

Teacher Collaboration Project
Supplement: *Informal/Formative Assessment of
Vocabulary Learning*

Purposes and functions of assessment

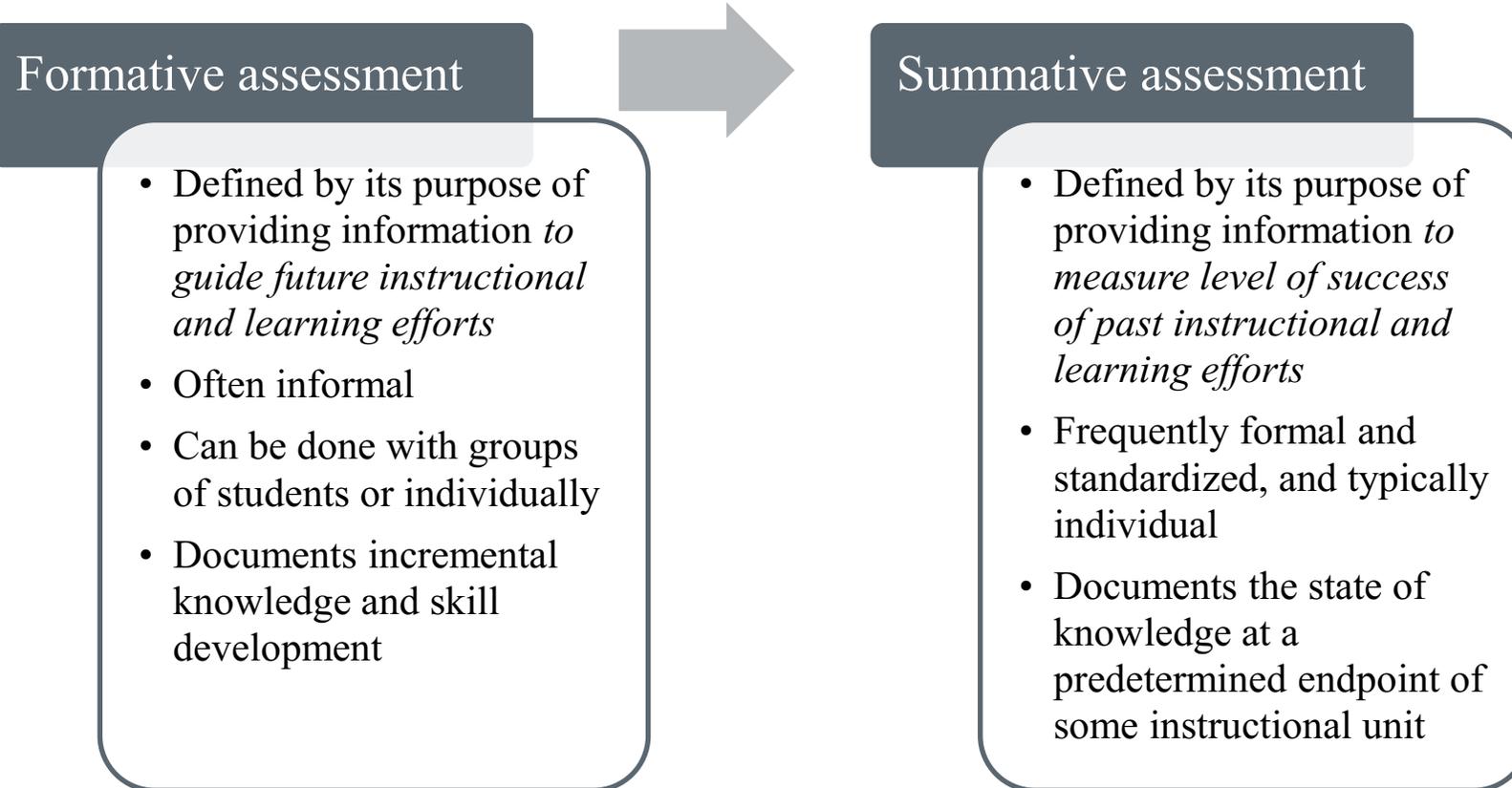
1. Check students' understanding of new vocabulary.
2. Reinforce importance of new words...
3. ...But also reinforce word knowledge itself (depth especially).

