Unpacking Standards & Crafting Common Assessments

How will we know if students have learned expected outcomes?

Common formative assessments are typically created collaboratively by a team of teachers responsible for the same grade level or course. Common formative assessments are frequently administered throughout the year to identify (1) individual students who need additional time and support for learning, (2) the teaching strategies most effective in helping students acquire the intended knowledge and skills, (3) program concerns – areas in which students generally are having difficulty achieving the intended standard – and (4) improvement goals for individual teachers and the team. – Learning by Doing

Creation of Common Assessments

Step 1: Unpacking the Power Standards

Step 2: Determine Learning Targets

Step 3: Determine Cognitive Demand of the Learning Targets

Step 4: Prepare and Administer the Assessments

Step 5: Use the Assessment Data to Adjust Teaching and Learning

Below you will find more details about each step.

Step 1: Unpack the Power Standards

As a team, "unpack" the Power Standards that you have agreed upon for the course/term/unit.

- Highlight or circle the skills the students will need to **be able to do** (verbs).
- Underline the concepts students need to **know** (important noun or noun phrases).
- Double underline any **context** in which the students will need to know these concepts.

(Step 1) Standard 3.4.1: Locate positive and negative rational numbers on a number line, understand the concept of opposites, and plot pairs of positive and negative rational numbers on a coordinate grid.

Learning Targets (Step 2)	Cognitive Demand (Step 3)	Assessment Type & # (Step 4)
Locate positive rational numbers on a number line.	Recall (Level 1)	Selected Response 4 questions Assessed after lesson 3.1 *List questions here…*

Locate negative rational numbers on a number line.	Recall (Level 1)	Selected Response 4 questions Assessed after lesson 3.1 *List questions here…*
Understand the concepts of opposites.	Skill/Concept (Level 2)	Constructed Response 1 question Assessed after lesson 3.2 *List questions here…*
Plot pairs of positive and negative rational numbers on a coordinate grid.	Skill/Concept (Level 2)	Constructed Response 1 question Assessed after lesson 3.2 *List questions here…*

 Step 2: Determine Learning Targets

Learning targets can be taught in a lesson or two, and they can be assessed to determine progress toward proficiency of the standard.

Learning targets may be explicit (written clearly in the standard) or implicit (skills not listed in the standard that are needed for proficiency of the standard).

Standard
Add fractions with like and unlike denominators.
Explicit Learning Targets
Add fractions with like denominators.
Add fractions with unlike denominator.
Implicit Learning Target
Find the least common denominator.

 Step 3: Determine the Cognitive Demand of the Learning Target
Using either Bloom's Taxonomy or Depth of Knowledge, determine the cognitive demand of the learning target. Knowing the demand of the learning target will help you plan your lessons as well as your common assessments.

 Step 4: Prepare and Administer the Assessments
Your team will need to:
- Decide the most appropriate form of assessment for each learning target, choosing a form that will use at least the same cognitive demanded as determined in Step 3.
- Determine the number of questions for each learning target. See the chart below for a

suggested number of questions to ensure the reliability of your assessment.
- Construct the questions for each learning target. If the standard that you are working with is tested at the State level, the test specifications can also be very helpful in guiding your assessment writing.
- Decide on a timeline for assessing each learning target.

Possible Types of Assessments		
Selected Response **(student chooses from options)**	**Constructed Response** **(student comes up with answer)**	**Performance** **(student performs the skill)**
Multiple Choice True/False Matching	Short Answer Essay Graphic Organizer Diagram	Speech Paper Physical Skill (proper technique)
Use 4+ questions for reliability	*1 question needed for reliability*	*Usually assessed with a rubric*

Step 5: Use the assessment data to adjust teaching and Learning

So, we gave the common assessment….now what?

Once the assessment is given, the team must review the results to determine how they will respond to student needs; this is what makes the test "formative."

- What differentiation will take place in each classroom?
- How and when will students be retaught?
- What scaffolds can be put into place to help struggling students?
- How can the team work together to make this happen?

It is also important to look at curricular and instructional level questions.

- What instructional methods seemed to reach students the best?
- Are there any curricular/instructional changes that need to be made the next time this learning target is taught?