Clear, Shared Outcomes: Evidence and Resources

2. Clear, Shared Outcomes: The learning outcomes are shared and internalized by teachers and students. These outcomes anchor and guide the choices of instructional activities, materials, practice assignments, and assessment tasks. Outcomes are understood and used by students to set goals, guide learning, and prompt self-reflection.

Supporting Beliefs

- Everyone involved in the learning process must know where they are going and why the work matters.
- Teachers and students need to be invested in the learning process to achieve outcomes.
- A culture of reflection is necessary for students to set and adjust personalized goals.

Key Traits

- Learning outcomes are clear—both long-term (e.g., graduation standards and performance indicators) and short-term (e.g., learning targets).
- Clear descriptions of what success looks like are established and shared.
- Materials, activities, and assessment tasks are selected by teachers and students to align with the learning outcomes.
- Students can explain how tasks and experiences align to learning outcomes.
- Students use standards and learning targets to reflect on their own progress and set goals for growth.

Literature Supporting the Element

1. "In selecting instructional outcomes, then, teachers should consider the importance of the outcomes they select for students both now and for what future learning the outcomes make possible. Instructional outcomes should represent important learning, high expectations for students, and intellectual rigor."
—Danielson, C. (2007). *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching (*2nd ed.) (p. 51). Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

2. "In objective-driven lessons, teachers are constantly focused on what they want students to learn and how they want students to demonstrate they have learned it. While teachers attend to the objective, they also focus on how each student is progressing toward learning the objective. Teachers plan, monitor, and adjust their teaching so that there is a high likelihood that all students will master the lesson objective."
—Johnson, J. F. Jr., Perez, L.G., & Uline, C.L. (2013) *Teaching Practices from America's Best Urban Schools: A Guide for School and Classroom Leaders* (pp.10-11). New York, NY: Routledge.

3. "Goals are the reason classroom activities are designed. Without clear goals, classroom activities are without direction. Researchers Joseph Krajcik, Katherine McNeill, and Brian Rieser (2007) explain that good teaching begins with clear learning goals from which teachers select appropriate instructional activities and assessments that help determine students' progress on the learning goals."
—Marzano, R. J. (2009). *Designing and Teaching Learning Goals and Objectives* (p. 4). Bloomington, IN: Marzano Research Laboratory.

4. "The increased emphasis on differentiated instruction and the momentum of project-based learning and personalized learning highlight an important shift happening in education: the move toward a more student-centered approach to teaching and learning. Interestingly, this movement comes on the heels of the push toward standards and academic

accountability that caused everyone to tighten their collective grips on what students did and how they did it. It's important to recognize that these two seemingly very different movements don't need to be at odds with one another; teachers should be able to personalize learning within the context of academic standards. It does, however, require that teachers shift their instructional strategies, and choice may be one of the best vehicles for getting there, for it allows teachers and students to share in the responsibility of teaching and learning. Teachers can create viable options that students will find compelling and appropriately challenging, and then students take responsibility for choosing options that will best help them learn."
—Anderson, M. (2016). *Learning to Choose, Choosing to Learn: The Key to Student Motivation & Achievement* (pp. 16-17). Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development.

5. "Our lessons, units, and courses should be logically inferred from the results sought, not derived from the methods, books, and activities with which we are most comfortable. Curriculum should lay out the most effective ways of achieving specific results. It is analogous to travel planning. Our frameworks should provide a set of itineraries deliberately designed to meet cultural goals rather than a purposeless tour of all the major sites in a foreign country. In short, the best designs derive backward from the learnings sought."
—Wiggins, G., & McTighe, J. (2006). *Understanding by Design* (2nd ed.) (p. 14). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

6. "We have found that many schools now require teachers to write a daily objective on the board for students. That's a useful practice so that students have something to refer back to, but posting it is nowhere near sufficient. It has to be accompanied by making sure students know what it is and what it means. The point is that learning is empowered when students understand what they are aiming to learn, and something has to happen beyond posting the objective on the board to ensure that student understanding."
—Saphier, J., Gower, R., & Haley-Speca, M. (2008). *The Skillful Teacher: Building your Teaching Skills* (6th ed.) (p. 164). Acton, MA: Research for Better Teaching.

