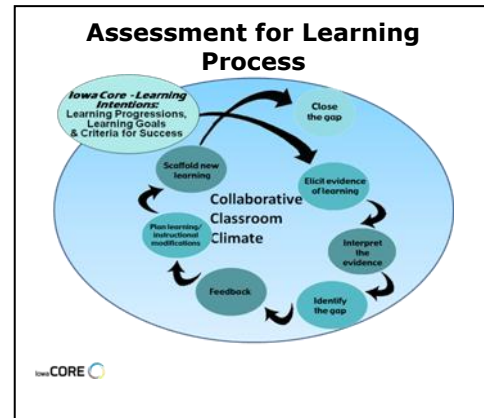


## Assessment for Learning Module Overview

**Assessment for learning is a process used by teachers and students as part of instruction that provides feedback to adjust ongoing teaching and learning to improve students' achievement of core content.**

Assessment for learning process provides students with clear learning targets, examples and models of strong and weak work, regular descriptive feedback, and the ability to self-assess, monitor learning, and set goals.

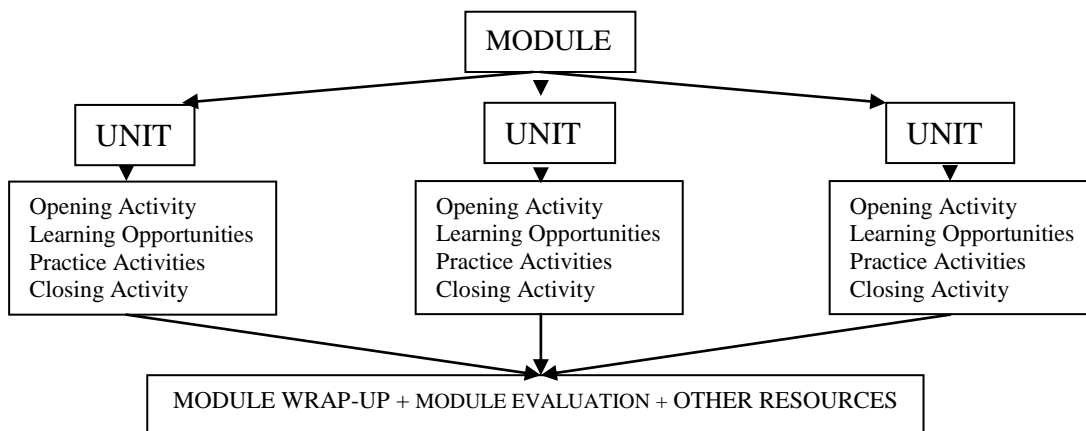
To assist educators in embedding the process in classroom instruction seven modules have been developed around the six attributes of assessment for learning found in the Iowa Core's *Assessment for Learning Brief*, *Assessment for Learning Literature Review*, and the *Assessment for Learning Innovation Configuration Map*. The six attributes identified by Iowa educators are as follows: learning progressions; clear learning goals and success criteria; modifying instruction based on elicited evidence; providing descriptive feedback; self- and peer-assessment; and creating a collaborative classroom climate.



The modules developed to support deeper understanding of these attributes are as follows:

- ❖ **Foundations**
- ❖ **Learning Intentions**
- ❖ **Eliciting Evidence/Instructional Modifications**
- ❖ **Descriptive Feedback**
- ❖ **Self-and Peer-assessment**
- ❖ **Collaborative Classroom Climate**
- ❖ **Putting It Into Practice**

The modules are developed around units. Each unit has opening activities, opportunities to learn, practice activities, and closing activities. Each module also includes a closing, evaluation, and other resources for the collaborative learning team (CLT).



It is anticipated that collaborative learning teams (CLTs) will assess their prior knowledge on assessment for learning to determine the total amount of time needed on each module to reach depth of understanding. It is recommended that all CLTs begin with the Foundations and Learning Intentions modules to better gage their current knowledge and practice. The CLT would then complete as many activities within the units as necessary to develop deeper understanding of each of the attributes.

*Many of the six attributes are also included in attributes found in the other four characteristics of effective instruction identified by the Iowa Core: student-centered classrooms, teaching for understanding, rigorous and relevant curriculum, and teaching for learner differences. Activities focusing on the characteristics of effective instruction can be accessed on the Iowa Core **Exploring the Iowa Core** Moodle site. <http://moodle.aeadonline.org/>*

## What can I expect in the modules?

Each module is considered a course of study and will include best practices in professional development. CLT members will have opportunities engage in activities focused on theory, demonstration, practice, and coaching. The modules will include each of the following components.

### ❖ **An overview of the topic which will:**

- provide the focus of the module.
- identify the participants learning goals and success criteria for the module.
- provide a CLT Planner to plan all sessions within this module.
- provide a Module Facilitator's Guide listing all activities in the module with approximate times for each activity.
- provide a collaborative learning community agenda planning template for the designated facilitator(s) to use and send to participants prior to the session. The facilitators will need to attach to the agenda any resources the participants are expected to utilize prior to the scheduled meeting session.
- provide links to a social networking platform for online discussions. The topics of each discussion forum will be identified for participants to respond to a question, share an idea, or express a concern.

