

# Engaging in Assessment Conversations: The Power of Feedback

Burnaby SD, Secondary  
May 26, 2021



## Katie White

Assessment Center, Solution Tree

Email: [k.white@sasktel.net](mailto:k.white@sasktel.net)

Twitter: @KatieWhite426

Instagram: @softedgedlearning

### Session Essential Questions:

- What are the attributes of effective feedback?
- How is effective feedback connected to assessment design?
- How might we ensure that feedback leads to decision-making and action by learners?

### Resource Support:

White, K. (2017). *Softening the Edges: Assessment Practices that Honor K-12 Teacher and Learners*. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree Press.

White, K. (2019). *Unlocked: Assessment as the Key to Everyday Creativity in the Classroom*. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree Press.

*“The main purpose of feedback is to improve the students’ ability to perform tasks he or she has not yet attempted.”*

Wiliam (2016)

**Purpose of Feedback**

To generate a productive response by:

- Impacting the quality of current and future products/ performances
- Developing strategies for growth
- Refining understanding of success criteria

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**Four Types of Feedback:**

Hattie and Timperley (2007)

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**Feedback Examples**

**Task feedback:** rubrics, checklists, within-artifact comments, targeted conversations

**Process Feedback:** General feedback (strengths, needs) with strategies/ decisions/ processes/ performance cues

**Self-Regulation:** “So next time you...” or “When you are working toward...” or “What decisions might lead you closer to your next goal?” Record on next task.

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Types of Feedback Conferences:

- **Teacher-student**
- **Student-teacher**
- **Student-student**
- **Author's chair**
- **Chosen audience**



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- **Feedback**
- **Information**
- **Advice**
- **Instruction**
- **Intervention**
- **Praise**
- **Fixing mistakes**



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**Consider**

- Does my feedback elicit a productive response?
- Does my feedback identify what's next in the learning? (How to get to better products and processes)
- Is my feedback targeted to each learner?
- Is my feedback strength-based?
- Does my feedback cause thinking?

--Tom Schimmer, [www.allthingsassessment.com/blog](http://www.allthingsassessment.com/blog)

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**Strengths:**  
It's all in our language... avoid the "gap trap"

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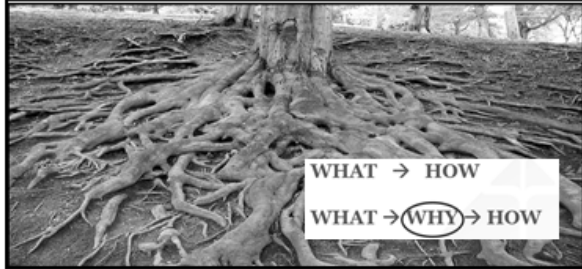
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**Identifying the Root Cause**



WHAT → HOW  
WHAT → (WHY) → HOW

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**Root cause and "First next steps"**

<p><b>Not yet proficient introduction to writing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wrote it before story was fully formed (Needs to know when)</li> <li>• Doesn't understand the purpose of an introduction (Needs to understand why)</li> <li>• Needs examples - dialogue, question (how)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Not yet proficient response to cause-effect corrosion question</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Needs support in understanding corrosion</li> <li>• Needs support with written expression</li> <li>• Needs to add examples to statements (justify)</li> </ul>
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<b>Facilitating a Productive Response</b>	
Ask questions	Offer reactions and opinions
Use reference tools	Find and apply patterns
Make connections	Consider feedback
Prepare a plan for growth	Generate ideas
Visualize and imagine	Confer with others
Activate prior knowledge	Analyze details and examples
Engage in and use new words/terminology	Make predictions/ hypotheses/ estimations
Experiment	Revisit texts/ processes/ skills

Strengths	Criteria Needing attention	Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You were able to identify the author's purpose.</li> <li>Difference between fact and opinion</li> <li>Familiar with text structure and elements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of understanding of supporting details led to lack of identification of key ideas</li> <li>Clarity about your purpose for reading</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access prior knowledge.</li> <li>Identify and explore key vocabulary.</li> <li>Revisit text and use reference tools.</li> </ul>

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**Crouch and Converse: Feedback Conversations**

**Strengths:**  
"I see that you are able to list key cell structures and describe some of the functions they perform."

**Needs:**  
"How might you expand your descriptions of function to more than one or two words? How might you add to your descriptions so the reader is clear about what you are trying to describe?"

