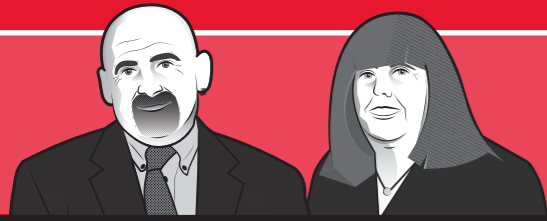**This one-pager summarises five formative assessment strategies from the 2015 book 'Embedding Formative Assessment' by Dylan Wiliam and Siobhán Leahy.**
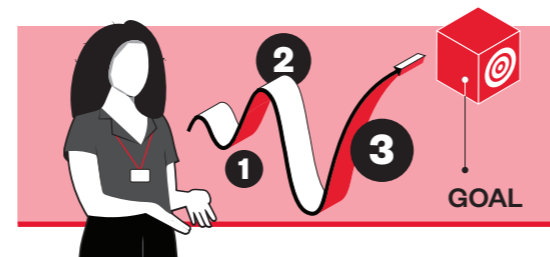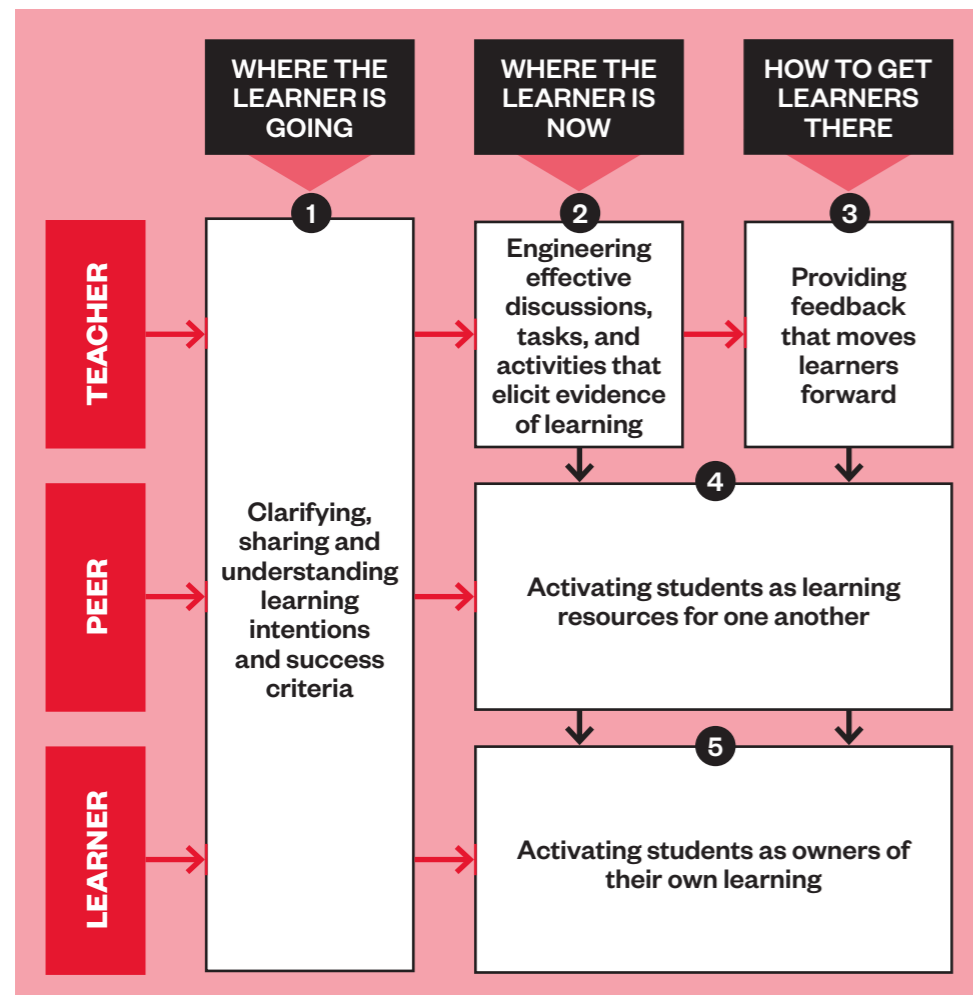
DYLAN WILIAM & SIOBHÁN LEAHY

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT
FIVE STRATEGIES TO MOVE LEARNERS FORWARD

EMBEDDING FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT (2015)
### PRACTICAL IDEAS FOR CLASSROOM FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

Dylan Wiliam and Siobhán Leahy's highly practical book, *Embedding Formative Assessment* presents five essential strategies to support the implementation of formative assessment. For each strategy, Wiliam and Leahy provide a number of tips and variations to help teachers make day-by-day, minute-by-minute, instructional decisions to maximise student outcomes. The Five Key Strategies of Formative Assessment diagram below, (created by Leahy et al in 2005) connects formative assessment processes with the role of three key agents: teacher, peer and learners. Since then, Wiliam and Leahy's thinking has moved on slightly, nevertheless, the ultimate goal of the strategies is to guide students to become independent learners.

