develop these skills of self-assessment and self-adjustment, so that they can manage and control their own learning.

Fostering Meta-cognition (Earl, 2003)

- ◉ Habits of Mind for Self-Regulated Thinking
- ◉ Examples of “What Good Work Looks Like”
- ◉ Real Involvement and Responsibility
- ◉ Targeted Feedback
- ◉ Discussion, Challenge and Reflection
- ◉ Practice, Practice, Practice
- ◉ An Environment of Emotional Safety

Habits of Mind: Self Regulation

Questions (for students and teachers)

- Am I aware of my own thinking about what I am trying to accomplish?
- Have I made a plan for what I want to accomplish?
- Have I collected all the resources for what I want to accomplish?
- Am I aware of how well I am doing and if I need to change any of my actions or attitudes?
- Am I evaluating how well this is going and what I would do differently next time?

What Good Work Looks Like: Writing Exemplar

English 12 Original Composition

Scale Point: 6

Comment

This paper was awarded a 6 because it illustrates a maturity of both content and style. Language is sophisticated. The topic is addressed in a nuanced and insightful manner.

The girl's dress was too small, and it itched. She hated dark colours, anyway. She sat, wedged between her mother and a fat third cousin who smelled like wet wool, in the third row of the funeral parlor. She smacked her gum loudly, and looked with twelve-year-old scorn at the assembled mourners. Her mother pinched her arm, and several old ladies rustled about in the broken silence to seek out the source of the disruptive and inappropriate chewing.

The girl grimaced at her mother, then stared determinedly ahead at the box that held what has once been her Grandmother McPhee. The girl had not liked her Grandmother McPhee particularly well, she had taken pleasure in scoffing at the old woman's failing memory, failing body, and pathetic offers of friendship. She had looked with dread on the obligatory semi-monthly visits to the nursing home where her grandmother was slowly languishing away. She had shrugged indifferently when she learned of her grandmother's death. She had put on a show of uncaring for her mother, who had looked at her with sympathy and put away the box of tissues. But inside, the girl was filled with a kind of horror.

When the time had come to leave for the funeral, the girl had announced first that she did not want to go, and second that she wanted to wear her jeans. Her mother, grim and determined, had manoevered her into an old, dark green dress that the late Grandmother McPhee had sent for the girl's birthday. The girl resented the intimacy of being encased in the relic.

After the moment of silence in the funeral parlor, an old lady the girl didn't know slowly hobbled her way up to the podium to speak. At the podium, the old woman asked for the lights to be lowered, and explained that she had prepared a slide show of photographs she had kept of Agnes McPhee over their 75 year friendship. The first slide was in black and white (and yellow with age), and depicted two girls, about twelve, standing in the snow grinning, with their arms around each other. The girl on the left was wearing a green dress, and was obviously proud of it.

The old woman at the podium met the eyes of the girl in the third row wearing the same dress. The girl's eyes filled with tears of regret, and of just understood loss. The old woman smiled kindly, with understanding, as if to say "she understood." For the first time, the girl understood, too. She squeezed against her mother, and was quiet .

6

The six paper is **superior** and may draw upon any number of factors, such as maturity of style, depth of discussion, effectiveness of argument, use of literary and/or rhetorical devices, sophistication of wit, or quality of imagination. This composition exhibits an effective writing style and a sophisticated use of language. Despite its clarity and precision, this paper need not be error-free.

5

The five paper is **proficient**. The composition displays some manipulation of language to achieve a desired effect and exhibits a clear sense of voice and of audience. Content is thoughtful and interesting. Vocabulary and sentence structure are varied and serve the writer's purpose successfully. Errors may be present, but are not distracting.

4

The four paper is clearly **adequate**. The composition conveys the writer's ideas, but without flair or strong control. Diction and syntax are usually appropriate, but lack variety. Structure, regardless of type, is predictable and relatively mechanical. The paper shows a clear sense of the writer's purpose, but is not engaging. Conventions of language are usually followed, but some errors are evident.

3

The three paper is **barely adequate**. The paper may feature underdeveloped or simplistic ideas. Transition[s] may be weak or absent. Support is frequently in the form of listed details. Little variety in diction and sentence structure is discernible. The composition may reflect some sense of purpose, but errors may impede meaning.

