

The Power of “Most, Some, or Few”

By Gina Fugnitto | Categories: Making Meaning, Being a Reader, Teaching Tips, Being a Writer

You may have read my previous blog posts where I shared gems about our work in Making Meaning with supporting Individualized Daily Reading Conferences and building a body of knowledge. The “what a gem” theme continues in this blog which features our formative (class and group) assessments. The class and group assessments are designed to support instructional decision-making, which is a key element in the assessments provided across CCC’s Collaborative Literacy programs—Making Meaning, Being a Writer, and Being a Reader.

Class or Group Assessments

Assessment “operates as part of instruction rather than separate from it.” As part of this assessment best practice, “the teacher can simultaneously gather information on the student’s development.” (Best Practice, Fourth Edition)

Our Collaborative Literacy programs are written with this assessment best practice in mind. Across the programs, teachers are offered regular opportunities to assess the learning and needs of the class. During the class/group assessments, the teacher is provided the opportunity to observe the students through the lens of the focused questions provided. A “Class Assessment Note” or “Group Assessment Note” in the Teacher’s Manual will alert you when an assessment is suggested, usually once per week or once per set (in the case of the Being a Reader small-group reading lessons). Each “Class Assessment Note” or “Group Assessment Note” in the Teacher’s Manual has a corresponding “Class Assessment Record” or “Group Assessment Record” sheet located in the Assessment Resource Book, or on the CCC Learning Hub.

“Most, Some, or Few”

“The common feature of observational notes is that teachers save time for regularly recording them; they develop a format that works for them; and they consistently use these notes, both to guide instruction and to communicate about children’s progress.” (Best Practice, Fourth Edition)

Our CCC Collaborative Literacy programs are designed to offer a format for collecting formative data regularly. When using the class/group assessment, the teacher observes if most, some, or only a few of the students are able accomplish what the focus question is asking (see examples below). The difficulty, for me at least, has been to determine how to use the data to guide instruction. The gem has been gaining an understanding of the power of “most, some, or few.”

The Power of “Most, Some, or Few” within the Lesson

Being aware of “most, some, or few” within the given lesson can support making on-the-spot instructional decisions. For example, if most students are exhibiting the desired skill or are comfortable with the instruction you know you can move on in the lesson or week’s instruction. If some students are exhibiting the desired skill you might use a Teacher Note or ELL Note to scaffold learning or you might use the “students might say” or “you might say” information to provide an example or model your thinking. If only a few

students are participating, you might decide to include an additional turn and talk to support student thinking or you might ask additional probing questions (*What in the text got you thinking that?* or *Say more about that?*) to gain more understanding of what the student(s) are offering in the conversations. You might re-read a portion of text to deepen understanding, clarify or support student thinking. Most importantly, you will be making an instructional decision based on the “most, some, or few” data that best meets the needs of the students.

The Power of “Most, Some, or Few” Beyond the Lesson

Being aware of “most, some, or few” supports the decisions you make beyond a given lesson. You might use that information to determine that reteaching is needed for the entire class or group. You might determine whether meeting with a small group of students to support instruction would be beneficial in addressing their needs. You might focus the scope of your conferences to further scaffold learning. Most importantly, you will be making instructional decisions based on “most, some, or few” which supports student success across a unit or set of instruction.

As you engage in teaching CCC’s Collaborative Literacy programs, what gems have you found to support both teaching and learning?

Making Meaning, Grade 3

Unit 8 ■ Week 2 ■ Day 3 Determining Important Ideas

Class Assessment Record ■ CA2

Ask yourself:	All or most students	About half of the students	Only a few students
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are the students able to determine important ideas in the passage? 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are they able to explain why they think those ideas are important? 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are they using the prompt they learned to help them explain their thinking? 			

Being a Writer, Grade 3

Observe the students and ask yourself:	All or most students	About half of the students	Only a few students
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are the students able to identify opinions to write about? 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can they state their opinions clearly in their writing? 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can they give reasons that support their opinions? 			

Being a Reader, Set 9

Gravity ■ Day 2
Comprehension

Group Progress Assessment ■ GA6

Ask yourself:	All or most students	About half of the students	Only a few students
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are the students able to identify information about gravity? 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do they refer to the text to support their thinking? 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do both partners share their thinking? 			