

I believe that feedback is an emerging part of a pedagogy that fosters communication, collaboration, sharing, and use of technology in our connected world.

In keeping with the idea of the feedback-friendly classroom philosophy, edtech strategies can be harnessed using conversations, commenting, blogging, Tweeting, reflecting, and using talking circles and other key strategies to promote effective feedback. We can target excellent feedback strategies when we

- consider our own goals
- think about what we need to improve
- think about what we can say to improve ourselves, help someone else out, co-construct new knowledge
- figure out what strategies we can implement
- determine how it fits in with current subjects
- track and collect data that are meaningful to students, school, school community, global community, and assessment data

The Inquiry Process

A perpetual feedback process supports and enhances the process of inquiry. Inquiry involves, though is not limited to, students' ability to continue to ask questions and move their learning toward topics and knowledge they want or need to build next.

Feedback promotes inquiry; inquiry opens doors for feedback. It is a process that can continue to evolve. When we stifle the process of inquiry, we stifle the process of feedback. We want our students to ask questions and be able to take those questions through the processes that lead to answers. To do this, we need to teach students to stop regularly and seek feedback. *Do the other students understand your inquiry? Is the information that is being gathered in the process adequate? Does it keep you on the right track?* When students begin their inquiries and start with questions, they need help to hone them. Questioning is a skill; therefore, ample modeling, practice, and ongoing feedback are essential to ask appropriate questions.

Inquiry is much more complex than merely asking questions and finding answers. It is a process by which we encourage students to identify what they want or need to learn, to effectively find the best information they are seeking, and then to turn that information into something useful and continue with the inquiry process. Through inquiry, students keep personal control over their learning and proceed at their pace when they are ready for the next step. This enables them to ask the questions they need when they are personally ready for the answers, not when an educator deems it necessary for assessment. Asking questions and wondering about the world becomes normalized when we know that learning and feedback are always at work within the classroom. Even the end of a unit, a closed-inquiry process, or assessment with summative feedback are great opportunities to have students continue to interact with the feedback and allow their natural curiosities to drive new learning forward.

Collaborating with feedback is essential while engaging in inquiry. When students are given opportunities to share ideas and bounce them off each other, they exercise an inherent ability (sometimes with teacher guidance) to figure out with each other exactly where they need to be in their learning. What a great way to increase student agency! We not only should encourage students to share their ideas together and engage in peer assessment, but also should model the process of collaboratively refining their plans as they progress through their learning. As

Inquiry does not have to end after an assessment, nor does it have to be solely supported and driven by the teacher. Our mindsets can expand to include teaching students to become skilled at feedback processes.

Sharing is inevitably an important part of the learning process by which we gain feedback and give feedback to others.

See Chapter 8 for more on curriculum expectations and success criteria.

students work together to discover patterns and confirm or disprove hypotheses, we can help them clarify and extend their thinking. We can give them opportunities to demonstrate their understanding, skills, and knowledge in new ways.

When we allow students to share their learning in a safe environment, we provide opportunities for new ideas to develop and for fostering differentiated learning opportunities. Ongoing interactions with peers in collaborative situations are a powerful way for students to identify areas of strengths and limitations. It is important to integrate key information about strengths and weaknesses, interests and learning needs, to help students choose how they will represent their learning to others. Then we can feed this information forward to extend student learning to new contexts and learning opportunities, both inside and outside of the learning environment.

If we are conscious of the feedback that is already taking place, we can modify it to promote strong learning relationships and new levels of learning that extend much more deeply than the learning expectations. Self-feedback and peer feedback are essential to the feedback-friendly classroom as a natural process of students' development as learners. We can foster this process by setting up a classroom culture to support reflection and other key skills that promote growth and development. We can then flexibly assess student learning as it fits into the curriculum expectations and success criteria that we uniquely create together.

Designing Inquiry

To avoid problems with the uncontrolled and non-positive feedback students receive from their peers, with the dilemma of not getting around to each student, or with giving feedback too late within a task, we need to look at how we are designing our inquiry processes. We can break our learning processes into phases, with strategies to reinforce the feedback given to each student at each phase of the process. This is where we model feedback for our students and help them learn how to provide the right kind of feedback at each phase of the inquiry process. Further, we can provide opportunities to help students document and reflect on the feedback that they have received. Finally, they can incorporate this into their work throughout the process, before moving on to the next phase. The inquiry process involves four steps:

1. **Acquire:** Students acquire new information guided by learning goals, desired curriculum outcomes, and their questions. However, they do not always know if their questions are good questions. *Do other students understand what we are looking for with our questions? How can we find out?*
2. **Manipulate:** This is where students begin to build their plan for learning more information. The manipulation of information will be based on learning goals, previous knowledge, and future questions. This is where students start the process of building knowledge. *What do we do with this information? What technological tools are we using? What success criteria are we meeting? How do we manipulate the information to suit our academic purposes?* Note that manipulation is shaped by personal backgrounds, cultures, and experiences; it lies where teacher understanding meets the unique range of experiences brought forth by the students
3. **Process:** This stage deals with how our cognitive processes work to make meaning from the data we have acquired and manipulated. The information is processed via a strategy or organizational tool. *Did our information answer*