2

The two paper is **inadequate**. The ideas are underdeveloped and simply or awkwardly expressed. The composition may be excessively colloquial or reflect inadequate knowledge of the conventions of language. While meaning is apparent, errors are frequent and rudimentary.

1

The one paper is **unacceptable** and may be compromised by its deficiency of composition, content, diction, syntax, structure, voice, or conventions of language.

0

The zero paper manifests an achievement less than outlined in a scale-point one, is written in verse, is off-topic or is a restatement of the topic. *Any zero paper must be cleared by the section leader.

Comprehension

(Reading to Learn)

Grades 3 - 6

(Figure 2)

elements of text

Text Awareness

Syntax

Comprehension

(Reading to Learn)

Thinking Skills

Orthographic Knowledge

Semantic

grammatical structure

technical vocabulary

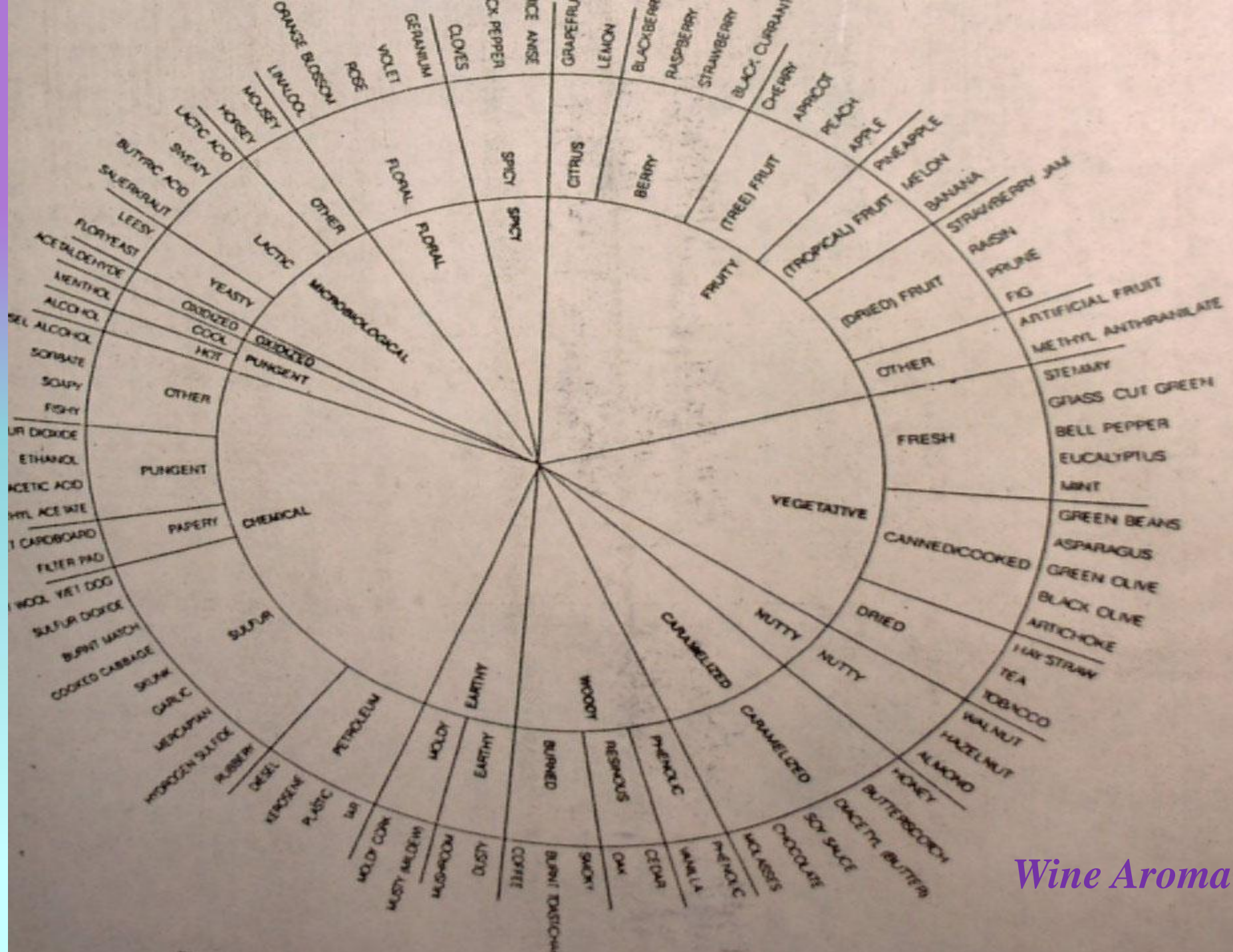
word patterns

Automaticity

compare & contrast
predicting
drawing conclusions
infering
summarizing
organizing information
background knowledge
sequencing
cause & effect
hypothesizing
evaluating
attributing
brainstorming
classifying