7. "Clearly stated learning intentions are an essential component of formative assessment strategy. They help teachers to be mindful of what their goals are to effectively plan and deliver lessons and they facilitate student learning by communicating expectations about the desired outcomes for each lesson. As a result, experts assert, "research on instructional techniques in all core content areas has found that explicitly linking classroom activities to learning goals helps students understand the purpose of the instruction and feel motivated to engage with the ideas."(Reed, D.K, May 2012) This is particularly true for underachieving students who benefit from a clear understanding of where each lesson is going."
—Hanover Research. (2014). *The Impact of Formative Assessment and Learning Intentions on Student Achievement*. Washington, DC: Hanover Research. Retrieved from http://www.hanoverresearch.com/media/The-Impact-of-Formative-Assessment-and-Learning-Intentions-on-Student-Achievement.pdf.

8. "If you want your students' learning to be at the higher levels–appreciating the complexity of the natural world, for example, or seeing how human history is told in multiple ways–you can write objectives aimed to target this kind of achievement. After all, the thinking and performance of the great scholars in any field are described by their colleagues in terms of analytical ability, creative synthesis, and insightful evaluation. If their thinking and performance can be so described, so can our students'."
—Reeves, A. R. (2011). *Where Great Teaching Begins: Planning for Student Thinking and Learning* (p. 32). Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development.

9. "Learning can be enhanced to the degree that students share the challenging goals of learning, adopt self-assessment and evaluation strategies, and develop error detection procedures and heightened self-efficacy to tackle more challenging tasks leading to mastery and understanding of lessons."
—Hattie, J., & Timperley, H. (2007, March). The Power of Feedback. *Review of Educational Research, 77*(1), 83. Retrieved from http://education.qld.gov.au/staff/development/performance/resources/readings/power-feedback.pdf.

10. "...[T]hinking after completing tasks is no idle pursuit: It can powerfully enhance the learning process, and it does so more than the accumulation of additional experience on the same task. Performance outcomes, we find, can be augmented if one deliberately focuses on learning from experience accumulated in the past. Results from our studies consistently show a significant increase in the ability to successfully complete a task when individuals are given the chance to couple some initial experience with a deliberate effort to articulate and codify the key lessons learned from such experience."
—Di Stefano, G., Gino, F., Pisano, G.P., & Staats, B.R. (2016, June 14). *Making Experience Count: The Role of Reflection in Individual Learning*. Harvard Business School. Retrieved from http://www.hbs.edu/faculty/Publication%20Files/14-093_defe8327-eeb6-40c3-aafe-26194181cfd2.pdf.

Resources and Readings

Brief Articles

1. Berger, R., Rugen, L., & Woodfin, L. (2014). *Leaders of Their Own Learning: Transforming Schools Through Student-Engaged Assessment.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
   These resources are excerpted from a longer chapter of this text on the purpose, design and use of learning targets and include a chart outlining teacher and student responsibilities or actions related to learning targets and a brief overview of how to write learning targets.

2. Wilson, D. (2015, May 22). Inspiring Progress Toward Learning Goals. *Edutopia*. Retrieved from https://www.edutopia.org/blog/inspiring-progress-toward-learning-goals-donna-wilson-marcus-conyers.
   In this post, the authors describe the impact of reflection and metacognition about learning on future learning and motivation, outlining several strategies to promote and capitalize on metacognition to impact achievement and inform goal setting.

3. Elder, Z. (2012, October). Constructing Learning So That it is Meaningful and Purposeful. *Full On Learning*. Retrieved from https://fullonlearning.com/2012/10/01/constructing-learning-so-that-it-is-meaningful-and-purposeful/.
   This short blog talks about a small shift that can be made to learning objectives to increase their impact on student learning. This is done by linking explicitly to the reason students need to know what they are learning or practicing.

4. Marzano, R. J. (2011, May) Art and Science of Teaching/Objectives That Students Understand. *Schools, Families, Communities, 68*(8), 86-67.
   This brief article describes several effective and ineffective ways to use learning objectives with students.

