

Quality Assessment in High Schools: Accounts from Teachers

Learning Goal:

This Professional Learning Conversation will focus on the way high school classrooms are changing, as teachers engage learners in assessment, increase the amount of specific, descriptive feedback available to students, and decrease the amount of evaluation that takes place during the learning. The goals of this Conversation are to:

- enhance your capacity to involve high school students in the assessment process.
- explore assessment strategies in a range of high school courses and/or content areas
- consider ideas to increase student access to specific, descriptive feedback and decrease evaluative feedback within the challenges of high school structures and in support of external learning requirements

Materials:

Each participant will need a copy of *Quality Assessment in High Schools: Accounts from Teachers* (edited by Anne Davies, Sandra Herbst, and Kathy Busick).

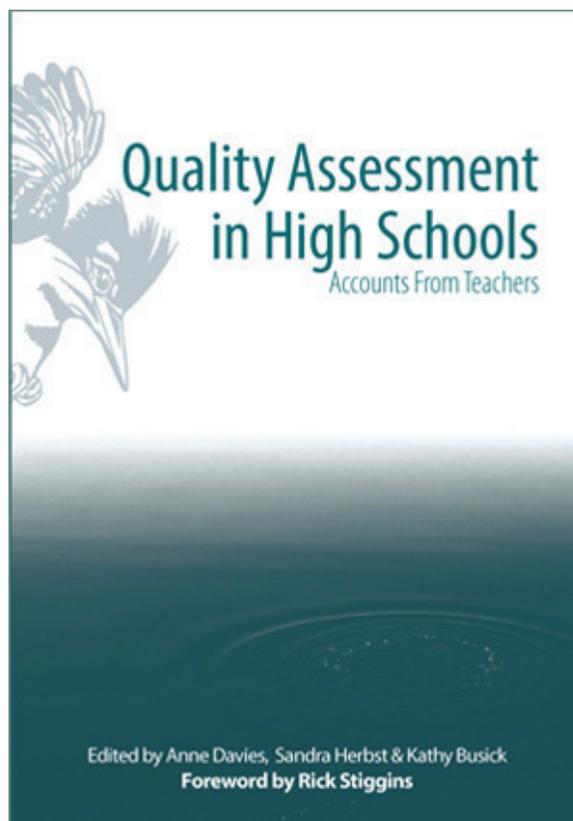
Chart paper, markers, and work space should be available.

Advance Preparation:

Depending on the amount of time available for this learning conversation, it might be helpful to ask people to read assigned chapters in advance.

Getting Started:

1. Make a list of ground rules or norms of collaboration (or review existing ground rules) and ask if there are additions participants want to make. [Ground rules



may include: listen actively; right to pass; be respectful; equal voice; take care of yourself; be prepared, present, and participating.]

2. Review the learning goals for this conversation with participants.
3. Form groups of three.
4. Ask participants within each group to read (or reread, review, and reflect) for 30 minutes:
Person 1: Select one reading of interest from chapters 1 - 5.
Person 2: Select one reading of interest from chapters 6 - 10.
Person 3: Select one reading of interest from chapters 11 - 15.

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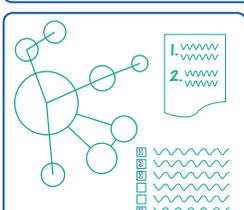
- When participants are finished reading, ask them to record and represent the highlights of the chapters they have read, using a Concept Frame. Below is an example of a Concept Frame based on the book, *Self-Assessment and Goal Setting*. [10 minutes]

Concept Frame

Chapter(s): _____

Key Words/Phrases

- Monitor own learning
- Regular, immediate, descriptive feedback
- Actively involved
- Depth and variety of data collection
- Time to process, pause, think, look for proof
- Match pace of learning and pace of teaching
- Identify gaps
- "Please notice"
- Before and after
- Repeat tasks
- Modeling



Connections to our Work:

Use exit and entrance passes in Math Gr 4/Science Gr 10; have peers give regular, immediate, descriptive feedback, using checklist criteria, BCA II; do student interviews in terms of "What did you learn? What did you do this class? What do you remember?"

Examples: "Muddiest Point Card"; "Performance Card"; "Proof Cards"; "Met/Not Yet Met"; "Acronyms" (IHA, URW, WTH - exclusionary)

Notes regarding other chapters:

Reproducible of Concept Frame on following page.

- Ask participants to find and meet with at least one other person who has read the same section and together discuss and add to your Concept Frame using the chapters read. (Note: Remind participants they will each need their own copy of their joint Concept Frame.) [10 minutes]
- Ask participants to return to their group of three.
- In their original group of three, ask participants to share the big ideas in the chapters they have read and discussed and connections they have made with their own work/experience, taking turns one-by-one to share the Concept Frame each has prepared. [20 minutes]

Debriefing the Learning:

- Two ideas I will use in my classes are: ____
OR
Two ideas that I need to think more about are: ____
- I recommend Chapter # ____ on pages ____ to ____ to anyone who ... because ... [5 minutes]

Taking Action:

Three ideas:

- High school educators need conversations within their discipline area as well as across many disciplines; therefore, consider repeating this professional learning conversation protocol a few times with different small groups.
- Sometimes it is helpful to revisit the key concepts underlying classroom assessment. We recommend participants read or revisit *Making Classroom Assessment Work*, 3rd Edition. Possibilities: Reread with your own questions in mind. Invite conversations with a trusted colleague. Consider doing the end-of-chapter tasks. Make use of the PLC Conversation for this book: [click here](#)
- If participants want a specific next step for implementing student-involved assessment, we recommend the *Knowing What Counts* protocol ([click here](#)) which focuses on student involvement in co-constructing assessment criteria for specific learning outcomes and on peer and self-assessment.

Concept Frame for: _____

Chapter(s): _____

Key Words/Phrases:

Pictorial Representation:

Connections to our Work:

Examples:

Notes regarding other chapters: