Providing feedback to students

Feedback supports learning by focusing students' attention on specific aspects of their work and supporting their ongoing learning. Good feedback is specific, focused, and not overwhelming in scope, and supports students' positive perceptions of their own capability. Giving skillful feedback requires the teacher to make strategic choices about the frequency, method, and content of feedback and to communicate in ways that are understandable by students.

Advancing justice through providing feedback to students

Providing feedback that helps students to see their strengths and focus on areas for improvement enables teachers to partner with and empower learners. When lacking feedback, students can feel invisible, uncertain about the quality of their work, and unclear about what to do next. Skillful feedback, whether offered publicly or privately, positions learners as visible, valued, and in control of their learning. It demonstrates respect for students' ideas and work by taking them seriously.

Equitable provision of feedback requires that teachers understand and intentionally work against normalized patterns by which Black, Latinx and Native American children receive significantly less feedback than their peers. Often the feedback they receive is negative, based on teachers' misunderstandings of children's thinking, or is non-academic.

The measure of feedback lies less in what the teacher says than in what students interpret the teacher as having said. Feedback that students interpret as affirming students' capacity and supporting their learning not only helps them improve their work or thinking in a particular moment, but supports ownership of their learning and their identity as practitioners of an academic discipline.

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Decomposition of providing feedback to students

PREPARE	SHARE			MONITOR
Prepare feedback	Use appropriate language and tone	Focus students' attention on specific features of their work	Support students to use the feedback	Monitor students' response
• Interpret student work or thinking in relation to the learning goal • Determine the purpose and main points of the feedback • Determine the timing and mode of the feedback • Determine the audience for the feedback and how it might position students	• Use clear and respectful language • Reference specific examples from student work or thinking • Provide feedback while students are still working toward the goal, or contextualize feedback in regards to a current goal • Offer next steps • Offer a useable amount of feedback Possible techniques • Begin by identifying strengths or understandings • Open with a question that invites students to reflect on their progress or success	• Direct feedback to the task, process, and/or effort rather than on students themselves • Identify and build on what students already know and can do • Support students to see their progress • Name specific aspects of the work or thinking that are strong and those that need improvement Possible techniques • Identify or elicit strengths or strategies and specific examples from the work • Name or invite students to name a process or strategy they used and to identify the outcome it produced • Describe or collaboratively determine discrepancies between the student work and the learning goal • Identify or support students to identify errors or misconceptions • Provide corrective or clarifying information	• Give students time to consider the feedback • Offer, or support students to articulate, concrete next steps to move toward their goals • Design opportunities for students to apply the feedback • Orient students to the ways current feedback is relevant to future work Possible techniques: • Invite students to respond or ask questions • Model a process or strategy students might use to improve their work or thinking • Name a specific opportunity that students will have to apply the feedback to improve their work or process • Invite students to set a new goal	• Interpret student work or thinking for evidence of new understandings, processes or outcomes • Acknowledge students' use of feedback • Support students to seek feedback independently • Support students to provide feedback to one another Possible techniques • Invite students to reflect on the way they responded to feedback and how it affected their work or thinking • Give students opportunities to request specific kinds of feedback or feedback on specific aspects of their work • Ask questions to help students reflect on their progress and goals in relation to the feedback • Reflect on how the language, content, amount or timing of feedback may have shaped students' response

Visual representation