

Establishing Learning Goals and Success Criteria

Transcript for the online video from CSAI – Section 1

Welcome to the module on Establishing Learning Goals and Success Criteria. In this video we will provide an Introduction to the topic and then delve further into understanding what Learning Goals and Success Criteria are.

As we've seen, there are four interconnected elements of the formative assessment process. This is a similar educational process to that traditionally used by many tribes, with students as active partners in the learning cycle.

In formative assessment, Learning Goals and Success Criteria anchor this 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. But the first one, Establishing Learning Goals and Success Criteria, anchors all the others.

Recall that the formative assessment process is grounded in three central questions:

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

Teachers answer the first question by creating strong, clear Learning Goals and Success Criteria. These provide the foundation for answering the second and third questions.

This module is organized into three sections.

1. What are they?
2. Writing Tips
3. Sharing Learning Goals and Success Criteria with Students.

The rest of this video is focused on the first idea, "What are They?"

Now let's start with some definitions. Learning Goals specify what students are expected to LEARN during a lesson (which might extend over as many as three or four class periods). Success Criteria are indicators that students have achieved their Learning Goals. In other words, Learning Goals are "WHAT students are expected to learn," and Success Criteria are "the WAYS students will show that they've learned it."

In thinking a little more about what Learning Goals are and are not and how they differ from standards, consider two important descriptors: Lesson-sized and concrete.

First, what Learning Goals are not: Learning goals are not standards, which describe the rigorous competencies that students are expected to accomplish by the end of year – the ability to apply what they have learned, to engage in complex thinking and problem solving. Standards cover a lot of learning, too much to cover in a single lesson. Instead, Lesson-size Learning Goals establish the incremental, “small steps” that students will need to take over the course of a unit or even a year to accomplish year end standards. Learning goals divide the standards into manageable, lesson-sized chunks. A Learning Goal could be, for example, I understand how to greet peers when I arrive at school.

Let’s look at an example of a standard, Learning goal, and Success Criteria. As you can see, the Learning Goal does not encompass the full scope of the standard, but only addresses one element or building block of the standard. If you are not using standards in your Native language instruction, take some time to decide on your end-of-year goals for your students. These goals will probably be different for different student groups based on their language levels. Once you have determined these end-of-year goals, plan backwards from there to determine lesson goals that build towards the end-of-year expectations.

Learning goals also are NOT Learning activities, which describe what students will do during the lesson to achieve the goal. A Learning Goal is a *what* (“what do I want my students to learn?”) and an activity is a *how* (“how will they learn it?”). In lesson planning, Learning Goals must come first, to make sure that instruction will help propel student forward toward meeting year end goals. Instructional activities are developed to enable students to meet the specified Learning Goals and demonstrate the Success Criteria. Student responses to key instructional activities provide evidence for assessing – and responding to -- how well the criteria has been met. Additionally, *it is often important to articulate both language goals and content goals for your lessons.

For example, if students are learning language through the process of building clay pots in a particular lesson, there needs to be a Learning Goal for the language students are expected to utilize during the activity *and* for the skills and understanding that is the intended learning related to pottery. More specifically, the activity should *require* the use of the target language.

In this example, language Learning Goals may relate to the vocabulary needed to communicate about the materials and building process, or for example, the pottery uses, OR the design symbolism. Goals may also relate to the language structures students need to understand in order to communicate in this context, for example, how to understand and set up a question. Students also may need to be able to explain issues involved in the building process, such as how to talk about cause and effect, as in, *if* the clay gets too dry *then* it cannot be molded any longer.

It can be helpful to think about student language Learning Goals from a few different angles. First, what vocabulary do I want my students to learn in this lesson? What are pronunciation patterns they need to practice? What language structures will help them communicate their ideas? And lastly, what is the purpose of the language? Is it to explain, persuade, introduce? Now let's move on to talk about Success Criteria.

They are very concrete statements that:

- Describe how teachers and students will know whether Learning Goals have been achieved
- That Reflect what students will say, do, make or write to show they have met the goals
- That indicate concretely what quality is expected of students
- And that are assessed based on student responses to instructional activities.

Now let's look at an example.

This example includes Learning Goals, Success Criteria, and learning activities. In this instance, the teacher had decided to focus on action words in the context of learning a dance to provide an opportunity for students to focus on this language feature as well as further develop cultural knowledge.

The Learning Goal comes first – it is a general statement of what students are expected to learn. In this example, it is, "I understand and can use action words to describe the dance moves we practice." The Success Criteria specify concretely how students will demonstrate their learning – it is just one of many ways the goal could be assessed and is written in language students can understand. In this case, it is: "I can describe the actions I take to perform different dance moves in the Snake Dance." The activity is both how students will develop the learning and how they will demonstrate their success. For this lesson it is: "Students learn a new dance through listening, watching it being performed, practicing and debriefing. Students describe actions they take such as listening to the beat of the chant and walking in step with the leader to form a line and make snake coils."

Success Criteria are concrete representations of the Learning Goals that describe the most important aspects of what the learning will look like at the end of the lesson and points along the way. As we have said, they describe specifically what students will say or do – and how well they will do it -- to show that they have achieved the lesson goal.

For example, if the lesson goal is "Understand how to use evidence in a persuasive speech", the end of lesson Success Criteria includes the ideas of crafting and presenting an effective persuasive speech *and* using evidence as a strategy to make the speech persuasive. These are the important aspects of performance for this Learning Goal. Additionally, the Success Criteria should communicate how students can reach these goals. For example, criteria for speech

quality might include the elements of coherence and logical development. The criteria for evidence use might include relevance and credibility. The specific criteria would depend upon what was addressed in instruction.

Success Criteria also represent a viable pathway to achieving the lesson Learning Goal. They lay out a logical progression of how you expect students' knowledge and/or skill to develop from the beginning to end of the lesson, also concretely describing how you will know whether students are making progress towards the end of lesson Learning Goal. If students are not making the expected progress, immediate action can be taken to fill in any gaps. Importantly, success on the Success Criteria during the lesson should lead to students achieving the final Success Criterion, a performance which fully exemplifies the Learning Goal and provides end of lesson evidence about how well the Learning Goal has been achieved. Let's take a look at another example.

For this lesson, the Success Criteria and activities are laid out sequentially from top to bottom to indicate the series of expectations and experiences students will encounter during the course of the lesson. Each activity and related Success Criteria proceed in connected steps to the final culminating task at the end of the lesson. This will provide the most conclusive evidence of where student learning is in relation to the Learning Goal. Feel free to pause the video here to read this thoroughly.

Next, we'll pause and reflect on the ideas presented in this video.

Even if you don't call them "Learning Goals and Success Criteria," do you already use something like this in your lessons – for example, a daily learning objective or demonstrations of learning? If not, how do you and your students keep track – at the lesson level – of what they are learning? How do you and your students know if they have learned it? Pause the video to reflect on these questions.

Thank You! You have completed the first section of the Establishing Learning Goals and Success Criteria module.

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