



Getting Started with AFL in Science Transcription: Video 2

Interviewees

Frances Tan

Cambridge trainer and Science teacher

Fatema Zaidi

Cambridge trainer and Science teacher

Zubair Anis

Cambridge trainer and Science teacher

What are some successful strategies for AFL in Science lessons?

Frances Tan

I think something that I've also used in my recent years is exam wrappers. So what happens is when students get back their question papers, I would ask them questions like 'How much time have you used to prepare for this exam?', 'What actually did you do to prepare for this exam?' and when they review their scripts questions would be including, 'What do you think went wrong?', 'Is it because you didn't understand the question or did you not write the key words required?'. So these kind of questions help students to understand, you know, it's a bit of metacognition in fact, where they're thinking about their learning and where they went wrong and how they can improve.

I think the Think-Pair-Share strategy would be really very helpful because it allows us to think about what they know and they could share it with a partner and then we could actually just, the teacher could get the feedback from the class on what the students really understood.

Fatema Zaidi

A very important aspect of AFL is the feedback aspect.

Zubair Anis

Effective feedback plays a pivotal role in the success of implementing AFL in the classroom.

Fatema Zaidi

I think one of the things that I'd like to mention is the use of rubrics. Again, a rubric can really provide quite individual feedback without the teacher having to write, you know lots of words or sentences. Just simple ticks can communicate a lot and at the same time, you know, the rubric can also communicate the success criteria that's required for the students to do well you know,

on that particular work. I mean, we tend to use rubrics, especially to give feedback on practical work, where we find it quite useful.

It's not possible to always give personalised feedback in writing to students so verbal feedback can be very useful. Again, I think technology can be really helpful there, where you can have, you know, there might be aspects that many students might have, you know, made similar mistakes in their working and you can just copy paste those comments for them or leave little voice notes even on their work if it's been done digitally. And I think that makes it quite personal also because I think teaching and learning is quite a personal business.

Zubair Anis

One of my favourite points when we talk about effective feedback is that you always praise the work and not the learner. Now, why do I like this so much? Because when you flip this at times, rather than praising, you have to do the opposite, which is to perform critique. So when you make this a habit of praising the work and not the learner when providing feedback, when you will criticise something or point out a mistake, it will be in the work and not the learner. That would help them actually grow and understand.

Fatema Zaidi

Another one that is a real favourite with the students also, they love these online quizzes. So, Kahoot is one of the online platforms that I use quite frequently and students feel like they're having a lot of fun but actually, I also am able to gather some really valuable data because I know exactly which question was answered correctly or incorrectly by which students.

Zubair Anis

When students/learners, they're performing that practical, you take rounds around the lab and you begin to have these conversations that if you're using a metre rule, why are you measuring correct to the nearest millimetre? What is the precision of this instrument? So you actually induce those thoughts for them to think about how to improve the accuracy or the precision of that experiment. When doing oscillations, you tend to ask them why they are timing 20 oscillations instead of a single oscillation. When do they start timing? When do they stop timing? Does it have to be the amplitude or the equilibrium position where they start timing? So these are the questions that force them to think and improve the accuracy of the experiment.

Fatema Zaidi

Another strategy that works really well is the use of exit passes, in which I would, you know, set either just a short question or ask students to write down a definition or their understanding of a certain idea that's just been introduced. Nothing too elaborate. I wouldn't give a whole A4 page, something that I could also just process very quickly and collect the slips as the students would leave.

Zubair Anis

Another successful strategy is the brilliant collection of example candidate response booklets available on the School Support Hub. Not only using those, one can also create a digital collection of student responses over a period of time. I've created a collection of my own in

which we actually take out those responses and give them to the learners to actually discuss in terms of peer marking, and then they actually rank those responses as well.

Fatema Zaidi

Another strategy that works really well for me is the use of mini whiteboards in the class. So I'm a chemistry teacher, and I might be just introducing organic chemistry to the class and I can ask them to draw structures and just hold them up, you know, and I can just, you know, with a quick glance, I can tell, you know, what some of the misconceptions are or the mistakes that we're making and they can be corrected before moving on further. So I think that works really well.