

Survey Question

25. At the end of each lesson, this teacher reviews what we have just learned.

Australian Professional Standard

Professional Practice Domain

Standard 5: Assess, provide feedback and report on student learning

Focus areas:

- 2.2 Content selection and organisation
- 3.2 Plan, structure and sequence learning programs
- 5.1 Assess student learning
- 5.2 Provide feedback to students on their learning

What does this sound like in the classroom?

"At the end of the lesson, this teacher always goes over what we just learned... It's useful because then I know if I missed something and have to go and talk to them, and it helps me know where we're up to."

Why is this important?

A good lesson deserves a conclusion; to remind students of the main points and reinforce them. As well as offering an opportunity to clarify and confirm understanding, this practice also allows teachers to link the lesson to the next one or to the overarching topic.

Research evidence strongly supports teachers' use of explicit teaching practices that include:

- Reviewing learning and explaining how it relates to other concepts and skills (NSW DEC, 2014)

A lesson review also gives students a clearer understanding of what they should know, even if they are struggling to gain complete understanding of it. This in turn clears the way for students to seek specific advice or clarification. So, a review can help initiate a feedback loop whereby the teacher becomes aware of how well their lesson has been received, and students can receive further instruction where necessary.

Checking for understanding should occur frequently during a lesson, and involve various tools and strategies. For example, after introducing, explaining and providing examples about a concept, a teacher should check that students understand the concept (Archer, 2011). This involves more than simply asking students if they understand. There are many ways to check for understanding effectively including: having students generate examples and non-examples; asking questions that require deeper processing about the meaning; and, asking students to explain ideas in their own words as part of review at the end of a lesson (Archer, 2011; Fisher & Frey, 2014)

What strategies have been shown to work in the classroom?

These guiding questions can help incorporate checking for understanding into lessons (Fisher & Frey, 2014):

- Do I know what misconceptions or naïve assumptions my students possess?
- How do I know what they understand?
- What evidence will I accept for this understanding?
- How will I use their understandings to plan future instruction?

An example approach to check for understanding is TAPPLE (Hollingsworth & Ybarra, 2009):

1. Teach First - explain the concept first
2. Ask a Question - ask specific questions on what you are teaching
3. Pause and Pair-Share - pause after asking a question and before selecting a student to respond to give all students thinking time to prepare an answer. You can also have students discuss the answer in pairs
4. Pick a Non-Volunteer - randomly select three or more non-volunteers to answer check for understanding questions to assess whether the entire class understands
5. Listen to the Response - is the response correct, partially correct or incorrect? What does this mean for what you will teach next?
6. Effective Feedback - give feedback based on the student's response [link to feedback resource pack]

What three things can I try in my classroom tomorrow?

1. Allocate a suitable amount of time at the end of your next lesson for a full review.
2. Allow time for student questions or clarifications.
3. Explain how today's lesson fits in to the sequence of lessons or topic you are covering and to assessment tasks.

What opportunities are there for collaboration with my colleagues?

Work with your colleagues to define the 'learning intentions' for each class as you progress through your curriculum plan. If your teaching team is giving consistent messages to your students (regardless of which teacher they have for the same class), in their conversations with each other they will feel that they are all on the same learning path.

Where can I find out more?

Referenced articles, books and other great reads:

- Archer, A. and Hughes, C. (2011) Explicit Instruction. Guildford Publications, USA.
- Dataworks Educational Research (2014) TAPPLE Method of Checking for Understanding. Accessed April 2014
- Fisher, D. & Frey, N. (2014) Checking for Understanding: Formative Assessment Techniques for Your Classroom. 2nd edition. ASCD.
- Fisher, D. & Frey, N. (2014) Why check for understanding? ASCD. Accessed April 2015.
- Hattie, J. (2013) Visible Learning for Teachers. Routledge Taylor & Francis.