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Teacher-led
Learning Circles
for Formative Assessment

**Teacher-Led Learning Circles
for Formative Assessment:
FINAL REPORT
SWITZERLAND**



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FINAL REPORT SWITZERLAND

**Teacher-led Learning Circles on Formative
Assessments (T3LFA) Project**

Robbert Smit



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Published by Education International - Sept. 2024

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1. Country Profile

1.1 Overview of the national education system, governance, education policies and demographic information

The Swiss education system is divided into compulsory education, comprising 11 years of schooling, including pre-school and non-compulsory education (see Figure 1). This paper will focus solely on compulsory education. The 11 years of compulsory education consist of two years of kindergarten, six years of primary education and three years of lower secondary school. Around 95% of all children and young people attend state school at no cost, and around 5% receive their education from private schools.

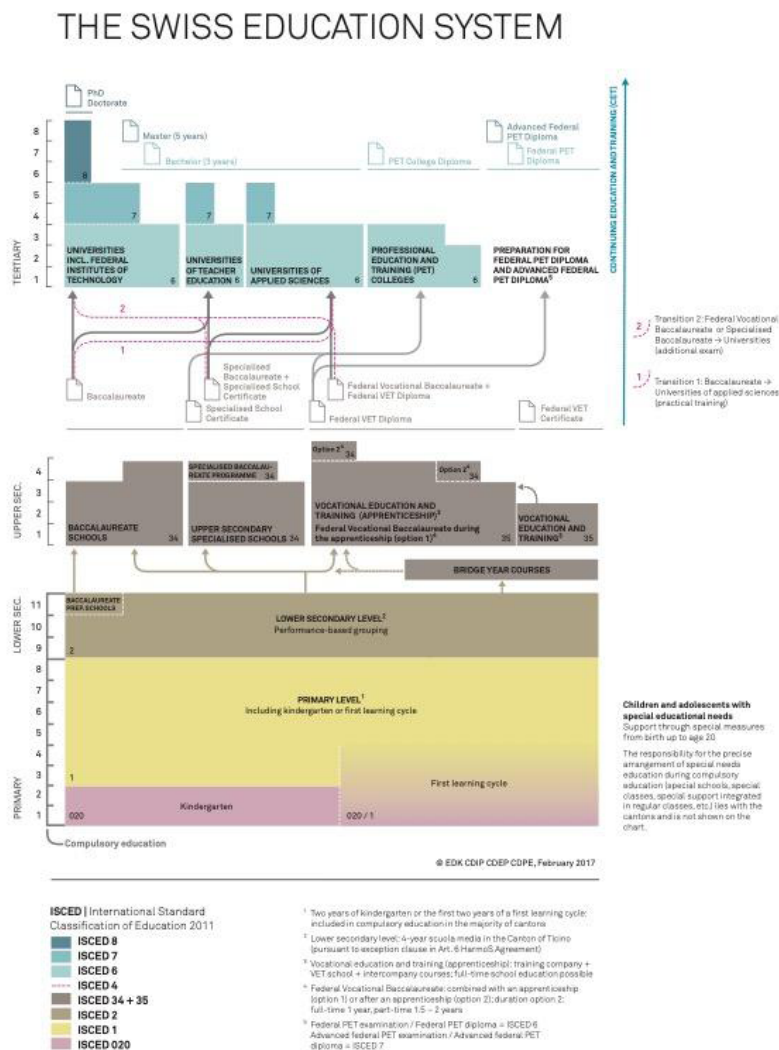
Switzerland is governed by a federal system at three levels: the confederation, the cantons and the communes. Direct democracy allows the citizens to have a direct say at all political levels. These democratic participation opportunities play an important role in Switzerland, which is geographically, culturally and linguistically diverse. Switzerland has four national languages: German, French, Italian and Romansh. This multilingualism is enshrined in law and cultivated in society, even though English is becoming increasingly important. German is the most widely spoken language. Almost two thirds of people speak another language than the one spoken in their region at least once a week.

Switzerland's education is organized along federal lines. This means that the Swiss confederation, cantons and communities all have responsibility for education. As regards compulsory education, the cantons have specific responsibility. They also take responsibility for special needs education for children and young people up to 20 years of age. There are certain national agreements regarding education, and more within the different language regions. For example, recently, new curricula for the German speaking and French speaking cantons have been developed, and to a certain extent, for the Italian speaking canton.

