

AER GAINS Video Series – Gathering Valid and Reliable Evidence to Inform Professional Judgment

Segment 1 (18:49) – Teachers and Students as Collaborative Partners in Gathering Evidence

Narrator: Assessment for learning and as learning engages teachers and students in generating a continuous flow of information about learning.

Teachers need to gather valid evidence of learning by purposely planning learning tasks that align precisely with goals and criteria.

When evidence is also triangulated, using multiple sources such as conversations, observations and products, it becomes more reliable.

Gathering valid and reliable evidence for assessment of learning both informs and supports teacher professional judgment when determining a grade that reflects students' achievement.

Narrator: In this video, teachers and students will use assessment to define, to inform, to improve and to assess the learning.

Kelly: I'd like you to reflect and talk about our goals, our expectations and our success criteria, and how they all work together; how they link to our learning task, which is the Public Service Announcement. Go ahead.

Narrator: You will hear teachers and students listening to, and learning from one another through ongoing student-teacher dialogue and interaction.

Suzanne: I would like you to give each other feedback, looking specifically at the evidence that you're going to use to support your message. Give him feedback. Look also: Is his evidence clear? Is it relevant? Is it informative? All of those criteria that we talked about today. While you're doing that, I'm going to record for my observations.

Nathan: Well my message is that bullying hurts, to tell someone. And my evidence is that I'm going to use a realistic bully scene for the background of my poster, such as a text message or a background of a playground, like, you know, where bullying takes place there.

Julia: What kind of facts are you going to have?

Nathan: I'm going to include some like: how many people actually get

bullied in the scenes, or by text message or through the playground, depending on the one I actually choose.

Narrator: You'll see teachers create a reciprocal flow of assessment information. Teachers build their understanding of what students are to learn, and how they know students are learning.

Cindy: If we want our students to have an understanding, then we ourselves need to have that understanding of what a PSA is. So we need to look at several PSAs to get a good understanding of them, so that we know the success criteria of what's going to make a good PSA. We'll let them bring out the success criteria on their own, but we have to know what we want them to be looking for. So I think maybe we should be looking at some PSAs ourselves. I'm sure there are examples of really solid PSAs and some that are not so good but we could still use, because we need our students to see that too, to be able to identify those success criteria.

Suzanne: So let's develop a common understanding of what are the characteristics of a PSA. We'll do that together.

Narrator: Students use this information to inform, assess, adjust and monitor their own learning.

Amy: I feel really confident because, like, when I'm done my work, I know I looked over the success criteria, I looked over the rubric and everything, and I know that I have everything I need to have in my work, so I feel really confident when she comes over and talks to me and I know that I have everything I need.

Narrator: What teacher and students are learning and doing when engaged in an assessment for learning environment, can often be used to improve learning; to inform instruction; and ultimately, to provide precise evidence of learning.

Kelly: Being able to work with my colleagues, I'm now learning and doing the very knowledge and skills that I would like my students to be able to have and be able to use at any time. I also feel much more comfortable modeling it for them because I've had the opportunity to learn it with my colleagues. It's okay to question, it's okay to receive feedback. They don't feel inhibited when they're given feedback, they feel inspired and they're ready to go back and improve on their work. It's improved me in that my feedback is timely, and it's meant just for that student. So rather than a piece of feedback that's just random, or things like "great job", now it's feedback that is appropriate to that task and the learning goal, and the

expectations and the success criteria.

So students are completely aware of what they should do next and why. It gives me access to what they're learning, how they're doing, and what the next steps are. Because when you co-construct that success criteria with them, based on the expectations, everybody has a common understanding of what the end goal is. So when you have explicit success criteria, the students understand the feedback you give them, because they helped create the success criteria. Students are not left in the dark, they're not guessing what you're talking about.

Narrator: Classroom interactions reflect parallel learning processes; teachers see themselves as co-learners. As these teachers are co-developing learning goals, success criteria, rubrics and high level tasks together, they not only build a common understanding of what is being learned and what it looks like, but also come to consensus on what constitutes quality evidence and quality performance.

Suzanne: If we look at a level 4, we want to make sure our qualifiers are appropriate.

Tammy: The achievement chart uses that effectiveness – high degree of effectiveness, considerable effectiveness, some effectiveness.

Suzanne: What you were talking about, enhance the message —

Kelly: Effectively communicate the message to the target audience.

Suzanne: So a level 1: the techniques and conventions used do not support, enhance ... Kelly: Effectively communicate Suzanne: Effectively communicate the message to the intended target audience.

Cindy: ...Or in a limited way.