	WHERE THE LEARNER IS GOING	WHERE THE LEARNER IS NOW	HOW TO GET LEARNERS THERE
TEACHER	① Clarifying, sharing and understanding learning intentions and success criteria	② Engineering effective discussions, tasks, and activities that elicit evidence of learning	③ Providing feedback that moves learners forward
PEER		④ Activating students as learning resources for one another	
LEARNER		⑤ Activating students as owners of their own learning	

STRATEGY 1
### CLARIFYING LEARNING INTENTIONS AND SUCCESS CRITERIA

Learning intentions are descriptions of intended learning and are useful for educators when planning their teaching. Success criteria are descriptions of task performance and are useful for *evaluating* teaching, and therefore useful for both teachers *and* students. Misuse can turn them into checkboxes that detract from long-term goals. Showing anonymous samples of work can help students to see what high-quality work looks like. Clarify 'big ideas' and develop progressions that encompass stages of the learning process.
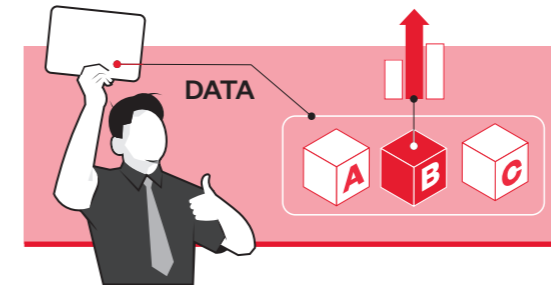
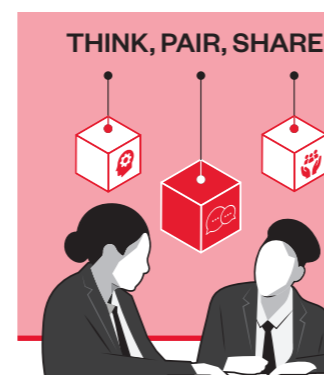### STRATEGY 2
ELICITING EVIDENCE OF PROGRESS

Eliciting evidence of what students can do is valuable for informed decision-making in the teaching and learning process. Planning quality questions with colleagues enhances the design of effective questions, activities, and tasks. Purposeful high-order questioning engages students and provides insights into their knowledge. Use no-hands-up approaches to get whole class responses. For example, promote active participation with mini whiteboards. Retrieval practice and well-designed hinge questions, or exit tickets are also effective methods of checking what students can do.
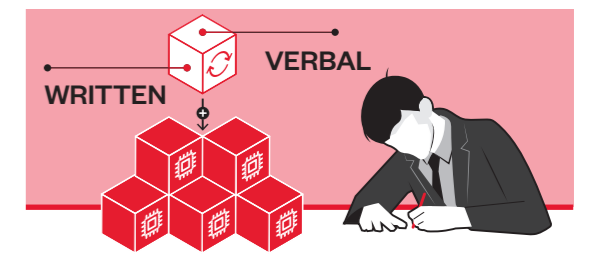
STRATEGY 3
FEEDBACK TO IMPROVE THE LEARNER

Wiliam and Leahy stress that "*feedback should be more work for the recipient than the donor.*" This means that feedback should be clear, helpful and actionable with the intention of improving the learner not the work. Give comment-only feedback on key pieces of work and allocate subsequent class time for students to respond to your feedback. Implement low-effort, high-impact strategies like turning feedback into detective work where students find a mistake or solve a puzzle. Digital tools also provide support for workload and are great for both verbal and written feedback.
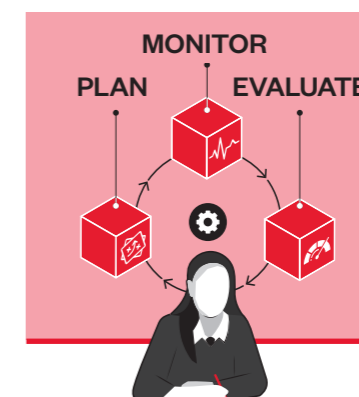
STRATEGY 4
ACTIVATING STUDENTS AS LEARNING RESOURCES

Provide students with opportunities to support each other through the learning process. Peer feedback is particularly powerful when scaffolded effectively - for example, using structured *kind*, *specific* and *helpful* language or 'two stars and a wish' criteria. Prioritise individual accountability in group tasks by assigning specific group roles with care. For example, do not assign a student as a 'reporter' until the end of the work. Disciplined *think*, *pair*, *share* routines or peer-to-peer quizzing activities can provide powerful opportunities for student talk and collaborative challenge.

STRATEGY 5
ACTIVATING STUDENTS AS OWNERS OF THEIR OWN LEARNING

As teachers, our ultimate objective is to nurture confident lifelong learners who can thrive beyond the confines of our classroom. Equip students with a repertoire of metacognitive strategies to enable them to plan, monitor, and evaluate their own learning regularly. To develop their self-assessment skills, encourage students to use traffic light colours to judge their understanding and implement surveys to address students' feelings, thoughts and actions so that they can improve next time. The focus should be on continuous improvement, not students' marks or grades.