

Arts Assessment For Learning

MUSIC — 3RD GRADE

REFLECTION: BEGINNER RECORDER SKILLS

Without judgment, describe what you did. just the facts:

Our first unit was about assessment in music. The students and I created their own checklists based upon what they thought an audience should do during a performance, what a performer should do, and what a singer and instrumentalist should do. I recently started the third graders on a unit involving just rhythm on a rhythm practice sheet, using their hands to clap and count, as well as drum sticks. They are still instructed to use each checklist while sitting and listening, and while playing or singing. After they performed well on the rhythm sheet, I moved to “sizzling” (using the consonant ‘TS’ to practice their tonguing technique after saying the rhythm syllables). I then handed the students recorders and asked them to perform the rhythm sheet on open fingerings after sizzling their rhythms to develop their tonguing technique. I also introduced them to a hybrid rubric checklist that featured a few items from their original checklists. They have a beginning knowledge of the new assessment tool, but have been practicing the sharing of their feedback since September. Last week, we started fingering the notes ‘B’ and ‘A’ while playing the rhythms and using the five line staff.

What went well?

The students seamlessly continued their feedback process and took well to the sizzling as practice for tonguing on their recorders.

What was so-so?

They are still shaky with using the language from the hybrid assessment tool.

What was the most challenging part of trying this?

The most challenging part was the organization of it all. The students have music during first period and many come to school late therefore disrupting the partner pairs, plus we are moved around and displaced from the stage (without prior warning) at times due to other rehearsals. This makes it difficult for me to plan ahead and move their equipment beforehand.

What was the impact of this strategy on student learning?

- The students knew exactly what language to use when giving feedback, because it was in front of them in the rubric and on their student-made checklists all year around. This made it easier for them to learn the vocabulary because it was embedded into every lesson and applied.
- The students always had a working knowledge of their expectations while in music class.

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- The speed of the Students' learning with respect to performing rhythm and notes was a lot faster and more accurate.

What questions were raised for you as you implemented the assessment practice?

- Will I have time to implement this formative assessment with all of my scheduling difficulties?
- Will the students react as well this year with this new hybrid rubric checklist as others have in the past with my other assessment tools?
- How can I continue making this process better and give the students the tools they need in order to be engrossed in this process?

What new insights or understandings are forming as a result of this experience?

- The more vocabulary the students get to apply in their music performance, the more comfortable and confident they are with using that vocabulary in their feedback process.
- Every little bit counts. Ensuring that the students go through some form of musical formative assessment process in each lesson will improve their learning and overall performance.
- Learn from your students. Use them in the creation of the rubrics to learn what matters to them when performing and incorporate it into every aspect of formative assessment possible.

How do the results of your action plan inform your inquiry question?

The results (filled out hybrid rubric-checklists, video footage of the learning and feedback process, and the end of the year performance level) showed that regular use of formative assessment did improve the students' ability to play three notes and more during the first year of recorder playing. The students were able to absorb the language needed in order to evaluate and influence their peer's performance as well as their own.

Documentation to bring (student work, photos, writing, teacher journal, etc):

Student Work:

1. filled out Hybrid Rubric-Checklists
2. Video footage of an entire lesson showing the feedback process and the students' ability to absorb the information given and improve.
3. Practice Triangle used in the learning process.