

Workshop-In-A-Box

A One-Day “Do-It-Yourself” Professional Development Workshop-In-A-Box on Assessment *for* Learning for K-12 Teachers

Assessment *for* learning is transforming classrooms, schools, and entire communities because it encourages learning and gently draws out the capabilities of each student, especially those who have the most difficulty learning. However, because the understanding of this practice is relatively new, there are few resources or guides to support teachers and schools in this learning. **That is where the One-Day Workshop-In-A-Box from Connections Publishing comes in.**

How to Introduce Assessment *for* Learning to Classroom Teachers

Getting started in classrooms with assessment *for* learning does not require a graduate level course or months of exhaustive training. In fact, teachers make assessment *for* learning their own and begin to apply it in classrooms almost immediately if three conditions are met:

1. They can see it supports learning.
2. They see concrete evidence that it is working for their peers.
3. They have a few hours to look into the concepts and practices in a supportive group setting, such as a workshop or professional learning community conversation.





Workshop Leader: Anne Davies, Ph.D.

The Workshop-In-A-Box is produced by Dr. Anne Davies, a noted author, consultant, and researcher. Anne applies her expert knowledge of developing quality classroom assessment practices toward her mission to “increase the possibility of learning for all our students.” Educators at every grade level throughout Canada, the United States, and other countries have benefited from the high-touch support she provides during professional development events and multi-year projects.

Books and resources authored and co-authored by Anne include the best seller, *Making Classroom Assessment Work*, and *Knowing What Counts*, a three-book series that offers practical ways to involve students in their own assessments (both available through Connections Publishing).

With more than 30 years’ experience in education, Anne has demonstrated her skills in a variety of roles, including classroom teacher, school district coordinator, department of education planner, school administrator, and university instructor.

“I have been leading workshops on assessment for learning for over a dozen years and have taken the best of my materials to create this Workshop-In-A-Box. Having been a teacher for many years, I know what teachers are up against to improve the level of learning in their classrooms. This Workshop is designed to give them a new way of looking at things along with practical steps that they can use right away.”

Anne Davies

1. It Supports Learning

Demonstrating the effectiveness of classroom assessment is crucial when introducing teachers to this practice. We have found that teachers are somewhat skeptical of new practices, and sometimes feel a little threatened and defensive when given the message that they are expected to embrace some new teaching methods. Hmm... Can't say we blame them! Teachers have formed their current approaches to teaching through lifetimes of experience, study, practice, and feedback. It would be unrealistic to expect them to “turn on a dime” and suddenly do something different.

So, we don't ask them to turn on a dime. Instead, our approach has been to simply give them an opportunity to see what the research reveals; show them what others are doing; and then ask them to think about, and discuss, how those practices might apply to their own teaching methods, if at all. Once they see proof that assessment *for learning* makes a difference, they often get very curious and want to learn more.

2. Concrete Evidence: Powerful Video Footage

One of the most important developments in our workshops has been to introduce video segments that show assessment *for learning* in actual classroom situations. We interview both students and teachers, and even show children discussing learning goals and evidence of learning with their parents (i.e., they demonstrate assessment *for learning* practices in action).

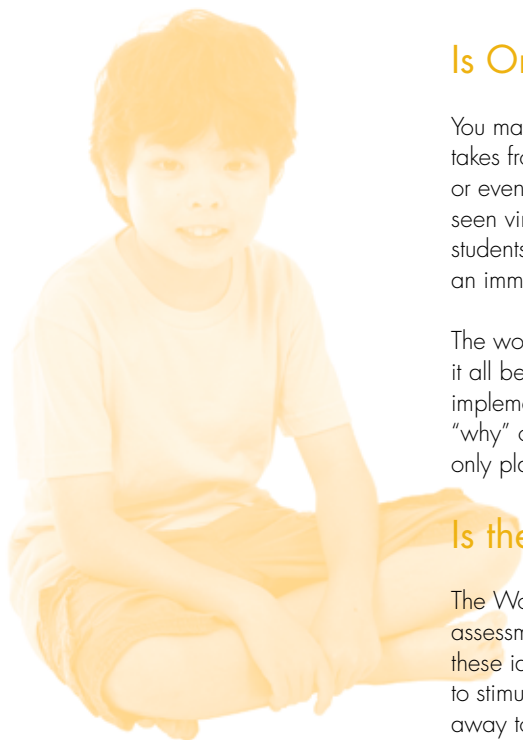
The video we use is not staged or a fictional representation. In fact, in most cases, we have been working with the teachers for a minimum of five years before they ever consider letting a video camera into their classrooms. They know what we stand for and have seen positive results in their own experiences, so they graciously allow us to interview them and their students to show others the power of classroom assessment. These video segments are available exclusively through Connections Publishing and are an integral component of The Workshop-In-A-Box.

3. Hands-on Introduction to the Concepts

Teachers also need to receive a thorough orientation to assessment *for learning* in a workshop setting, where they can discuss the concepts with their peers and begin to think about how they might experiment with these practices in their own classroom settings. We use a number of great resources and powerful group learning strategies, such as jigsaws, to introduce the concepts and help teachers begin to create their own plans and approaches.

It only takes a small flame to set tinder alight, and we have seen how teachers often “catch fire” and become very enthusiastic about assessment *for learning* once they begin to experience for themselves the difference it can make for students (especially those who generally have the most difficulty learning). The promise of assessment *for learning* is incredible when you think about it: that students who struggle to learn do better with these methods. As we have seen at many schools, once teachers see that this is true for their colleagues and begin to experience it for themselves, they often become enthusiastic proponents and begin to carry the practice forward with great energy.





