

Hi! And thanks for clicking to find out more about formative assessment.

Several attributes of effective formative assessment are illustrated in this vignette. The teacher had a clear understanding of the learning progression that he wished to move students through on their way to learning the larger learning goal of applying and interpreting measures of central tendency. He also was aware of common misconceptions that students have or develop in this particular area, and so created two questions to get at those misconceptions.

Although students answered his questions correctly, he was still sensitive to the additional evidence provided by the one student who asked the question, and supplemented that evidence by a quick class poll. Realizing that although students were able to complete the procedural steps to find the median value, they clearly did not understand the concept yet, he adjusted his instruction by creating an additional question for them to discuss in pairs. He continued to collect evidence systematically, both through listening to students' conversation and through another poll.

After facilitating and guiding students' conversations the teacher decided that the class was ready to move on. However, he planned to return to this concept in a couple of days to check that the students had internalized the concept. This teacher used multiple sources of evidence in an effective way: planned questions at the start of the class; class polling to get a sense of the students' thinking; and listening to student conversation.