

12 Ideas for Leaders

by Anne Davies

Thank you once again for attending our recent two-day ***Leading the Way to Quality Assessment Practices*** Institute in the Comox Valley. The ‘out the door’ evaluations were incredibly positive. We also appreciated the few suggestions regarding possible improvements for next time. We will do our best to fine-tune the structure of the two days and the use of the facility.

Here is the list of 12 ideas shared during our Institute.

1. Consider completing the end-of-chapter exercises in ***Making Classroom Assessment Work*** or those “Being a Leader” sections in ***Leading The Way to Making Classroom Assessment Work***. Working from Chapters 1 – 10 will give you and your colleagues a draft assessment plan. Consider 20 – 30 minutes in a series of staff minutes to do the work month by month. Or, form a book club of interested people and focus on it weekly or biweekly.
2. Consider co-constructing criteria and setting norms of collaboration with any group with whom you work on a regular basis. It is a wonderful opportunity to model and discover for yourself how co-constructing criteria builds a common language and a picture of success.
3. The “Being a Leader” sections in ***Leading the Way to Making Classroom Assessment Work*** describe **Indicators of Classroom Application**. Consider using those to guide your observations in classrooms. Go further and co-construct criteria with your colleagues using the following sentence stem, “In our school, assessment *for* learning has many different looks, including... “ Then, when classroom walkthroughs are scheduled, post notes on classroom doors so visitors’ observations are focused. For example, one school used the following, “As you walk through our classroom, please notice...” Allow space for “Compliments”.
4. The “Being a Leader” sections in ***Leading the Way to Making Classroom Assessment Work*** describe **Ways to Support Teachers**. Consider using those to guide your use of assessment for adult learning.
5. The “Being a Leader” sections in ***Leading the Way to Making Classroom Assessment Work*** describe **Ways to Model**. Consider using those ideas to guide your use of assessment *for* learning in your leadership work. Be intentional and deliberate as you model assessment *for* learning. Let your colleagues know what you are trying to do. Ask them to give you feedback that is specific and descriptive. Make it easier for them to give you quality feedback (rather than judgmental feedback) by sharing your criteria for yourself and asking them to highlight two they notice you incorporating successfully, and, if you are feeling brave, highlight one thing you might want to consider doing more of.
6. Leaders need time to reflect. Written reflections help us not only keep on track but, over time, serve to show us progress in relation to our beginnings. Consider keeping a weekly journal. It will help you recognize the progress you are making and guide your next steps. Book an appointment with yourself first - for reflection time and journaling at least 30 minutes a week. A school principal shared his door sign, “My door is always open... unless it’s closed”. Closing it on a regular basis gave him valuable reflection time.

7. Review the table of contents in ***Transforming Barriers to Assessment for Learning***. Identify the chapters pertinent to you at the present time and read one or two. Go back to others when they emerge as areas for consideration and reflection. It is a book designed for you to use when you need it.

8. Leaders need to know the research upon which they stand. In ***Transforming Barriers to Assessment for Learning*** the authors identified the shoulders upon which we stand. Consider reading more research and making your own list of Giants upon whom you and your work stand.

9. The “Wrong Turns and Course Corrections” handout is currently available on our website. http://www.annedavies.com/assessment_for_learning_ar_nomad.html. Consider using it with your colleagues.

10. Your **Learning Journal** has resources in the back, including directions for numerous professional conversations, as well as blackline masters and references.

11. Sign up (and invite your colleagues to sign up) to receive Anne’s free e-newsletter for the latest research, tips and ideas at http://www.annedavies.com/assessment_for_learning_ezine.html

12. These two days are just one step in your learning journey when it comes to assessment. Consider continuing your learning via Anne Davies’ web coaching sessions that will begin in the fall - professional learning without travel is a joy in these times.

Lastly, we would be pleased if you were to consider Connections Group a resource and keep in touch with us. You can ask to be on Lisa Robinson’s contact list. She will let you know if there is something new that might be of interest to you. Her email is lisa@connect2learning.com