Is One Day Enough?

You may be wondering what effect a one-day workshop can have. From our experience, it actually takes from two to five years to really take assessment *for learning* deep into the DNA of a school, or even an individual classroom. However, the benefits of the assessment *for learning* approach are seen virtually overnight. The concepts, in themselves, are not difficult to learn or put into effect, and students begin to learn better from the very first moment. So, our one-day workshops typically have an immediate positive effect.

The workshop is similar to planting a seed. Yes, change needs to happen slowly and organically, but it all begins when a seed is first planted. Each teacher will take away the beginnings of a plan for implementing assessment *for learning* practices. They will also receive invaluable texts that explain the “why” of assessment *for learning*, and give practical guidance as to the “how”. This workshop not only plants seeds, it provides water and nutrients to help foster and support new growth.

Is the Workshop for Beginners Only?

The Workshop-In-A-Box is designed for teachers who are either brand new, or relatively new to assessment *for learning*. However, we have found that even if teachers are experienced working with these ideas, the workshop is very beneficial as an opportunity for review, to gain a fresh perspective, to stimulate discussions with peers, to renew energy, and for the texts and samples they will take away to use in their own classrooms.

Workshop Content

Leading the Day

The package includes all materials needed for a stand-alone, self-facilitated workshop for almost any size group of teachers who want to learn both the “why” and the “how” of assessment *for learning*.



The Workshop includes a DVD with over 37 minutes of video footage on practical assessment methods, and a CD-ROM with full resources for leading the Workshop.

The material includes:

- Power Point Slides for every part of the day;
- Video segments to be used at key parts of the workshop to introduce concepts and provide evidence of current classroom practice;
- Full Agenda with facilitator notes to set the purpose for the day, provide context, and guide participant expectations;
- Ground rules for table groups;
- Step-by-step instructions and timeline, with full resources for every step of the way; and
- Guidelines or suggestions for reading the energy of the room, working with participants, drawing out participation and contributions, fielding questions and objections, and handling difficult conversations.

Review body of research supporting the positive contribution of Assessment <i>for Learning</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Summary • Black & Wiliam Research Summary • Harlen & Deakin-Crick Research Summary
Overview of Assessment <i>for Learning</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video: Learning Destination • Video: Feedback • Video: Proof of Learning • Video: High School Class
Processing & Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual reflection • Table discussions • Sharing of ideas with larger groups • Group “tour” of notes posted by tables
Overview of Classroom Assessment: Expert Jigsaw	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slides: Directions for Jigsaw • Text: <i>Making Classroom Assessment Work</i>
Delving Deeper into Practical Ideas: Expert Jigsaw	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slides: Directions for Jigsaw • Text: <i>Knowing What Counts</i> series (3 volumes)
Closing Reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slides: Next steps and how to move forward by working smarter, not harder.

The Texts

Workshop texts are purchased separately:

- *Making Classroom Assessment Work* (one copy required for each participant)
- *Knowing What Counts* series (three books in a set; one set required for every three participants, as participants can share the books between themselves).

***Making Classroom Assessment Work* – by Anne Davies, Ph.D.**

This text addresses the “why” of assessment *for* learning. It provides a thoughtful and thought-provoking framework that teachers and administrators can use to reconsider how assessment is working in their classrooms. From building the foundation for student involvement, through ways to report, the author provides a bridge between what the research shows and what teachers can do in their classrooms.

The end-of-chapter activities in this volume lead teachers to complete an assessment plan in one subject area. Teachers will be able to use this text as they begin to apply assessment *for* learning in their classrooms.

Note: The material in the Workshop-In-A-Box can be used with both the 1st and 2nd editions of *Making Classroom Assessment Work*.

***Knowing What Counts* (series of three books)**

This series is a natural progression for teachers who have started with *Making Classroom Assessment Work*. These books get into the “how” of actual practice, with examples for teachers who want to involve their students in assessment and evaluation.

***Setting and Using Criteria* – by Kathleen Gregory, Caren Cameron, and Anne Davies**

This text is full of practical ways to help teachers involve students in their own assessment. It shows teachers how to set criteria with students using a simple four-step strategy, then how to give powerful feedback and feed-forward information to learners. Included are classroom-tested ideas, cross-curricular examples, ten assessment methods that keep students focused on criteria, responses to commonly asked questions, and blackline masters. The authors provide five different classroom models for setting and using criteria and show how these ideas are adaptable to any classroom setting.

***Self-Assessment and Goal-Setting* – by Kathleen Gregory, Caren Cameron, and Anne Davies**

This text is the second book in the *Knowing What Counts* series and provides approaches to successfully build self-assessment and goal-setting into classroom practice. The book includes classroom ideas, cross-curricular examples, twelve ways to involve students, responses to commonly asked questions, and blackline masters.

***Conferencing and Reporting* – by Kathleen Gregory, Caren Cameron, and Anne Davies**

This text is the third book in the *Knowing What Counts* series and provides ten different ways for students to show proof of their learning as well as ways to take part in conferences and demonstrate their own learning. The end result is improved learning, as students are participants – not bystanders. This book includes classroom ideas, cross-curricular examples, fourteen ways to involve students in their own assessment, responses to commonly asked questions, and blackline masters.