

Arts Assessment For Learning

MUSIC — 3-5TH GRADES

REFLECTION: FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT IN THE KODALY CLASSROOM

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

Over the course of four years I have been able to promote an effective classroom musical culture using peer to peer and self assessment as students take control of their learning. We developed a set of checklists, rubrics and protocols for students singing and playing in the classroom together. Students have become more critical and active listeners as they assess performances and writing.

What went well?

Students have shown improvement playing the recorder and singing because they listened to one another and to themselves. They paid more attention to detail. Students have improved the ability to discuss their musical performances critically. The evidence for this is the increased peer to peer discussion regarding the performances.

What was so-so?

I have to improve my efforts with differentiating instruction. In response to this observation I have students move into pairs based on common benchmark examples. Students attempting to play star song #4 will seek out a partner who is also working on the same example. This can be done with songs students are singing or playing on the recorder. The language of my rubrics is not student-friendly yet.

What was the most challenging part of trying this?

Students did not create or design their own goals and rubrics. Time is limited and I have to use discretion when designing opportunities for student-led work. I know I have to re-write the rubrics to be more student-friendly and to include students in this process. That will require careful consideration. How can we reword the rubrics without losing momentum in music-making?

What was the impact of this strategy on student learning?

Students correct singing with peer feedback and correct rhythm errors. Students listen to one-another and provide the feedback that helps a performer. But while listening to partners and classmates students are becoming critical listeners.

Arts Assessment For Learning

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

How can I apply these practices in other contexts? Will I be able to apply what I am doing with upper grade students with k-2 students? How will I need to adapt my tools and practices?

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

Peer to peer assessment heightens student engagement and learning. The learning is more effective and efficient. Formative assessment can be adapted to writing activities. I have expanded the use of formative assessment to student writing examples. Writing examples can be opportunities for immediate revision and learning.

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

I refer to a rubric in my action plan. It was not necessary to use a rubric after all. A checklist was all I needed to have the students engage in peer to peer assessment. For the recorder-playing portion of my action plan, students used a scoring guide. For the singing portion students used a simple rubric.