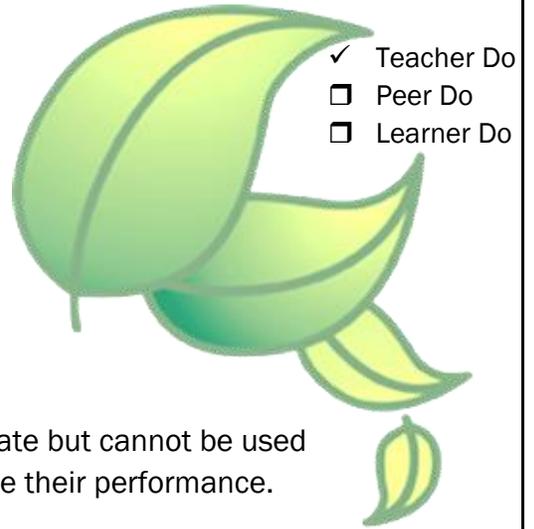


# Providing Feedback that Moves Learning Forward



*“Feedback only functions formatively if the information fed back to the learner is used by the learner in improving performance.”* (Wiliam, 2011, p. 120)

“When you tell an unsuccessful comedian to be funnier, it is accurate but not helpful.” (Wiliam, 2011, p. 120)

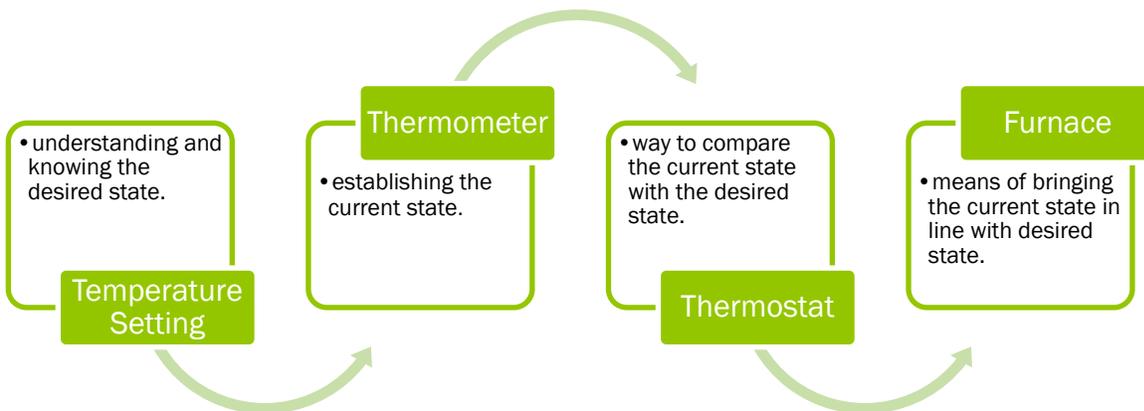
- Some feedback is accurate but cannot be used by the student to improve their performance. This is not formative.
- Research indicates that comments without grades are more powerful than comments + grades. This is only true if the feedback moves the learning forward.

What does this mean? Some dilemmas...

## A Recipe for Future Action

*“Telling what is wrong isn’t enough; to be effective, feedback must provide a recipe for action.”* (Wiliam, 2011, p. 121)

Using an engineering metaphor for a feedback loop:



## Grading

While research shows that grading can damage achievement, we are not in a position to get rid of them. “What we can do is make changes to grading systems so that they provide accurate information about student achievement while supporting student learning.”

(Wiliam, 2011, p. 123)

## William's Wisdom

- Feedback should
  - cause thinking rather than an emotional reaction
    - try to not promote students comparing to each other.
    - direct attention to what is next rather than how well or badly someone did on the work.
    - imply an action on the part of the student.
    - be more work for the recipient than the donor.
  - be focused – less is more
  - relate to the learning goals that have been shared with students
    - relate to the rubric or criteria developed.
- Feedback is important for all learners, even those who performed well.
- Don't provide students with feedback unless you allow time to work on their action related to the feedback.
- Possible strategies:
  - Three questions – when reading student work, the teacher finds three points that they would like the student to reflect on. These are numbered 1, 2, 3. At the end of the work, the teacher writes a specific question 1. \_\_\_ with space afterwards for students to answer the question, then question 2. \_\_\_, 3. \_\_\_\_\_. This means that all students have equal opportunity to reflect and move their learning forward.
  - Comment strips – write comments on slips of paper with no names on them. In groups of four, hand back student work and the corresponding slips of paper. Have students determine which comments match with which student work.
  - Identify how many questions are wrong on a page and have students identify which ones they are and correct them.
  - Place a dot in the margin of a line that needs attention – but have students identify what the error is and correct it.

## Works Cited

William, D. (2011). *Embedded Formative Assessment*. Bloomington, Indiana, United States of America: Solution Tree Press.