



Misconceptions about Formative Instructional Practices

DIRECTIONS: Read the common educator misconceptions below. Based on what you've learned so far, select the answer that you feel is the better information to help address this misconception. Record what makes your choice the better answer. Feel free to return to Module 1 as needed.

1. An assessment is viewed as an event or test rather than a process.

- A. The act of “assessing”—both formatively and summatively—is a process that includes gathering evidence about student learning and responding to the results.
- B. What makes assessment more than just an event or test is what you do with the results from the event, test, or activity. When formatively assessing, the results are used to improve learning and inform instruction. When summatively assessing, the results are used to make a judgment about student learning.

Why we chose our answer ...

2. Formative instructional practices are an initiative, and “this too shall pass.”

- A. Formative instructional practices are about good teaching—they are not a program or initiative.
- B. Formative instructional practices are supported in the research to raise levels of achievement for all learners, especially low achievers.

Why we chose our answer ...



3. All formative instructional practices are created equal.

- A. Although there are many formative instructional practices, Black and Wiliam recommend key practices—high-impact practices—based on their extensive research.
- B. Although there are many formative instructional practices for teachers, it is how students use formative instructional practices that needs to be heightened in classrooms.

Why we chose our answer ...

4. Using formative instructional practices means I have to change everything I do.

- A. Small and strategic changes make a big difference. Teachers will want to work together to learn about formative instructional practices and intentionally embed the practices proven to produce great gains in student achievement.
- B. Using formative instructional practices will also involve changing what students do. This means that teachers need to prepare students and model the high-impact practices that are proven to produce great gains in student achievement.

Why we chose our answer ...

5. I'm already using formative instructional practices (formative assessment). I have learning targets posted in my room.

- A. Clear learning targets are only the tip of the iceberg when it comes to formative instructional practices. They are important because they make the high-impact formative instructional practices possible.
- B. Although a great start, the power of learning targets occurs when teachers and students have a shared understanding of exactly what the learning is and what it looks like when a student has mastered or met the learning at varying levels.

Why we chose our answer ...



6. After administering a formative assessment, teachers always need to reteach and reassess their students.

- A. This is true some of the time, but not all of the time. After a formative assessment (a formative assessment event), teachers and students need to respond to what the data, or evidence, tells them.
- B. If reteaching is necessary, students should not be reassessed until they have additional opportunities to practice.

Why we chose our answer ...

7. Summative assessments are bad.

- A. “Summative assessments aren’t bad or wrong. They’re just not formative.” –Formative assessment expert Jan Chappuis, in her book, *Seven Strategies of Assessment for Learning*.
- B. Summative assessments are a necessary component of a balanced assessment system—in our classrooms, schools, and districts.

Why we chose our answer ...

8. Formative instructional practices always play out over a long period of time.

- A. This is true some of the time, but not all of the time. Using formative instructional practices includes gathering and responding to evidence of student learning both formally and informally.
- B. The process of using formative instructional practices can occur within a class lesson or even a matter of minutes. If a teacher or student gathered and responded to evidence of learning to improve learning, he or she has used formative instructional practices.

Why we chose our answer ...