### ❖ **Multiple Sections**

- **Introduction/Setting the Stage** will:
  - provide reminders for accepted norms of effective collaborative learning teams.
  - provide assessment for learning strategies/tools for the collaborative learning team to practice and monitor their progress.
  - provide optional opening activities for the facilitators of the module. These are designed to "set the stage" for learning about the topic/attribute focus of the module.
- **Units** will provide the content activities for the module.
  - The activities will provide the following, as appropriate:
    - resources focused on the **theory** supporting the attribute.
    - resources such as videos, vignettes, case studies, etc. that **demonstrate** the attribute in classroom settings.
    - activities and suggestions for putting it into **practice**.
    - **coaching** suggestions.

- Additional materials found within the units include:
  - **Practice Profiles** provided for each module topic/attribute. The *Practice Profiles* are designed for self-assessment by the participants. It is expected that the participants self-assess pre- and post- session. They should also revisit the *Practice Profiles* to revise them as their learning on the topic/attribute deepens.
    - ◆ An additional suggested activity for the *Practice Profile* is for the participants to anonymously share their level of understanding of the topic/attribute. Using a group level of understanding, the team can then identify specific actions to deepen the collective understanding of the topic/attribute and put it into practice.
  - **Innovation Configuration Map** segments provided for each attribute. The Innovation Configuration Maps have been developed as classroom observation tools. It is expected that teachers use the *Innovation Configuration Maps* to plan, invite, and conduct peer-assessments as they implement the attribute in classroom instruction. They serve as a coaching tool.
  - **Links to other tools developed for professional development of the Iowa Core.**
- **Consolidate Your Learning/Wrap-Up** provides planning opportunities for individual participants or partners.
- **Additional Resources for Further Study** provides opportunities for additional reading selections or online web sites.

## How should I use the modules?

**Begin with the Foundations course.** Even if your Collaborative Learning Team has completed an overview of assessment for learning or participated in a pilot, the Foundations course will provide the common vocabulary and background for successful completion of the additional modules

**Choose a whole module/course or a portion of a course** (e.g., unit) The suggested sequence would be to complete the modules/courses as listed above, but by pre-assessing the needs of your team, you will be able to identify a sequence that best meets their needs.

**Work through the module/course from start to finish.** Although each unit is developed around a sequenced series of activities, the CLT may choose to engage in only one or more of the learning opportunities or practices. Because the course design process itself tends to be iterative, you may find yourself revisiting decisions made in previous activities as you go along. Frequently, the activities build on each other and team members will be asked to continue an activity or add to a graphic organizer developed previously. The facilitator will need to review any activities omitted to determine whether or not they are revisited later, either within the unit or in another unit.

**Use the evaluation and assessment for learning tools provided.**

## How long will each module take?

Different collaborative learning teams will work through each module at vastly different speeds. Here, however, are a few guide posts:

- It is expected for most collaborative learning teams to take up to three years to complete all seven modules. The goal is for deep understanding of assessment for learning and implementation with fidelity in the classroom. Applying all aspects of



the assessment for learning process in classrooms will take time and practice.

- Use the ***Exploring the Core Facilitator’s Guide*** to set up effective collaborative learning teams. It provides assistance in forming teams, maintaining teams, and using tools and protocols. It can be found at
- Develop an action plan for your collaborative learning team identifying the sequence for the modules and an approximate timeline. Adhere to the timeline and session agendas so the team is not “sidetracked” or “stalemated”.
- The practice activities built into each module will take time and dedication to implement with fidelity. An advantage of a collaborative learning community is that team members support each other’s learning and practice. Take time to use the Innovation Configuration Maps to observe each other and practice descriptive feedback.
- The following key findings come from the report, *Professional Learning in the Learning Profession: A Status Report on Teacher Development in the United States and Abroad*, by Linda Darling-Hammond and others of the National Staff Development Council.
  - Teachers typically need substantial professional development in a given area (**close to 50 hours**) to improve their skills and their students’ learning.
  - Sustained and intensive professional development for teachers is related to student achievement gains.
  - Collaborative approaches to professional learning can promote school change that extends beyond the individual classrooms.
  - Effective professional development is intensive, ongoing, and connected to practice; focuses on the teaching and learning of specific academic content; is connected to other school initiatives; and builds strong working relationships among teachers.

## Where do I go for help?

Each Area Education Agency (AEA) in Iowa has consultants with expertise in assessment for learning and the Iowa Core. They will be able to answer most of your questions and provide technical assistance. Contact the AEA for consultants’ contact information.



At the Iowa Department of Education, contact Colleen Anderson in the Bureau of Teaching and Learning Services [colleen.anderson@iowa.gov](mailto:colleen.anderson@iowa.gov) 515-281-3249.