

Professional Learning Community (PLC) Formative Assessment Cycle for Deepening Understanding of Standards and Supporting Student Success

High-Level Summary

Week 1: Unpack the Standard and Select a Common Assessment

- Select a standard and analyze it collaboratively to establish a shared understanding of proficiency.
- Define key concepts, skills, and cognitive demand.
- Co-construct a learning goal and success criteria.
- Select a common formative assessment to administer in the following week.

Week 2: Analyze Student Work and Plan Instruction

- Review student responses on the common assessment.
- Make sense of student thinking by identifying patterns, strengths, and misconceptions.
- Design targeted instructional strategies to address learning gaps and advance student understanding.

Week 3: Reflect on Instruction and Assess Impact

- Report back on the implementation of instructional strategies.
- Assess their effectiveness by analyzing new work from students who were on the cusp of mastery.
- Determine next steps for continued support and improvement.

Detailed Overview

Week 1 - Step 1: Unpacking the Standard

Purpose: Build a shared understanding of the standard, its components, and the level of cognitive demand required.

- Break down the standard into its key concepts and skills.
- Identify the prerequisite knowledge students need to engage with the standard.
- Discuss vertical alignment—how this standard connects to previous and future learning.
- Consider misconceptions or challenges students might face.

Expectation: Teachers leave with clarity on what mastery of the standard looks like and what students will need to do to demonstrate understanding.

Week 1 - Step 2: Co-Construct the Student Learning Goal and Success Criteria

Purpose: Establish a clear vision of what students should achieve and how they will demonstrate success.

- Collaboratively develop a student-friendly learning goal that aligns with the standard.
- Define success criteria—what students should be able to know, understand, and do to show they have met the goal.
- Consider how students will engage in self-assessment and peer assessment using the success criteria.

Expectation: Teachers agree on a consistent language and approach to communicate expectations to students.

Week 1 - Step 3: Create or Select a Common Assessment

Purpose: Develop a common understanding of what mastery looks like and ensure assessments align with the **cognitive demand** of the standard.

- Select a high-quality task that aligns with the standard and success criteria.
 - Consider using a task from a high-quality instructional material or a question from a standardized state test.
- Ensure the task allows students to demonstrate conceptual understanding.
- **Non-Negotiable:** Teachers solve the problem themselves before administering it to students.
 - This ensures a shared understanding of the depth of reasoning required.

Expectation: Teachers have a common assessment that will provide meaningful data about student learning.

Week 2 - Step 4: Analyze Student Data

Purpose: Use evidence to inform instructional decisions.

- Teachers bring student work samples from the common assessment to analyze.
- Moderate scoring by applying common rubrics or success criteria.
- Identify trends, strengths, and areas of need across different student groups.

Expectation: Teachers determine how students are progressing toward the learning goal and ensure consistency in assessing student work.

Week 2 - Step 5: Action Planning for Intervention and Instructional Adjustments

Purpose: Develop targeted strategies to close learning gaps and enhance instruction.

- Identify students who need additional support and determine specific interventions.
- Consider instructional changes:
 - Do teachers need to refine or expand their own strategies?
 - Would different representations support student understanding?
- Plan instruction, re-teaching opportunities, and enrichment for students who need extension.

Expectation: Teachers leave with a clear plan to address student learning gaps and enhance instructional approaches.

Week 3 - Step 6: Cycle Reflection

Purpose: Reflect on the impact of instructional strategies

- Bring new student work to the table.
 - Consider analyzing the impact on students who were previously on the cusp of mastery.
- Reflect on:

- What instructional strategies worked well?
 - What challenges did we encounter?
 - How did our interventions impact student learning?
 - What adjustments should we make next time?
- Discuss how this cycle informs the next round of meetings..

Expectation: Teachers refine their practice based on insights gained, ensuring ongoing improvement in student outcomes.