There are around 9446 schools offering compulsory education in Switzerland. Of these, 10% are private schools. Schools operating in the compulsory education segment are attended by approximately 976,105 pupils (data for the 2020/21 school year from the Swiss Federal Statistical Office (2022)). Of these, 19% attended primary level 1-2 (kindergarten, entrance level), 54% attended primary level 3-8 and 27% lower secondary level. Girls accounted for just under half at each level and children and young people of foreign nationality accounted for just over a quarter. The number of pupils attending compulsory school is expected to rise over the next few years. This trend is not the same for all cantons; in the more urban areas, in particular, growth is expected (Wolter et al., 2018). In conclusion, a greater need for teachers and infrastructure is to be expected.

In a survey from 2020, 918 parents from all over Switzerland stated that the majority of them were satisfied with the work of the teachers and the school (Keller et al., 2019). However, satisfaction decreases from kindergarten to secondary school. Parents of children with special educational needs are less satisfied with the school situation than other parents. Inclusive education is also one of the most controversial school topics discussed in the media in recent years (Aschwanden & Gerny, 2022). The topic of assessment is primarily addressed in the media when discussing whether or not grades should be given in schools (Serafini, 2021).

Figure 1. The Swiss education system (Wolter et al., 2018)



1.2 Summary and discussion of current national (and/or local as relevant) assessment policies

Since school sovereignty lies with the cantons, they organize cross-linguistic or separate performance assessments in the main subjects. Previously, school inspections have mostly been concerned with compliance with legal standards, procedures and budgets. However, currently, various approaches are being taken to evaluate the quality of schools and teaching processes, the primary aim of which is to identify development opportunities for schools (Wolter et al., 2018). This also includes the development of a culture of assessment in individual schools. Local school autonomy allows headmasters, together with their team of teachers, to develop their own assessment culture within the framework of the cantonal guidelines.

The performance assessment of pupils has long been considered a task of teaching and learning. Especially in compulsory education, assessment was seen as a necessary tool for schools to fulfil their purpose of allocating and selecting students for different educational

pathways (Imlig & Ender, 2018). Since 2000, international discourse and, in particular, large-scale international examinations, such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), have changed the perception and use of information on student performance in policymaking and among the general public. On a national level, Switzerland has introduced an educational governance system, using standardized monitoring and reporting tools. The Swiss Conference of Cantonal Ministers of Education (EDK) is responsible for the national coordination of education and cultural policy. The EDK regularly takes stock of the state of harmonization of key aspects of compulsory education and assesses whether national education standards are being met. National educational standards have been developed for four subjects, and the first national tests have been conducted on the basis of these standards (Swiss Conference of Cantonal Ministers of Education (EDK), 2011). The last major survey took place in the spring of 2023. More than 20,000 pupils in the 11th school year HarmoS (or 9th grade) were examined in the subject area of languages (Interfaculty Centre for Educational Research (ICER), n.d.). No reporting will be made at lower levels, such as at school, class, teacher or individual student level. Furthermore, Switzerland regularly participates in PISA School Leadership Tests. They provide important indications for the Swiss education system and its development.

In addition, there are so-called learning-enhancing achievement or diagnostic tests, which can be carried out by classes or individual students in the sense of providing information on the level of achievement of a reference group (Wolter et al., 2018). For example, the “Stellwerk” test has been implemented by nearly all German-speaking cantons; its items are based on the common educational goals of the cantons’ various curricula (Moser, 2006). However, these diagnostic tests must be purchased by the schools. Some of the tests are also used (by companies) to select students for entry into vocational apprenticeships (Siegenthaler, 2010).

In each of the two largest language regions, there is a cross-cantonal curriculum which also contains information on assessment. This includes both the summative and formative functions of an assessment. The French/Italian curriculum is the Plan d’études romand, PER (Conférence intercantonale de l’instruction publique de la Suisse romande et du Tessin (CIIP), 2011) and the equivalent in the German-speaking cantons (incl. Romansh and Italian in the Canton of Grisons) is the Curriculum 21 (Deutschschweizer Erziehungsdirektoren-Konferenz (D-EDK), 2015). In practically all cantons, there are directives specifying that the formative function should also be used in the assessment of students’ performance, e.g., in the notes for assessment in the Canton de Vaud (Direction générale de l’enseignement obligatoire et de la pédagogie spécialisée (DGEO), 2022b) or in the Canton Zurich (Volksschulamt, n.d.). The new curricula include not only subject-specific competencies, but also generic or transversal competencies - social and personal. There is controversy as to whether it would make more sense to include these in school reports, which has been done in many cantons. LCH-Switzerland, the umbrella organization of teachers, for example, suggests that these competencies should only be assessed formatively (LCH Dachverband Lehrerinnen und Lehrer Schweiz, 2016). In a bulletin of the CIIP, Michel Develay, a former professor of teacher education in Lyon, states that the assessment of transversal competencies should not be based on marks (Bourgoz Froidevaux & Schneider, 2022). He elucidates that if the aim is to help students understand how they function or why they have difficulties, self-assessment would be a much better way. Reflexivity could be a valuable resource in this respect, as it helps students to characterise what they have learnt. Co-evaluation could also be used, either between students or with the teacher. Documents such as portfolios would be good tools for monitoring students’ learning in the area of transversal competencies. We will come back to these assessment instruments later.