Mary Lou McKinley, 2001

background knowledge



Wine Aroma

Real Involvement and Responsibility

Example

- ◉ Student led parent conference

Targeted Feedback

"Closing the Gap Prompts" (adapted from Clarke, 2001)

Learning Intention: To effectively introduce a character at the start of a story.

Activity: Choose someone you know but the class doesn't to describe in a written paragraph.

We Are Learning To: Write about people's characters for our stories.

How Will We Know We've Done It: (created with the class) We will have written something about their appearance, their likes and dislikes, their personality, their attitudes and other things that help others know more about them.

Let's assume that a child has written about someone he knows from a summer camp. After highlighting several phrases that successfully give information about this person, the teacher asterisks the phrase "This person is a good friend". The arrow to the "closing the gap" prompt could take any of the following forms:

A Reminder Prompt: *Say more about how you feel about this person.*

A reminder prompt is most suitable for a student who probably has good command of figurative language but has not used it here, for whatever reason.

A Scaffolding Prompt: *Can you describe how this person is a good friend? (question) Or, Describe something that happened that showed you what a good friend this person is. (directive) Or, He showed me he was a good friend when..... (finish the sentence)*

Scaffolding prompts work well with students who need more structure or some direction but are likely to carry on from here.

An example prompt: *Choose one of these sentences to tell me more about your friend. "He is a good friend because he never says unkind things about me." Or, "My friend helps me do things".*

When a student is struggling or doesn't appear to understand the concept, example prompts can provide them with actual models of the learning intention.

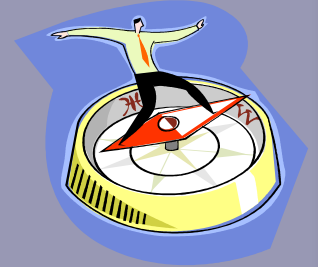
Discussion, Challenge and Reflection

Using Assessment for Reflection and Self-Monitoring

- ◉ Students As Their Own Best Assessors
- ◉ Developing Self-evaluation Habits of Mind
- ◉ "The Case of Choices"

Practice, Practice, Practice

Making the Change



◉ Changing Minds

- Schools are for learning
- Assessment has a significant role of learning

◉ Changing Practices

- Learning at the core
- Teaching each student “just in time” to maximise learning and minimise misconceptions
- Feedback for learning
- Communication to ourselves, to students, to parents, to the community

What knowledge and skills do our students need?

What do they already know?
What sources of evidence have we used?
What do they need to learn and do?
How do we build on what they know?

What knowledge and skills do we need as professionals within this initiative?

How have we contributed to existing student outcomes?
What do we *already know* that we can use to promote student outcomes?
What do we need to *learn to do* to promote improved student outcomes?
What sources of evidence/knowledge can we utilise?

What has been the impact of our changed actions?

How effective has what we have learned and done been in promoting valued student outcomes?

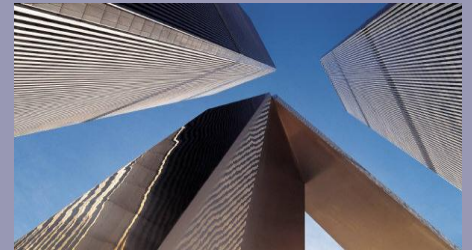
Deepen professional knowledge and refine skills by engaging in further professional learning

Engage students in new learning experiences

If it's not about learning, what is it about?

- ◉ In a fast changing world, if you can't learn, unlearn and relearn, you're lost. Sustainable and continuous learning is a given of the twenty-first century.

- [Stoll, Fink and Earl \(2003\)](#)



● If you make a change and it feels comfortable, you haven't made a change.

- Lee Trevino



◎ **Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful and committed citizens can change the world. In fact, it has never happened any other way.**

• Margaret Mead