**Strategies:**  
"Where might you go for more information if you need it? How might 'talking it out' help you with your written responses?"

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### Feedback Frame:

<b>Ask:</b>	What do you like best? Which criteria do you think you really captured?
<b>Respond:</b>	Here is what I thought went well: ( <i>insert strengths in relation to criteria and your own response</i> )
<b>Ask:</b>	What were some aspects that you found challenging? What would you like to improve or change?
<b>Respond:</b>	Challenges ( <i>Choose some of the following as appropriate</i> ): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I noticed...</li> <li>I wonder...</li> <li>I see...</li> <li>This criteria...</li> <li>I wonder if you might...</li> </ul>
<b>Ask:</b>	If you were given another half hour to improve, what would you practice, add or do differently? How would you approach this next time?
<b>Respond:</b>	<i>Offer feedback as to HOW to approach the chosen goal(s). Try any of the following to guide the conversation:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I wonder if you could try...</li> <li>Maybe spend more time...</li> <li>Before you start, consider...</li> <li>Try looking for ideas...</li> <li>Something to consider...</li> <li>Perhaps a different way to approach that is...</li> <li>Sometimes, I...</li> <li>What if...</li> </ul>

### Finding Time

- Focus on a few students each day
- Focus on a single criterion at a time
- Group students according to needs and have them do some thinking and supporting together
- Build up student feedback skills (focus and pass back strategy)
- Identify what needs attention and build in time for students to explore why and how (teams)
- Leverage in-the-moment conversations (refine approaches)
- Audio or video feedback
- Make student-accessible criteria available
- Leverage samples and exemplars
- Virtual feedback mentors

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## Assessment Design

### Assessment Simplified

**Where am I now?**  
(Current State)

- Observations
- Conversations
- Artifacts/Products

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**Where am I going?**  
(Future State Goal)

- Calibrated
- Student-accessible

**Response**

- Feedback
- Differentiated instruction/ groupings
- Targeted practice
- Extension
- Goal setting

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## The Power of Prediction

Balance:

- Removing barriers
- Inviting tension and challenge

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I can construct meaningful personal connections	
<b>Construct</b>	You make these connections yourself and you write them, say them, or show them in some way (drawings, photos, etc) Others understand your connections when you share them
<b>Meaningful and Personal</b>	The connections are your own; they mean something to you The connections explain how you related to the text in your own way (what you have seen; what you have done; <b>what you have felt; what you believe</b> )
<b>Connections (Self-Text-World)</b>	The connections are between a text you are reading, viewing, or listening to and another text, or a personal experience you have had, or something you have seen or experienced in the world <b>Your connections are detailed</b> You make connections to several different texts (not just once)

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**I can work collaboratively**

<b>Work</b>	Identify and pursue a common goal Complete a task; develop and show thinking
<b>Collaboratively</b>	Propose viable ideas and help others feel comfortable to share their ideas Ask initiating, clarify and consolidating questions <b>Respectfully and authentically consider others' suggestions</b> <b>Negotiate tasks according to strengths and interests of group members</b> Adjust your plan according to the group's purpose

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**In same cases...**

The challenge is elsewhere...

- Stamina
- Comprehension
- Language/ Vocabulary
- Automaticity
- Confidence
- Self-forgiveness
- Relationship
- Etc.

How might we assess these predicted challenges?

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**Mapping an assessment plan**

	Pre-Assess	Writer's Workshop	Exit card	Quiz	Writing sample/ Rubric
Predicted Need 1		X			
Predicted Need 2		X		X	
Predicted Need 3		X	X	X	X
Predicted Need 4		X			X
Proficiency					X

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**Assessment Plan**

	Exit Card	Practice	Practice	Practice	Quiz	Quiz
Predicted Need 1	X	X				
Predicted Need 2	X				X	X
Predicted Need 3			X	X		X

**Feedback, Reteaching, Recovery Time**

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• Feedback  
• Information  
• Advice  
• Instruction  
• Practice  
• Fixing mistakes

**Not every student is ready for feedback; some need more; some need less**

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**Try This**

- Offer strength-based feedback somehow every day
- Work on combining task feedback with process and self-regulation feedback (connect tasks)
- Phrase feedback as “decisions you might make”
- Offer 3-part feedback (strengths, needs, strategies)
- Build in specific recovery time after feedback
- Invite students to reflect on the feedback they chose to apply and why
- Connect feedback to goal setting

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**Notes:**