Cindy: What would qualify "limited" though? Even "with a high degree of effectiveness", what does that mean? If I'm going to give the student that level, I want to be able to explain to him or her what limited means. 'Cause I'm sure that's what they're going to ask me. We need to come up with some examples of a limited use of a technique and then a high degree of effectiveness, so that we can clearly show them that's what this means.

Narrator: Teachers, through deliberate collaborative planning, learn and practice the assessment knowledge and skills they will need to model for their students.

Kelly: Maybe pull it back to our graphic organizer that we gave them, where they were able to critique the PSAs, and be able to say – if they could pull out the message, and what mood did she have, and they were able to pick out the target audience, and they were able to pick out the setting. I think our graphic organizer as well, which ties in with the expectations, will help us set a clear rubric.

Tammy: Okay, so we're going to give them a variety of examples, both of good PSAs and less effective PSAs, so that we'll use the graphic organizer so they can identify what is effective, what is not.

Kelly: If we do one as a whole class first, maybe if we model, so that it's done with us so they have a better understanding of it. Give them time for elbow partner table talk to see, to make sure they understand.

We also want to make sure that the PSAs that we're using also coincide with each piece of the criteria that we've selected out of the expectations.

Suzanne: So you're developing that common understanding of what a 4 and a 1 is as co-learners with your students.

Narrator: Teachers then engage in reciprocal learning when they co-construct and clarify with their students what they are learning, what it looks like, and what is quality evidence of successful learning.

Suzanne: I used to give a task and I would be evaluating it based on the expectation about what I thought the task looked like. There was no interaction between me and the students. Now, the student really needs a voice, they really need to be involved in the success criteria. Because we developed the success criteria together, the task together, the rubric together, I find that the quality of work is a lot higher than what I saw in the past. I'm understanding "what does that look like"? They're involved beginning to end. We talk about how are they going to demonstrate their learning. They're more engaged in their role as a learner, and we're co-learning, as opposed to me telling them what they're going to learn. Now they're self-assessing, they're peer-assessing. Now we're learning together, but they are the ones that are directing their learning.

Suzanne: Quickly look at two aspects of that success criteria. How could we use those two criteria to help us create a rubric?

Suzanne: Take a look at messaging.

Student: The message – it has to be clear and concise and easily understood by a target audience.

James: They have to be able to get what it's talking about.

Suzanne: OK. Matthew?

Matthew: The target audience has to know what your message is.

Suzanne: What do you think a level 1, or compared to a level 4, would look like?

Matthew: Level 1 would be, like, the target audience doesn't understand what your message is. Suzanne: And what would a level 4 be?

Matthew: The target audience can understand your message.

Suzanne: What is the purpose of those facts and details?

Student: To back up, back up the answer.

Cassie: To help persuade the audience to react.

Suzanne: Excellent. What would level 1 look like?

Cassie: There wouldn't be many facts and details, and it wouldn't be very persuasive.

Suzanne: What about level 4?

Cassie: There would be many facts and details and so it would help, like, it would help the audience react.

Suzanne: Can I put any facts and details?

Cassie: No, they have to be relevant.

Suzanne: Relevant to what?

Cassie: The main idea, or message.

Suzanne: Relevant to the message?

Narrator: Students learn and apply assessment skills that make their learning explicit, build a common understanding of success and lead to the desired level of performance.

Hope: She asks us what we should put in the criteria. When I'm working on it, I'll stop sometimes and just look at the success criteria and then go back to my work and see if it's in there. You can go to a peer or someone and

ask them to look at it and see. You can look at other people's work to compare. When I'm looking at the rubric, it helps me understand how I'm supposed to do the work. I look at the criteria so I know how my work should be. I'd be giving examples, like the most important examples, to support the facts.

Narrator: Learning is more symmetrical in that teachers learn and model what they expect students to learn and do. It helps educators understand what it's like for students to struggle with rigorous and demanding tasks.

Cindy: My colleagues and I are actually doing what we want our students to be doing and learning. So if we want our students to have a common understanding of something, before we get to them, we have to have a common understanding of it. We do everything we want our students to do beforehand, so we know what it looks like, we know what it feels like, we anticipate what is going to come up, so that we're prepared. Everything is purposely and meaningfully planned ahead of time.

Kelly: What if we take the time and look at a couple, so we get to decide what makes a strong one, what makes a weak one. So look at 1.2 and 1.3, especially 1.3. We can evaluate the effectiveness of that presentation: the information, the theme, the opinion, the issues. Maybe be our turn to interpret if it's complex or difficult. Are they using direct messages, implied messages? 'Cause if we take the time to walk through that, then we'll see it as the students would see it. What's it going to look like through their eyes? So we could go through a couple of PSAs and critique them, like you said, to pull out the characteristics of what made it strong, what made it weak.