5. Moss, C. M., Brookhart, S. M., & Long, B.A. (2011, March). Knowing Your Learning Target. *What Students Need to Learn, 68*(6), 66-69.
   This article explains the importance of learning targets, the challenges encountered by one school as they moved to using learning targets and the impact making that change had for teachers and students.

Books and Reports

1. Johnson, J., Uline, C., & Perez, L. (2013). *Teaching Practices from America's Best Urban Schools: A Guide for School and Classroom Leaders* (1st ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.
   This book profiles the patterns in practice among award winning urban schools that have a strong record of producing equitable results across all demographic groups. Chapter 2 in particular focuses on the role of objectives and how they are used in the classroom to help students achieve mastery.

2. Marzano, R. J. (2009). *Designing and Teaching Learning Goals and Objectives: Classroom Strategies That Work*. Bloomington, IN: Marzano Research Laboratory.
   This book provides a comprehensive overview of the research and theory behind learning objectives as well as resources and guidance related to developing specific learning goals. There are additional chapters related to attending to cognitive demand, noncognitive goals, and thinking of learning goals in a sequence.

3. Moss, C. M., & Brookhart, S. M. (2012). *Learning Targets: Helping Students Aim for Understanding in Today's Lesson*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
   This text begins with an explanation of why learning targets matter and how to write them as well as how to use them with students. The author then discusses using learning targets to differentiate instruction, promote higher order thinking, and for summative assessment and grading. There are many examples and practical tools included in the text as well.

4. Reeves, A. R. (2011). *Where Great Teaching Begins: Planning for Student Thinking and Learning*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
   This book identifies learning objectives–and specifically those focused on student outcomes–as a foundation for learning, then connects those to assessments and instruction in later chapters. The author explains the contrast between seeing and designing learning with an activities mindset versus that of an outcomes or learning mindset and offers many tips and tools for creating learning focused objectives.

5. 5. Hanover Research. (2014). *The Impact of Formative Assessment and Learning Intentions on Student Achievement*. Report. Washington, DC: Hanover Research. Retrieved from http://www.hanoverresearch.com/media/The-Impact-of-Formative-Assessment-and-Learning-Intentions-on-Student-Achievement.pdf.
   This report explains the connection between formative assessment and learning intentions, then summarizes the

research about what makes learning intentions effective and the impact of learning intentions on student learning as well as students' ability to self-assess, though much of the research cited was carried out with older students.

6. General Teaching Council for England. (2011, March 11). *Research for Teachers: Hattie's Concept of Visible Teaching and Learning*. General Teaching Council for England.
Retrieved from http://www.curee.co.uk/files/publication/1301578655/Hatties%20concept%20of%20visible%20teaching%20and%20learning.pdf.
This report summarizes the key findings in John Hattie's study: Visible learning: A synthesis of over 800 meta-analyses related to achievement, Routledge, London (2009) and discusses how and why clearly stated learning objectives are part of Hattie's definition of visible learning.

Videos

1. EL Education. Using a Learning Target Throughout a Lesson.
Retrieved from https://eleducation.org/resources/using-a-learning-target-throughout-a-lesson

2. EL Education. Students Discuss the Power of Learning Targets.
Retrieved fromhttps://eleducation.org/resources/students-discuss-the-power-of-learning-targets

3. EL Education. Students Unpack a Learning Target. Retrieved from
https://eleducation.org/resources/students-unpack-a-learning-target

4. EL Education. Students Unpack a Learning Target and Discuss Academic Vocabulary. Retrieved from
https://eleducation.org/resources/students-unpack-a-learning-target-and-discuss-academic-vocabulary

5. EL Education. Student Own Their Progress:Using Data with Students. Culture of Growth: Growth in Students.
Retrieved from https://eleducation.org/resources/culture-of-growth-growth-in-students

6. Teaching Channel. Adapting Socratic Seminar: Senior Project Reflection.
Retrieved from https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/senior-project-reflection-socratic-seminar-ousd