Consider the key distinctions between:

- Formative and summative assessment.
- Modality of assessment (written, oral, visual).

See the REL Central resource on using formative assessment:
https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/central/pdf/REL_2017259.pdf

Formative versus summative assessment



Varying the modality of assessment



In writing, invite students to:

- Write a definition of a new vocabulary word to evaluate confidence in word recognition.
- Fill in the blanks with key words to build or explore background knowledge.



In oral language, invite students to:

- Teach a peer about the lesson content using one of the novel words.
- Discuss how the word relates to other words on the topic, in English and home languages.



In multimedia activities, invite students to:

- Draw a picture of the lesson content, labeling key features with new vocabulary.
- Create a word network to display how the target words relate to other familiar concepts.

Varying the modality of assessment: *Writing*



impact

bombard

transmit

When the pilot first stepped out of the plane, she was _____ with questions about how she was able to land it safely. Everyone was worried that getting down to the runway with only one wheel would lead to a dangerous _____! But the pilot told the crowd that the team on the ground _____ messages that helped her set all of her controls so that she could gently lower the plane to the runway.

In writing, invite students to:

- Write a definition of a new vocabulary word to evaluate confidence in word recognition.
- Fill in the blanks with key words to build or explore background knowledge.

Varying the modality of assessment: *Writing*



In writing, invite students to:

- Write a definition of a new vocabulary word to evaluate confidence in word recognition.
- Fill in the blanks with key words to build or explore background knowledge.

impact

bombard

transmit

Students can match words to definitions, or can write definitions for target words.

to keep sending large amounts of something; to attack

to give someone something; to send or share something

to have an effect on; to hit or collide with

Varying the modality of assessment: *Speaking*



In oral language, invite students to:

- Teach a peer about the lesson content using one of the novel words.
- Discuss how the word relates to other words on the topic, in English and home languages.

impact	bombard	transmit
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Sarah: Well, I think that Dr. King was talking about making sure that we **value** each other more than we **value material** things, like money and phones. We all know the **media** always tells us we should have more things, but I agree with him. I'd rather have great friends and be with my family than have expensive things.



Ms. Cassell: Right on, Sarah. So what are some other **values** that have been **transmitted** to you guys?



Shaquille: I **value** hard work. My father has taught me that if you are disciplined, you can achieve your dreams. I want to be a doctor so that I can have a positive **impact** in the community. Learning to be a doctor requires a lot of school, and a lot of hard work!



