

Peer and self-feedback

Overview

When students have formed a reliable and secure schema, feedback during learning can come from students. Feedback from any source needs to be accurate, clear and easy to understand to correctly form and consolidate schema. Teachers need to enable students ‘... to provide themselves and others with quality feedback’ (Almarode and Vandas 2019:326).

For feedback to be effective, students need a shared, deep understanding of the success criteria. By assessing their own learning and the learning of others against clear success criteria, students are better equipped to identify the next steps for learning.

Substantial teacher modelling on how to formulate, give, receive and apply feedback is required for peer and self-feedback to be effective (Brookhart 2017). Tools and techniques, such as exemplars and think-alouds, can be used to teach these skills.

Students can be guided to produce effective feedback through the use of scaffolds such as sentence stems and templates. Scaffolds can support students to structure their thinking and formulate specific and constructive feedback.

As students practise the skills of peer and self-feedback, close and continuous teacher monitoring is required to ensure feedback is accurate and useful in moving learning forward.

Key considerations:

- Ensure students understand the learning intention and success criteria to assess their own and others’ work effectively.
- Provide explicit teaching and modelling on how to give, use, and apply peer and self-feedback (Brookhart 2017).
- Incorporate peer and self-assessment, making it a regular part of what students do during and after learning.
- Allocate time for students to practise the skills of peer and self-feedback.
- Create tools and scaffolds to guide peer and self-assessment, ensuring feedback is objective and focused.
- As students become more confident and capable, allow them to give feedback with less support and more independence.
- When including feedback routines, teachers should consider the cultural, social and emotional contexts of their classroom.

‘The amount of feedback we can give our students is limited. In the longer term, the most productive strategy is to develop our students’ ability to give themselves feedback.’

(William 2016:14).

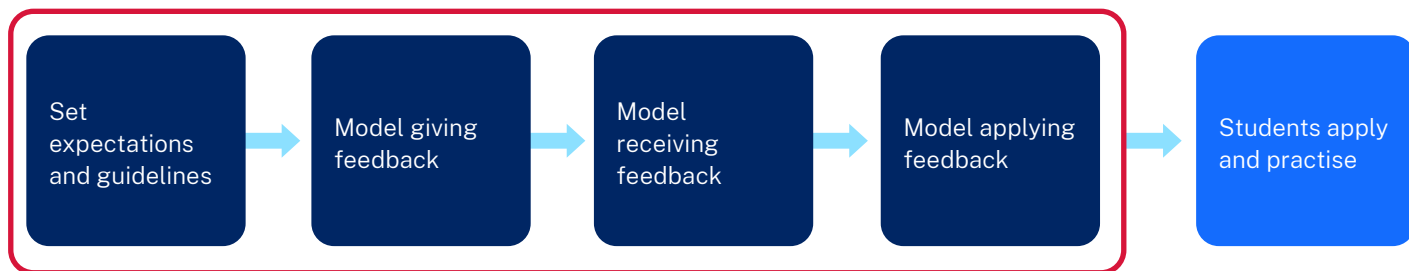
Using effective feedback resources



<https://edu.nsw.link/explicit-teaching-using-effective-feedback>

Classroom application

Teachers facilitate peer and self-feedback through modelling.



Peer feedback – Stage 3 English

A Year 6 class are learning to present a clear argument to persuade an audience (EN3-CWT-01). As students are learning to give and receive peer feedback, sentence stems are provided to scaffold their thinking. The teacher demonstrates how to evaluate an anonymous writing sample using the learning intention and success criteria. Using the sentence stems, they model how to give feedback that is respectful, specific and constructive. They model applying the feedback by thinking aloud while annotating the work sample.

What you did well	What you could improve	How you could do this (actions based on feedback)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I really liked how you ... You did a great job with ... One strength of your work is ... It's clear that you put effort into ... Your use of (specific skill/ technique) was effective because ... You explained (concept/idea) well by ... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You could improve your ... One area to focus on is ... Your work could be even better if you ... I found (specific part) a little unclear because ... I noticed that you didn't include ... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you work on (specific area mentioned in feedback), you could ... To address (specific issue), try ... To improve (area for improvement), start by ... It would help if you added more detail to ... To make (specific aspect) stronger, your next step is to ...

Self-feedback – Stage 4 Science

Students in a Stage 4 science class are learning to describe the effects of forces in everyday situations, specifically magnetic force (SC4-FOR-01). In this lesson, students are responding to the question, 'How do magnets attract or repel each other based on their polarity?'

After students have written their individual response, the teacher displays a pre-prepared writing sample and models how to self-assess using a pre-filled checklist aligned to the learning intention and success criteria. When criteria is incomplete or not evident, they demonstrate how to articulate specific and actionable steps to improve their response. The teacher then models how to apply self-feedback, by verbalising their thinking while editing the original response or rewriting it.

Self-assessment against the learning intention and success criteria	YES	NO	How can I improve this?
Have I described how magnets interact with each other?	✓		
Have I used relevant scientific terms?	✓		
Have I used the words 'north pole', 'south pole', 'attract', 'repel', 'opposite', 'same'?		X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add the terms 'north' pole and 'south' pole to your response when describing 'opposite' poles and 'same' poles. Replace 'stick together' with 'attract'. Replace 'push away' with 'repel'.

More resources

Black PJ and Wiliam D (2009) 'Developing the theory of formative assessment', *Educational Assessment Evaluation and Accountability*, 21(1):5–31.

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/225590759_Developing_the_theory_of_formative_assessment

NESA – Effective feedback

<https://www.educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/k-10/understanding-the-curriculum/assessment/effective-feedback>

References

[English K–10 Syllabus](#) © NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) for and on behalf of the Crown in right of the State of New South Wales, 2022.

[Science 7–10 Syllabus](#) © NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) for and on behalf of the Crown in right of the State of New South Wales, 2023.

Almarode JT and Vandas KL (2019) *Clarity for learning: five essential practices that empower students and teachers*, Corwin Press, Inc, US.

AITSL (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership) (2017) Reframing feedback to improve teaching and learning, AITSL website, accessed 20 March 2025.

<https://www.aitsl.edu.au/tools-resources/resource/spotlight-reframing-feedback-to-improve-teaching-and-learning>

Brookhart S (2017) *How to give effective feedback to your students*, 2nd edn, ASCD.

Rolheiser C and Ross JA (2001) 'Student Self-Evaluation: What Research Says and What Practice Shows' in Small RD and Thomas A (eds) *Plain talk about kids*, Covington, LA, Center for Development and Learning.

Wiliam D (2016) 'The secret of effective feedback', *Educational Leadership*, 73(7):10–15.