

PACKET 2

BUILDING CAPACITY



*Additional resources

ELA 2019/2020



Success Criteria – Definitions and Key Points

Directions: Peruse these various definitions and key points. Choose two from each section that best helps you understand success criteria.

Definitions

There are numerous definitions and descriptions of success criteria. Here is a sampling of definitions that collectively convey the essential information about what success criteria are and how they should be used, in and out of the classroom. Use these definitions to build a common vocabulary in your school, district, region or state.

- The success criteria answer the question, “What are we looking for?” Their purpose is to make students understand what criteria the teacher is using to judge their work, and of course to ensure that the teacher is clear about the criteria that will determine whether the learning intentions have been successfully achieved. The success criteria answer the question, “How will we know?” They state as exactly as possible what the students and teacher want to see (Hattie, 2009, p. 170).
- Success criteria provide the “way of knowing that the desired learning (intention) has been achieved” (Hattie, 2009, p. 47).
- “Learning objectives and success criteria are the tools which enable pupils to exercise power over their learning. Active learners need to be engaged and reflective: success criteria – the ingredients, steps or possible features of the learning objective – provide a rationale for the learning objective in real terms, so that the learner is aware of the expectations and can identify which success criteria are going well and which are not? (Clarke, 2008, p. 81).
- “In order to have a maximum impact, success criteria need to be known by teachers first. All pupils need to have the same learning objective, the same context, and the same criteria. Differentiate the activity rather than the success criteria” (Clarke, 2008, pp. 92-93).
- “Success criteria help students to gain a better understanding of what successful learning might look like in ways that they can recognize from what they know now... They spell out in greater detail the learning” (Absolum, 2010, p. 83).
- “Learning goals and success criteria are critical pieces of information students need to be successful learners. Students and teachers must hold a common understanding of what is to be learned, and what successful achievement looks like. With explicit goals and criteria, students have the beginnings of what they need to become independent, self-monitoring learners” (EduGAINS, n.d., p. 1).



Key Points

- Identify the *details* needed to achieve the learning intention.
- Specify what students are to *do* to demonstrate learning.
- Success criteria provide a “map” to the learning destination.
- Use specific terms from the standard.
- Include objective wording only, no subjective words (e.g., *some, few, little, many, elaborate, etc.*).
- Brainstorm *other* details not included in the standard, but needed.
- Compare success criteria with the standard to ensure they accurately match its concepts, skills, and intended rigor.



Learning Progressions - Definitions and Key Points

Directions: Peruse these various definitions and key points. Choose two from each section that best helps you understand the progression to learning.

Definitions

There are numerous definitions and descriptions of learning progressions. Here is a sampling of definitions that collectively convey the essential information about what learning progressions are and how they should be used, in and out of the classroom. Use these definitions to build a common vocabulary in your school, district, region or state.

- “Learning progressions represent prerequisite knowledge and skills that students must acquire incrementally before they are able to understand and apply more complex or advanced concepts and skills” (Ainsworth, 2015, p. 178).
- Learning progressions are “a set of building blocks — subskills and bodies of enabling knowledge — to be achieved by students on their way to mastering a target curricular aim” (Popham, 2008, p. 25).
- “Learning progressions are the sequenced building blocks of instruction that lead students to understand the unit learning intentions. Look at each unit learning intention to decide what increments of instruction students will need to fully understand that learning intention. Then list these instructional building blocks in a suggested sequence they will occur during the unit” (Ainsworth, 2015, p. 18).
- Learning progressions are the “pathways along which students are expected to progress” (Heritage, 2010, p. 38).
- “Explicit learning progressions can provide the clarity that teachers need. By describing a pathway of learning, they can assist teachers in planning instruction...When teachers understand the continuum of learning in a domain and have information [through formative assessment] about [students'] current status relative to the learning goals, they are better able to make decisions about what the next steps in learning should be” (Heritage, 2010, p 39).
- “Learning progressions are also called progress variables, progress maps, and learning trajectories. Progressions invite a developmental view of learning because they lay out how expertise develops over a more or less extended period of time, beginning with rudimentary forms of learning and moving through progressively more sophisticated states. When teachers' instruction and formative assessment practices are undergirded by learning progressions, teachers can better use formative assessment to map where an individual student's learning

currently stands and take steps to move him or her forward" (Heritage, 2013, Chapter 2, para. 2).

Definitions

- "The learning progressions within standards are rarely identified within a grade level. Instead, teachers must work to determine a sequence of surface to deep learning and think through how to scaffold instruction within each unit and for the entire year. One way to visualize this hierarchy or progression within the standards is to think of a scaffold used to erect a building. The scaffold has different tiers, and as one tier of the structure is completed another is added in order to allow for the next level to be constructed" (O'Connell & Vandas, 2015, p. 46).



Key Points

- Learning progressions begin with lower-level thinking skills/concepts and progress to higher ones. They *lead up* to the more rigorous learning intention.
- They reflect "simple to complex" learning. The learning intention typically (but not always) represents *complex* learning. The learning progressions represent the simple and complex learning skills needed to achieve the learning intention.
- It helps to look back at the original standard statement for the specific skills and concepts it includes. These can help in brainstorming what the progressions should be.
- The success criteria identified in Step 4 should all be reflected in the learning progressions (Step 5).
- Brainstorm progressions first; then sequence them in a *suggested* order for instruction. Use your individual and collective teaching experience plus provided tools and resources.
- Keep in mind: There is no perfect set of learning progressions! They represent teachers' individual or collective best thinking about what the instructional pathway – the "chunks" of learning – should be.
- Learning progressions make explicit to teachers and students "Where to *next*?"
- They provide the focus for lesson-specific formative assessments.