



Getting Started with AFL in Science Transcription: Video 4

Interviewees

Fatema Zaidi

Cambridge trainer and Science teacher

Zubair Anis

Cambridge trainer and Science teacher

Frances Tan

Cambridge trainer and Science teacher

What are some of the challenges of AFL in Science?

Fatema Zaidi

I think the, you know, being so content heavy, I think that is one of the challenges in teaching a science syllabus and, you know, it also makes assessment for learning all the more important.

Zubair Anis

When we talk about grades in science, learners tend to be very competitive. They have this race to achieve grades. So if I'm going to practice AFL in my classroom and I would give them feedback in the form of comments and not actually give a grade, at the end of the day, they would press me to actually give them a grade or assign them a grade. So I need to convince my learners that it is this feedback in the form of comments that will eventually help you to get a much better grade, which is your target at the end of the day.

Fatema Zaidi

I think most science teachers would agree with me that there's a lot of content in any science syllabus and I think we're usually the ones rushing, you know, towards the end, just struggling to finish the syllabus. So there are a lot of concepts and they build on previous concepts. And you know, so many times we see that if a student has been absent, missed some lessons in the middle, they struggle to keep up and so on. So, it's so important that your student has, or your learners have, gauged the first few fundamental concepts before moving on to the more advanced ones.

Frances Tan

I think, science teachers need to realise that we are actually language teachers, just that our vocabulary is not in everyday language. They tend to be technical and that's why, you know, this will be a challenge that we associate with assessment for learning in science. We need to

understand that we have a role to play in communicating science as not just facts and concepts, but actual languages.

Zubair Anis

You know, in terms of physics, we've got nucleus, then we've got nuclei, then we've got nucleons, then you've got nuclide notation and then we've got neutrons. So it tends to be mind boggling. So when we talk about self-assessment in the language of science, you have to have those conversations during classroom time and actually make the learners reflect on the correct use of language.

Fatema Zaidi

Back to back classes sometimes can make it very difficult for teachers to sort of gather evidence that is required for effective formative assessment or assessment for learning. You know, then they're already burdened with marking and we don't really want to, you know, come up with strategies that would really, you know, add to that load and we need to look at smart ways of sort of, you know, eliciting the evidence that we need so that we can process it quickly enough to modify or to re-strategise before the next lesson.