

**Connections Publishing Inc. Announces Release of
Assessment for Learning “Workshop-In-A-Box,” a 1-Day
Self-Facilitated Professional Development Workshop for Teachers**

Courtenay, British Columbia, Canada – July 11, 2007 – Connections Publishing announced today the launch of the new “Workshop-In-A-Box,” a one-day self-facilitated workshop designed for schools and districts to host professional development sessions for teachers on the subject of “assessment for learning”.

“I have been leading workshops on assessment for learning for over a dozen years and have taken the best of these materials to create this package,” said workshop developer and noted assessment for learning expert, Dr. Anne Davies. “With this workshop, classroom teachers can get oriented in a single day, have many of their questions answered, and tap into the latest information and texts to help them begin using assessment for learning methods in their classrooms immediately.”

The Workshop-In-A-Box 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. This 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 handling difficult conversations.

The Workshop-In-A-Box is designed primarily for classroom teachers who are relatively new to the whole area of assessment for learning, but it also includes materials and exercises to benefit lead learners and teachers who already have experience with these teaching methods.

The concepts are presented in a workshop setting, where participants can discuss the material with their peers and begin to think about how they might use these practices in their own classrooms. The Workshop-In-A-Box uses a number of group learning strategies such as jigsaws to introduce the concepts and help teachers begin to create their own plans and approaches.

The Workshop-In-A-Box draws heavily on four texts, which are used for exercises in the workshop and are kept or shared by the participants afterwards for further learning and support. The first text is *Making Classroom Assessment Work*, by Dr. Anne Davies. This book 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. The other three texts are part of a series called *Knowing What Counts*, which gets into the “how” of actual practice, with examples for teachers who want to involve their students in assessment and evaluation. All four texts are published by Connections Publishing.

ABOUT CONNECTIONS PUBLISHING INC.

Connections Publishing Inc. is an educational publisher based in Courtenay, British Columbia, Canada. The mission of Connections Publishing is to see all students become lifelong learners, ready to solve problems in their own lives and in the world. Connections Publishing sees its role in this enormous task as one of providing educators with practical and powerful resources to use in their work.

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ABOUT ANNE DAVIES, Ph.D.

Dr. Anne Davies is 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.

Among the many books and resources Anne has authored and co-authored is the best seller, *Making Classroom Assessment Work*, as well as *Knowing What Counts*, a three-book series that offers practical ways to involve students in their own assessments (both available through Connections Publishing). In addition, she has written chapters and articles for educational journals and publications worldwide.

With more than 30 years of 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. She earned her doctorate in education from the University of Victoria in British Columbia, Canada.

ABOUT ASSESSMENT *FOR* LEARNING

Educators use “assessment *for* learning” to improve student learning and raise standards. Most people think of tests and exams which evaluate student learning as primary examples of assessment, but those are examples of assessment *of* learning. Assessment *for* learning, also known as classroom assessment, is different. It is not used to evaluate learning but to help learners learn better. It does so by helping both students and teachers to see:

- the learning goals and criteria
- where each learner is in relation to the goals
- where they need to go next
- and ways to get there

Many studies have been done over the years to gauge the effectiveness of assessment for learning, and a review of this research in 1998 by Black and Wiliam found that assessment for learning is one of the most powerful ways to improve learning, especially amongst students who find learning to be more challenging.

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