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Figure 1.4

Seven Strategies of Assessment for Learning

| Where Am I Going? |
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| Strategy 1: Provide students with a clear and understandable vision of the learning target. Strategy 2: Use examples and models of strong and weak work. |
| Where Am I Now? |
| Strategy 3: Offer regular descriptive feedback. Strategy 4: Teach students to self-assess and set goals. |
| How Can I Close the Gap? |
| Strategy 5: Design lessons to focus on one learning target or aspect of quality at a time. Strategy 6: Teach students focused revision. Strategy 7: Engage students in self-reflection, and let them keep track of and share their learning. |

Source: Adapted with permission from R. J. Stiggins, J. A. Arter, J. Chappuis, and S. Chappuis, *Classroom Assessment for Student Learning: Doing It Right—Using It Well* (Portland, OR: ETS Assessment Training Institute, 2004), p. 42.

Strategy 2: Use examples and models of strong and weak work.

Carefully chosen examples of the range of quality can create and refine students’ understanding of the learning goal by helping students answer the questions, “What defines quality work?” and “What are some problems to avoid?”

Where Am I Now?

Strategy 3: Offer regular descriptive feedback.

Effective feedback shows students where they are on their path to attaining the intended learning. It answers for students the questions, “What are my strengths?”; “What do I need to work on?”; and “Where did I go wrong and what can I do about it?”

Strategy 4: Teach students to self-assess and set goals.

The information provided in effective feedback models the kind of evaluative thinking we want students to be able to do themselves. Strategy 4 teaches students to identify their strengths and weaknesses and to set goals for further learning. It helps them answer the questions, “What am I good at?”; “What do I need to work on?”; and “What should I do next?”

How Can I Close the Gap?**Strategy 5: Design lessons to focus on one learning target or aspect of quality at a time.**

When assessment information identifies a need, we can adjust instruction to target that need. In this strategy, we scaffold learning by narrowing the focus of a lesson to help students master a specific learning goal or to address specific misconceptions or problems.

Strategy 6: Teach students focused revision.

This is a companion to Strategy 5—when a concept, skill, or competence proves difficult for students, we can let them practice it in smaller segments, and give them feedback on just the aspects they are practicing. This strategy allows students to revise their initial work with a focus on a manageable number of learning targets or aspects of quality.

Strategy 7: Engage students in self-reflection, and let them keep track of and share their learning.

Long-term retention and motivation increase when students track, reflect on, and communicate about their learning. In this strategy, students look back on their journey, reflecting on their learning and sharing their achievement with others.

The seven strategies are not a recipe to be followed step by step, although they do build on one another. Rather, they are a collection of actions that will strengthen students’ sense of self-efficacy (belief that effort will lead to improvement), their motivation to try, and ultimately, their achievement. They represent a use of assessment information that differs from the traditional practice of associating *assessment* with *test*, and *test* with *grade*. These assessment practices will not result in more grades in the gradebook. Rather, they ask us to think more broadly about what assessment is and what it is capable of accomplishing.