Feedback for Deeper Learning
Educator effectively delivers feedback that guides student thinking and encourages metacognition.

Key Method
The educator provides feedback that guides student thinking and encourages metacognition.

Method Components
Research shows that much of the feedback given by teachers is ineffective or detrimental to student learning. This is especially worrisome given the importance of feedback when students are mastering complex tasks such as problem-solving and analysis. Unlike situations where students are purely being asked to memorize and recall information, deeper learning requires students to reflect on the cognitive process and understand the strategies that lead to successful performance. Feedback is crucial to this metacognitive awareness. If our goal is merely for students to remember facts ("Who were the Axis powers in World War II?") then letting the student know if the answer is right or wrong will suffice. But if we want students to think about the interplay of ideas ("To what extent was the outbreak of World War II inevitable?"), then we need to give students robust feedback that guides their thinking.

Determine the Learning Objective and the Success Criteria
The first step of effective feedback is being clear about expectations for student work. Students need to understand what the success criteria are for their learning. This can be communicated by distributing a grading rubric or by looking at examples of high-quality and poor-quality work as a group to determine what constitutes success.

Provide Feedback that is Specific, Descriptive, Focused, and Refers to the Success Criteria
Effective feedback shares four key characteristics:

- **Specific:** The feedback should include a specific action step that the student can take to improve his or her learning. Telling the student to “keep it up” or “give it another shot” does not help the student understand the process to move forward. Examples of specific feedback include telling a student to “provide more explanation for why the hypothesis seems plausible” or “add an extra sentence after each quote to interpret and connect the quotes to the thesis.”

- **Descriptive:** The feedback should help the student understand his or her cognitive process as it is revealed in the work. It is important to focus on the process, rather than just the result. Telling a student that an answer is incorrect provides little metacognitive insight. On the other hand, helping students understand whether the strategy revealed in the work is effective or needs improvement helps students understand the “how” behind the “what.” An example of descriptive feedback would be, “I see you’re outlining the steps for this experiment. I like how you’ve sequenced the steps and included the names of the solutions. The next thing to do is to include more detail about the quantities of the
solutions and what lab materials you will use (vials, Bunsen burners, etc.). This will provide the necessary level of detail as outlined in the success criteria.”

- **Focused:**
  Feedback is considerably more impactful when it focuses on only one or two points. Prioritize the most important takeaways and explain them thoroughly rather than distributing a laundry list of tasks for improvement.

- **Refers to the Success Criteria:**
  The feedback should refer to the success criteria. Teachers who include additional comments that are not outlined in the success criteria risk frustrating students who lose sight of the purpose of the assignment. If students are learning to create an argument that is supported by feedback, the teacher should not comment on aspects of the student’s work that are irrelevant to the task, such as the formatting of the paragraphs.

**Give Students Opportunities to Act on the Feedback**
Students need to put the feedback into practice shortly after receiving it. Research suggests that if the teacher is providing the feedback along with a final grade, the feedback will have little impact on student learning. Feedback is best used while the learning process is still unfinished, as with writing drafts, ungraded in-class work, and in the midst of projects.

**Supporting Research**


**Resources**


**Submission Guidelines & Evaluation Criteria**

*The items in this following section detail what must be submitted for evaluation. To earn the micro-credential, you must receive a passing evaluation for Parts 1, 3, and 4 and a “Yes” for each component in Part 2.*
Part 1. Overview Questions
(450-word limit total):

- **Activity Description**: What was the learning objective and the success criteria for the activity?
  - **Passing**: Learning objective and success criteria are clear, with sufficient detail to understand how the feedback would align with the objective and the criteria.

- **Activity Evaluation**: How did the feedback guide student thinking and encourage metacognition?
  - **Passing**: There is sufficient explanation for how the feedback guided student thinking and encouraged metacognition.

Part 2. Work Examples/Artifacts
Please submit evidence toward your demonstration of competency in providing feedback for deeper learning. This should be an assignment with written feedback or a video of the teacher delivering feedback orally.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feedback connects to the learning objective and the success criteria.</th>
<th>“Yes”</th>
<th>“Almost”</th>
<th>“Not Yet”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feedback ties closely to the learning objective and the success criteria.</td>
<td>Feedback references several elements that are not tied to the learning objective and the success criteria.</td>
<td>Feedback is disconnected from the learning objective and the success criteria.</td>
<td></td>
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| Feedback provides the student with specific information on how to improve. | Feedback gives specific steps that the student can take to improve learning. | Feedback is somewhat vague in what the student can do to improve learning. | Feedback is vague or too broad to provide clarity about next steps for the student. |

| Feedback describes the student’s cognitive process as it is revealed in the work. | Feedback serves as an observation of how the student’s process is revealed in the work. | Feedback emphasizes the results of the student’s work rather than the process. | Feedback does not reveal anything about learning strategies or the student’s process. |

| Feedback is focused. | Feedback is limited to one or two suggestions for improvement. | Feedback includes more than two suggestions for improvement. | Feedback includes a laundry list of items to improve. |

Part 3. Student Reflection
Please submit two student-created reflections on their experience of receiving feedback for deeper learning. Use the following questions as a guide (250-word limit for each reflection):

- Did the feedback help you to understand what steps to take to improve your work?
- Did you have an opportunity to apply the feedback shortly after your teacher gave you the comments?
  - **Passing**: Student reflections clearly indicate how the feedback gave guidance on the next step in the learning process and how the student was able to implement the feedback. The reflections are specific and convincing.

Part 4. Educator Reflection

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Provide a reflection on what you learned using the following questions as a guide (200-word limit):

- What was the impact of providing feedback for deeper learning?
- How will you use feedback to drive deeper learning in the future?

- **Passing:** Educator reflections clearly indicate how feedback encouraged deeper learning for students and clearly state how feedback will be used to drive deeper learning in the future. The examples given are specific and convincing.