

Analyze Relative to the Learning Goals and Success Criteria

Transcript for the online video from CSAI – Section 1

Welcome to the module on Analyzing and Interpreting Evidence of Student Learning.

This video provides an Introduction to the topic and then delves further into the idea of keeping the focus on lesson Learning Goals and Success Criteria.

As we've seen, there are four interconnected elements of the formative assessment process.

Learning Goals and Success Criteria anchor the process.

Next comes gathering evidence of student learning, then analyzing the evidence and finally taking whatever action is needed to close the gap between where students are and where they need to be.

This module focuses on analyzing the evidence. Recall that the formative assessment process is grounded in three central questions:

- Where are students going?
- Where are students now?
- Where to next?

Analyzing evidence helps answer the question, “Where are students now?”

To know where students are in their learning, teachers need to purposefully gather and analyze evidence that will help them understand where students are relative to the Lesson Learning Goal and Success Criteria. Based on their analysis, teachers can make informed decisions about next steps and help insure students' success.

This analysis should go beyond “got it” or “didn't get it” so that teachers have a more nuanced interpretation of their students' learning status and how the students' thinking and skills are evolving over the course of a lesson.

This module delves into four main ideas in Analyzing Evidence.

They are:

- Keep the Focus on Your Learning Goals and Success Criteria
- Compare Evidence to Likely Range of Student Responses
- Use Multiple Sources and In-the-Moment Evidence, and
- Take Account of Students' Prior Knowledge and Experience

This section focuses on the idea: Keep the Focus on Your Learning Goals and Success Criteria.

We will now take a closer look at the idea: Keep the Focus on Lesson Learning Goals and Success Criteria.

To be able to analyze evidence of progress toward meeting the lesson Learning Goal and Success Criteria, teachers need to have a clear sense of what meeting the Goal entails and how to get there. This clarity comes from teachers' content knowledge, and also their knowledge of how students learn the content. So the stronger a teacher's content knowledge, the stronger the analysis of evidence is likely to be.

When teachers analyze evidence, they make a forward-looking interpretation to inform their decisions about next steps in learning. Teachers' analysis can be guided by the following questions:

- What does the evidence tell me about my students' current learning status?
- Are my students on track with where I expected them to be with meeting the Success Criteria at this point in the lesson? Or
- Is there a gap between my students' current learning status and where I expected them to be? If there is a gap, what is it?

Teachers need to understand the source of the gap in student learning if they intend to fill it.

For example, if students are unable to understand instructions for an activity it could be because they do not know some of the words in the instructions, or they may be struggling to understand the words when they are spoken together in sentences, or they may mistake a spoken word for a similar word because of slight differences in pronunciation. Sometimes, teachers need to probe further or gather additional evidence to determine the source of the gap.

In analyzing where students are in their learning relative to the lesson Learning Goal and success criteria, it's important to focus on just that, students' pathway to the goal and success criteria --- and not get distracted by extraneous information about student learning outside of the goal. Instead focus on what students' responses tell you about where students are relative to where you want them to be. And save the information on other goals for another time and lesson.

For example, a teacher is listening to a classroom conversation to ascertain if students are skillful at furthering the topic of discussion through strategies such as extending the idea of a peer, paraphrasing what others have said, and/or asking follow up questions.

While doing this, she may also hear a variety of types of student language or errors in language use that are not specifically related to the Learning Goal and Success Criteria. This is an instance where it could be easy to get distracted by all the “noise” in the evidence, and lose track of the specific focus. Next we’ll look at another example.

In this example, (*adapted from Clarke, 2005*) the teacher analyzes students’ story drafts and provides feedback, which the students use the following day. The example shows how the teacher analyzes evidence related to the Goal and Success Criteria and then crafts her feedback in response to those only. While student work and teacher feedback is in written form in this example, the same activity could be done orally, with students reciting their stories in draft form and getting verbal feedback from teachers.

The Learning Goal for the lesson is:

Develop an opening to a story that introduces a problem and uses contrasting imagery and/or actions to create an engaging scenario.

The Success Criteria are:

- I can set up the problem in the story opening;
- I can include contrasting imagery and action to create an engaging scenario;
- I can use vivid vocabulary to make the contrasts powerful.

Here is an example of student writing. The teacher has used a technique that Shirley Clarke refers to as comment markers – she has underlined the parts of the paragraph that relate to Success Criteria – and has analyzed or evaluated their effectiveness. Pause the video a moment to read the student’s work.

Then she provides a written comment to this student about her analysis. This demonstrates the teacher’s analysis of evidence and is also a form of taking pedagogical action which we will cover in more detail in the next module. The teacher writes:

Samantha, the contrast of the blood-curdling screech vs. the still quietness of the night is powerful and engaging. How can you highlight the contrast between the bird and the children?

Notice that the teacher has noted and provided feedback about contrasts that were successful and then asks the student to consider how she can highlight an additional contrast. Crucially, the teacher does not analyze nor provide feedback about other aspects of language use, as they are not the focus of the Learning Goal. For example, she does not provide feedback on any errors in the writing or spelling because they are not the focus of the analysis on this occasion (although the teacher may have noticed these errors and banked them for a future lesson). In an oral language lesson, a parallel may be that the teacher notices the student making errors with tense and agreement, but chooses to address those issues in another lesson.

The student responds to the teacher feedback by expanding the sentence that contrasts the bird and the children. Her new sentence is: *Max spun around to see a huge bird, bigger than an eagle, larger than an adult human being, dwarfing the delicate children, making them seem inadequate.* As you can see, she has used the feedback to improve her work. She has met the Success Criteria of including contrasting imagery and action in her story opening to create an engaging scenario, and using vivid vocabulary to make the contrasts powerful. The use of the feedback has provided the student with another learning opportunity.

Now let's pause and reflect.

Think of a lesson you've given a student where you got sidetracked in your feedback away from the Learning Goal and Success Criteria. What feedback could you have given that would have stayed on target? Pause the video a moment to reflect on this question.

Thank you! You have completed the first section of this module on Analyzing Evidence of Student Learning.

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