

Evaluation

“Evaluation provides key information to students, teachers, parents and administrators.”

Evaluation is the process of analyzing assessment data and making decisions about student progress and instruction based on the results. Evaluation provides students, teachers, parents and administrators with essential information.

In the Intensive Core French program, student evaluation is based on the following principles:

Evaluation is an integral part of the learning process.

Assessment tasks reflect the outcomes of the program and the types of learning activities in regular use in the classroom. Evaluation is criterion-referenced; students are assessed on their achievement of the outcomes. The emphasis of the Intensive Core French program is on the development of literacy skills. The balance among these skills (speaking and listening; reading and viewing; writing and representing) needs to be maintained.

There should be an opportunity for students to reflect upon and provide feedback on the following:

- their perspective on the learning experience
- their preference of the methodologies used
- their views on themes and topics
- their perception of relevancy of themes
- their suggestions of other themes
- their preferred classroom resources
- their preferred types of evaluation
- their progress

Evaluation is both planned and ongoing.

Students should know when, how, and on what they are being evaluated; the evaluation plan should be communicated to students and parents at the beginning of the year. Students play an essential role in evaluation (peer evaluation of group work, self-evaluation, suggestions for evaluation). Evaluation should be flexible, accounting for student progress over the year but also providing a clear picture of how students will be assessed.

Evaluation requires both formative and summative components.*Formative*

Formative evaluation improves student performance by means of feedback that is precise, clear and directly related to the task. Formative evaluation assists the teacher and student by identifying areas where students need help. Teachers then adjust instruction to accommodate these needs.

The Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers (CASLT) has developed formative evaluation instruments and activities for elementary Core French: French as a Second language Formative Assessment Package, Beginner Level (CASLT)

When one considers the student-centred nature of Intensive Core French, rubrics comprise some of the most effective tools for formative evaluation. It is essential that students view the rubric prior to its use in the evaluation of a project or similar piece of work. A well designed and tested rubric serves several purposes:

- It clearly shows the students the expectations of a particular evaluation.
- It serves as a working guide for the student(s) throughout the project.
- Upon completion of a particular piece of work, it serves as a precise and effective way to identify specific strengths and challenges of individual students.
- It provides for meaningful student/teacher/parent conferencing about the evaluation process.
- For the purposes of evaluation, it provides to students, parents and teachers a precise and clear picture of required needs and useful strengths.

Summative

Summative evaluation involves making a judgment based on data. Reporting may be anecdotal or reflect a letter or number grade. Schools and school districts have policies and procedures on reporting and other aspects of evaluation. The teacher should consult these when developing an evaluation plan.

Evaluation includes a variety of assessment techniques.

Assessment is the systematic process of gathering information on student learning and performance. To obtain a complete picture of student performance, a variety of assessment techniques is recommended.

Assessment Techniques

Assessment Techniques

Assessment techniques for inclusion in an evaluation plan follow.

Projects

(Refer to Principes Fondamentaux - Intensive Core French Support Document - July 2009)

Communicative/experiential projects are used to assess outcomes. Students engage in a series of activities during the unit that help them complete a task. The project is based on selected outcomes and encourages students to link their life experiences to their second language learning. For example, a birthday card or arranging a birthday party might be experiential projects in a theme related to friends and celebrations. Sometimes projects may require that students work cooperatively.

Teacher Observation

Observation provides information on student performance. The teacher establishes criteria for the observing and provides feedback to a student as soon as possible following the activity. For example, in observing a role play, the teacher would establish criteria for the task, and at the end of the activity, provide feedback to students based on the observation of those criteria. The teacher may use a checklist or rating scale to assist in recording information.

Interviews

Interviews are exchanges of information, usually a conversation. Formal interviews are used to assess Intensive Core French students at the end of the intensive period. It is also common to hold a formal interview late in the academic year, to assess overall progress in French. Informal interviews occur on a regular basis during class time. The teacher may also observe students as they interview each other. Interviews should be related to the topics studied and involve the use of known vocabulary and language.

Portfolios

A portfolio is a file of work samples, including projects, writing pieces, workbook pages, journal entries and audio or video recordings. Items may be kept in an exercise book, or the portfolio may be a folder or binder. A portfolio may be for a unit, for the Intensive Core French period, or the school year. If the portfolio is compiled over a long period students may select pieces they wish to include for the next year.

Portfolios allow teachers, parents and students to see, almost at a glance, the progress that the student has made over time.

Self and Peer Assessment

Self and peer assessment are important components of formative evaluation. Peer-assessment helps students develop a sense of community and responsibility. It gives learners a variety of responses to their work and, like self-assessment, provides the teacher with information on how activities might be improved. Peer-assessment is used to help assess group performance. For example, other students might select from a given list the aspect of a presentation they liked best (gestes, vocabulaire, couleurs, dessins). This encourages active listening and close observation by all students.

Self-assessment encourages students to:

- reflect on their learning
- identify what they have accomplished
- focus on areas needing improvement
- plan and organize to accomplish a task
- suggest changes to the project or instructional methodology

For self and peer assessment, students need models of the responses expected of them. For example, the teacher needs to review the statements on a rating scale or a checklist before starting the task. For beginning students, rating scales may be a series of images, numbers, or one-word descriptions.

Using Rubrics

Rubrics

Rubrics give clear performance criteria and are used for scoring or rating student work. Rubrics benefit teachers, students and parents. For teachers, using rubrics leads to greater consistency and accuracy in assessment. Students benefit from understanding the expectations and receiving specific feedback on the task. Parents are able to closely monitor student progress.

Rubrics range from simple to complex. For example, checklists, rating scales, and scoring grids can be used as rubrics. Rubrics are often used with other assessment techniques. Students can be taught to effectively use various rubrics to evaluate their own work or that of their peers.

Resources on Evaluation

Further information on student evaluation is contained in the recommended resources and bibliography sections of this guide, as well as in the Department of Education publication:

The Evaluation of Students in the Classroom: A Handbook and Policy Guide (1990).