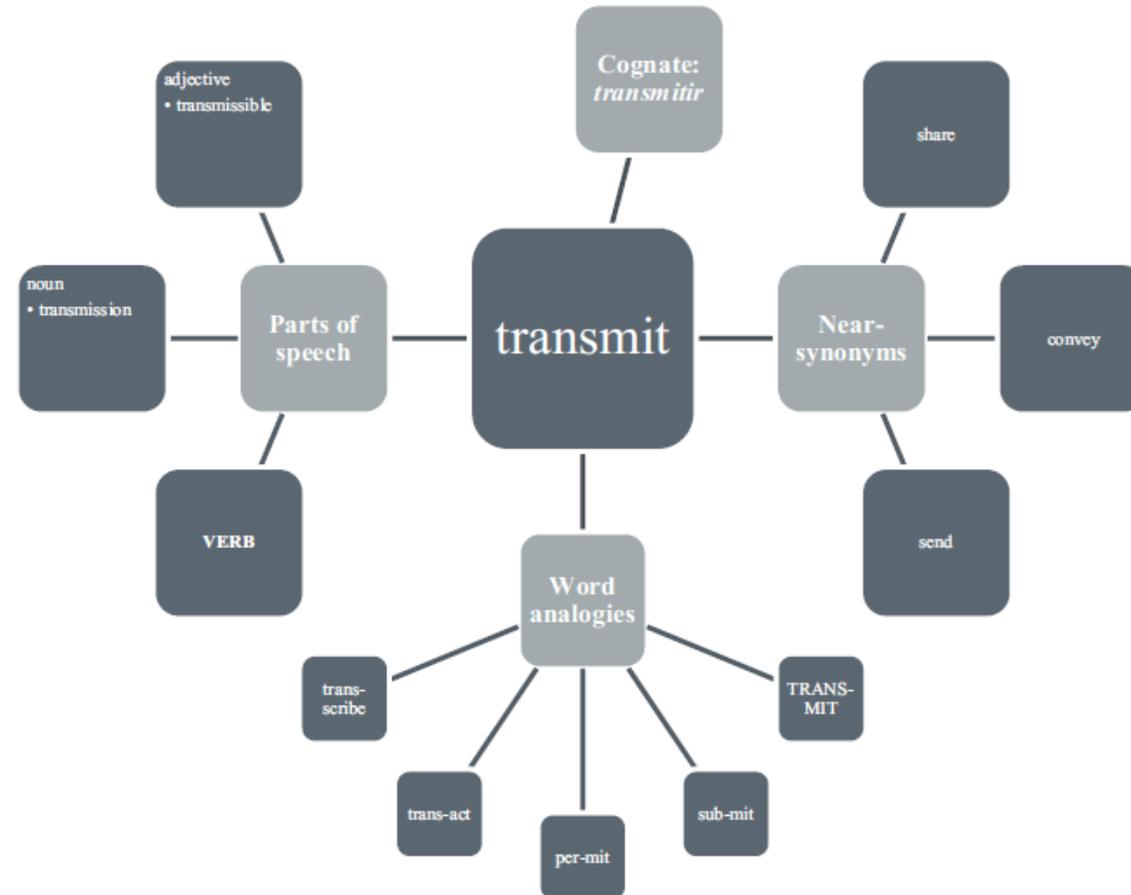
Ben: Working hard can get you far, but how will people know if they can trust you? Honesty is an important **value**. Last week I knocked a glass of water onto my mother's computer. She blamed the cat until I told her the truth. I still got in major trouble, but my mother said she **valued** my honesty.

Varying the modality of assessment: *Multimedia*



In multimedia activities, invite students to:

- Draw a picture of the lesson content, labeling key features with new vocabulary.
- Create a word network to display how the target words relate to other familiar concepts.



Assessing different aspects of word knowledge

Word Generation

4th Grade - VOCABULARY ASSESSMENT

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

DIRECTIONS: Read the sentence and choose the one best answer—the option that means the same or almost the same as the underlined word. Circle your answer.

1. The girls excluded Ana during the kick ball game.
 - a) included
 - b) left out
 - c) secluded
 - d) cheered for
2. I had to make a very hard decision.
 - a) division
 - b) promise
 - c) move
 - d) choice
3. The friends discussed whether global warming was true or false.
 - a) wondered
 - b) disagreed
 - c) debated
 - d) imagined
6. The group will campaign against smoking in public places.
 - a) fight
 - b) complain
 - c) collect
 - d) surrender
7. The students respect the teacher.
 - a) reject
 - b) admire
 - c) insult
 - d) dislike
8. Let's closely examine the problem.
 - a) extract
 - b) neglect
 - c) study
 - d) skim

How do target words relate to familiar words?

2. Let's closely examine the problem.

- a) extract
 - *Similar sounds (phonological match)*
- b) neglect
 - *Unrelated*
- c) study
 - *Synonym (semantic match)*
- d) skim
 - *Antonym (semantic opposite)*

Snow, C. E., Lawrence, J. F., & White, C. (2009). Generating Knowledge of Academic Language Among Urban Middle School Students. *Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness*, 2(4), 325–344. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19345740903167042>
Jones, S. M., LaRusso, M., Kim, J., Kim, H. Y., Selman, R., Uccelli, P., Barnes, S. P., Donovan, S., & Snow, C. (2019). Experimental Effects of Word Generation on Vocabulary, Academic Language, Perspective Taking, and Reading Comprehension in High-Poverty Schools. *Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness*, 12(3), 448–483. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19345747.2019.1615155>

3. Assessing vocabulary: *Key takeaways*

- ✓ Your purposes for assessing vocabulary can and should shape the kind of assessment you administer.
- ✓ Low-stakes assessments help check for understanding of new vocabulary in situ.
- ✓ Assessment can focus on different aspects of word learning, and all are important.