



Professional Learning Module

Modeling the enactment of the Formative Assessment:

Steps to Solving Equations (Concept Development)

This Professional Learning Module describes how a facilitator can implement, with fidelity, the Shell Center's Formative Assessment Lesson, *Steps to Solving Equations*, so that participants understand how to enact, in their own classrooms, this lesson that is compatible with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Resources for each component of the module are included as page numbers in the *Lesson Guide*, and as links to additional professional learning tools such as handouts and videos.

Shell Center's Lesson Guide: <http://map.mathshell.org/materials/lessons.php?taskid=431&subpage=concept>

Framing the lesson

Teachers frame the lesson so that students know what to expect throughout the entire process, from the pre- to the post-lesson assessment. Participants learn what it means to *frame* a lesson, why it is important, and what might go wrong if it is neglected.

Handout: [Framing a Formative Assessment Lesson](#)

Express Yourself: the pre-lesson assessment

The pre-lesson assessment is designed to *surface* the common issues that impede student learning. It is important that students are given the opportunity to figure out how to get started on the problem without help from their teachers or peers. Guiding students toward an effective approach robs them of the opportunity to learn how to engage in CCSS Standards for Mathematical Practice [MP1](#) (*Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them*). The pre-lesson assessment is not graded, but is analyzed to identify common issues. These data are used to modify instruction.

Lesson Guide: page T-2; assessment S-1 & S-2; **Facilitator Notes:** [Administering the Pre-Lesson Assessment](#)

Whole-class interactive introduction

For successful enactment of the introduction it is important to follow the *Lesson Guide*'s suggestions exactly. Replacing the whole-class discussion with a mini-lesson will quickly sabotage the entire lesson.

Lesson Guide: pages T-4 & T-5; slides Writing Algebraic Expressions P-1, P-2, P-3, & Which Equations Describe the Story? P-4

Individual work

Students are given a set of word stories to review individually. This provides an initial, independent opportunity to become familiar with the material, which they will see again in a collaborative setting.

Lesson Guide: page T-5; card set S-3

Introducing the collaborative activity

By taking care to introduce the collaborative activity teachers give students the chance to wrap their arms around the activity that they are being asked to do. Students need to be given clear instructions in writing as well as access to these written instructions for the duration of the activity so that they can grapple with the complexities of the activity and maximize their learning.

Lesson Guide: pages T-6, T-7 & T-8

$$\text{Total} = 3x + 3x + 3 + 3x + 6$$

Engaging in the collaborative activity

The collaborative activity is designed as an opportunity for students to learn. This gives students an opportunity to engage in many of the CCSS Standards for Mathematical Practice—for example [MP2](#) (*Reason abstractly and quantitatively*) and [MP3](#) (*Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others*). This opportunity to learn is enhanced when teachers give students feedback, allow students to struggle productively in homogeneous pairs, and mini-conference so as to scaffold student learning.

Lesson Guide: pages T-6, T-7 & T-8; card sets S-3, S-4 & S-5;

Videos: [A Teacher Listens](#), [The Importance of Homogeneous Grouping](#) & [Mini-Conference](#)

Whole-class discussion

This is the most difficult part of almost any lesson. Teachers who have enacted the Shell Center's Formative Assessment Lessons tell us that this is the part of the lesson where they feel the most vulnerable, and the part where they find the *Lesson Guide*'s specific advice on what they might say to their students most useful.

Lesson Guide: page T-8; **Video:** [Whole-class discussion](#)

Express Yourself (revisited): the post-lesson assessment & sharing prepared feedback

Students are given back their pre-lesson assessments and their teachers' feedback questions and comments before being asked to complete the post-lesson assessment. The post-lesson assessment gives students the chance to demonstrate growth across the pre- and post-lesson assessments. We have found it important to ask students to complete it individually in class, without help from other students or their teacher.

Lesson Guide: page T-8; assessment S-6 & S-7; **Facilitator Notes:** [Administering the Post-Lesson Assessment](#)



Professional Learning Module

Following up on the enactment of the Formative Assessment Lesson: *Solving Equations (Concept Development)*

This Professional Learning Module describes how to follow up on the enactment of the lesson *Steps to Solving Equations*, and how to facilitate the professional learning opportunities that are afforded by Formative Assessment Lessons.

Shell Center's Lesson Guide: <http://map.mathshell.org/materials/lessons.php?taskid=431&subpage=concept>
Resource: [Facilitator Notes](#)

The mathematics of *Steps to Solving Equations*

Participants reflect on the lesson to determine its mathematics. They consider its alignment to the CCSS and reflect upon how the lesson presents students with an opportunity to learn.

Lesson Guide: page T-1; **Handout:** [The Mathematics of Steps to Solving Equations](#)

Analyze student responses to the pre-lesson assessment

Participants analyze a small set of student responses to the pre-lesson assessment to identify and name the 3 to 5 most important common issues evident in the student work. Participants record these data in a copy of the *Growth Analysis Spreadsheet*.

Lesson Guide: pages T-3, T-9 & T-10; **Student work:** [Express Yourself](#);

Spreadsheet: [Growth Analysis Spreadsheet](#); **Handout:** [How to use the Student Analysis Growth Spreadsheet](#)

Write feedback questions and comments that will move the learner forward

Using the *Criteria for Feedback* handout, participants practice developing 3 to 5 feedback questions that are designed to encourage students to think more deeply about the common issues and move their learning forward. This written feedback is shared with students at the end of the lesson, just before they begin the post-lesson assessment.

Handout: [Criteria for Feedback](#)

Analyze student responses to the post-lesson assessment

Participants analyze a small set of student responses to the post-lesson assessment and add these data to their copy of the *Growth Analysis Spreadsheet* in order to illustrate student growth across the pre- and post-lesson assessments.

Student work: [Express Yourself \(revisited\)](#)

Modifying subsequent instruction

Assessment is not formative until it is used to modify subsequent instruction. The Formative Assessment Lessons are designed to reveal evidence about student learning. Here participants use all of the evidence — the evidence revealed during the lesson and that collected from the assessments—to modify instruction so that it better promotes student learning and is compatible with the CCSS.

When to enact this lesson in your classroom

Deciding when to enact a Formative Assessment Lesson can be a challenge. Many lessons fit well about two-thirds of the way through a compatible unit of instruction, but would also work well as part of a review. The *Course Outline* provides a suggestion for when to enact this lesson.

Resource: [A Course Outline for Grade 7](#)

Link the structure of the lessons to the theory of formative assessment

The Big Idea and the Five Strategies studied earlier convey the interpretation of formative assessment that underpins the Shell Center's lessons. Participants consider how the structure of the lessons maps on to the theory.

Handout: [Big Idea of Formative Assessment](#); **Handout:** [Five Strategies of Formative Assessment](#)