

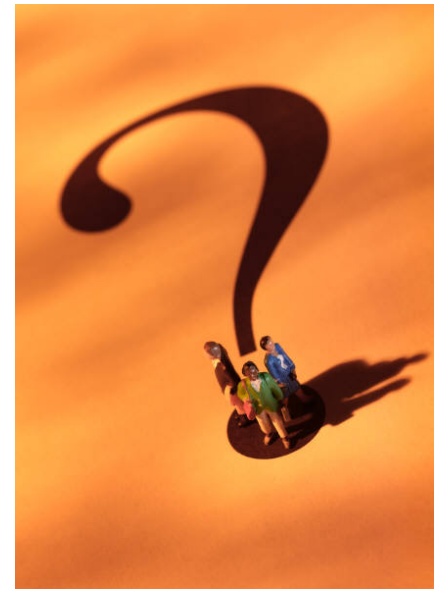


Question:

How can I help my students self assess?

Andie's Answer:

As a teacher coach I have the great pleasure of observing and working with many highly effective teachers. (I think the term highly effective describes excellent teachers more than highly qualified.) Last week I had the pleasure to visit in a high performing elementary school. I met an early career teacher (second career) teaching fifth grade. We had a few minutes to talk and she stated "This is the job I always wanted—I always wanted to teach." It was obvious because her enthusiasm and instructional focus was contagious and her students appreciated being in her classroom. I decided to stay a while and observe.



Ms. Hammer was reviewing with her students for a unit test on the water cycle. The students were engaged and participating in the review in small groups and then in a whole group activity. At the end of the lesson a **LightLocator** was distributed to each student. It was apparent that the students had used this **LightLocator** before. Ms. Hammer provided the directions for completing the **LightLocator**. "Use the lines next to the red light to let me know where you are really struggling. On the lines next to the yellow light, let me know where things are just a little fuzzy. On the lines next to the green light, let me know where you are good to GO!" The students began completing the **LightLocator**. Once complete, the Locator sheet was passed to Ms. Hammer.

Ms. Hammer explained to me later that she often uses this strategy to determine how close students are to the learning targets of a lesson or in this case, are students prepared for the summative assessment on a unit of study. The data she gathers is used to modify her lesson plans from day to day.

I thought this was a great formative assessment idea! I have attached a copy of Ms. Hammer's **LightLocator** use it to help you gather data about student learning so that you can support high achievement for all students.