Cindy: There's not just PSAs out there that bring out the message...

Suzanne: We can look at it through the lens of the expectations. So, look at it in terms of interpreting the message, look at it in terms of the effectiveness and what techniques and conventions are used. Those pieces are going to help the students eventually to create their own media form.

Cindy: 'Cause those are the learning goals; it's the PSA that's like the vehicle to get there. Suzanne: That's right.

Narrator: Teachers routinely and collaboratively develop student's assessment literacy; teachers clarify what students are learning and together they provide timely feedback through self and peer assessment, and set new learning goals based on next steps.

Kelly: What are we looking to do?

Jordan: Get a message across. Inform.

Kelly: Get a message across for...?

Jenna: A target audience.

Curtis: For a certain target audience.

Kelly: Right, to convey what we want to say? We decided our learning goal, exactly, was to educate, persuade, inform, and have people to see our point of view about a social issue. So is our PSA going to enable us to do that?

Kelly: OK. I'd like you to take a look at the success criteria and your graphic organizers and I'd like you to each pick two pieces of criteria that you think are really important for you right now. Curtis: I think that educate and persuade is important. Jenna: Probably either the target audience or the clear, realistic message.

Jordan: Mine's probably the target audience and facts and examples.

Kelly: What I'd like you to do with your table partners is to share what you have so far with each other, and then I'd like each other to give feedback. What are the strengths, what are the next steps for your PSA based on what you've chosen for your success criteria right now?

Amy: I think right now, that you might be at a level 3, 'cause you do have your facts. And you might want to get your details to flow better. Maybe just put them in an order, a specific order to go with.

Lindsay: Make them into full sentences, because she has "can cause"... "shaken baby syndrome can cause", so into sentences.

Amy: Maybe during the acting, you could put a little sentence underneath it, what's happening and why you think they're doing it?

Megan: I'm still going to do a little bit more research to make them in complete sentences and to make it more flowing to put it in my Public Service Announcement.

Narrator: Through collaborative assessment students acquire the language and skills to assess, monitor and regulate their learning, resulting in improved achievement.

Teachers plan and model assessment for learning by listening and learning with and from their colleagues, as well as with and from their students. Each takes ownership for his or her learning and acts as a learning resource for others.

Tammy: We want to ensure they're using reliable sources.

Cindy: One of the students themselves said they have to be true facts or reliable facts. Kelly: Supportive facts that, that hit that target audience.

Suzanne: And that's a conversation we can have whole group or in their small group, of them discussing what are relevant resources and relevant sources and facts.

Kelly: 'Cause if we narrow their scope even when they're watching the PSA, where their scope is simply on the relevant details and they can focus in on that, to fill in the template and then be able to use that template comfortably on their own. I think it will help them keep focused. When they do the final task, it won't be the first time that they're demonstrating that learning. They'll have had multiple opportunities to either to peer self-assess, or they can assess with us.

Suzanne: If the student is clearly demonstrating that they understand relevant detail. And we can use it when evaluating their final product.

Kelly: Pull out your graphic organizers that help you brainstorm. I'd like you guys to share with each other, listen to one another, and give each other feedback related around that success criteria and what you have so far.

Matthew: Sometimes if I'm not fully sure, I'll go ask either a peer or my teacher to have feedback, so I can better understand my thing and what parts need to fix. You look over the success criteria; you have everything and that you know you did exactly what was on there. Whenever I have, like, those times where I really need just more time 'cause I'm really not sure I'm fully completed with it, I'll kinda look over, ask the teacher, ask for feedback, then if I'm actual sure after I've asked for feedback, with the success criteria and all my levels. Having group conversations, worksheets, and it helped a lot with having -- talking to peers, and having group talks.

Narrator: Assessment for, as and of learning provides access to multiple sources of assessment data before, during and after learning that can potentially be used as valid and reliable evidence.

This evidence informs and supports teacher's professional judgments when determining a grade and/or planning instruction.

Anna-Marie: I want to try to connect the notion of the teacher - student relationship as being parallel to the principal – teacher relationship. Through our conversations, which the teachers who were involved in this project and I have spent many hours conversing about our learning, what's going on in their classrooms as a direct result, for example, of this project – how can they apply some of the things that they're learning or "I did apply this, and this is what happened, what do you think?" And in terms of product, when I walk into their classrooms, you see the visible evidence; so you see learning goals posted, you see success criteria, you talk to students and you see that they know what they're learning, and they're doing what they're learning, and that the teacher and the students are on the same page. So there's all kinds of evidence available to me in my school that suggests that this experience has been very powerful for both teachers.