Imlig and Ender (2018) point out, that from a teaching perspective, all these new instruments (large-scale and diagnostic tests as well as cross-regional curricula) influence instruction both intentionally and unintentionally. In terms of educational policy, it is important to clarify whether these instruments are intended to improve teaching and how they relate to other teaching materials and teachers' professional backgrounds and assessment practices.

1.3 Discussion of the existing professional learning context and professional development for teachers' use of formative assessments

The Swiss curricula have been described in terms of competences and thus follow the paradigm of competence measurement, as understood in international performance measurement (Klieme, 2004). The concept of competence has been critical in educational practice, due to its influence on textbook development and teacher training (Imlig & Ender, 2018). Various questions on assessment were reconsidered against the background of Curriculum 21 or the PER, and further training measures were expected from the teachers' associations in particular. In this context, however, the main focus was on questions of summative assessment, such as the possibility of harmonizing the reports in terms of structuring them according to subjects or subject areas or developing instruments and materials with which teachers could be supported in summative assessment. Nevertheless, with respect to Curriculum 21, formative assessment has become very important, due to the influence it has on the learning process (Deutschweizer Erziehungs-Konferenz (D-EDK), 2015). The D-EDK expert group on assessment stated in its report (Deutschweizer Erziehungs-Konferenz (D-EDK), 2015) that, summative performance assessment cannot be limited to ascertaining the attainment of individual levels of competence. It must include additional criteria, such as the difficulty of the task, its cognitive demands, the independence of the solution of the tasks, etc. (qualitative dimension). The expert group further concluded that to support teachers, teaching materials should provide exemplary rubrics for complex assessment situations. Assessment must be part of education and teacher training for competence-based learning.

Almost all the universities offering teacher education provide professional development (PD) for assessment, including formative aspects. The topics range from portfolio, feedback, competence-based assessment, assessment meetings between student and teacher to assessment culture in schools (e.g. Pädagogische Hochschule Zürich, n.d.). Such PD programmes are most likely to be booked as collective events by whole school teams; individual training sessions for individual teachers are rarely attended. Apart from the PD offered by universities, private institutes or coaches also provide courses on formative assessment (e.g., schulentwicklung.ch).

One of the more recent topics that comes up in professional development, with respect to assessment, is rubrics. In connection with national standards, rubrics could help the targets of a standard or competence to be understood by the teacher and the students. Students can check the state of their learning process, based on clear descriptions of the goals. Teachers should be helped by rubrics to clarify their feedback on the students' work. However, this instrument has not been used much in practice in Switzerland to date (Bachmann & Smit, 2019). As part of the project "learning with rubrics", teachers in the Eastern area of Switzerland participated in PD regarding the use of rubrics for mathematical argumentation (Smit et al.,

2019). Some of the teachers were able to transfer their experiences to other subjects but, in general, the construction of rubrics (which was not part of the PD) was considered to be rather time consuming and difficult. Some textbooks, such as “die Sprachstarken” for German, already have rubrics, and more textbooks could follow in the future, relieving the teacher of the burden of self-development (Koller & Biasio, n.d.).

In the case of younger children, understanding criteria within a rubric is difficult. Mottier Lopez and Dechamboux (2019) conducted PD for teachers of children in lower primary classes and in kindergarten (age four to eight) to demonstrate how the assessment criteria for this age group can be made transparent. The aim was for teachers to develop the criteria for formative assessment with the young students in the course of learning activities. The content objective was to identify the main characters in a story. Students’ participation in the construction of the assessment criteria made the process interactive.

Formative assessment is also dependent on the subjective beliefs of the teacher, for example, teachers may give different feedback to students with a lower educational background than to students with a higher educational background (Neuenschwander et al., 2021). At the FHNW, as part of the project SCALA, teachers were able to learn how to make pupil feedback conducive to pupils’ learning, as well as socially fair (Neuenschwander et al., 2018). Through PD, teachers developed fairer and more performance-appropriate expectations towards pupils with a migrant background.

1.4 Examples of formative assessment practices currently being used by teachers

To understand the different practices reported here, it is important to understand that a student can be involved in formative assessment processes in the classroom in different ways (Direction générale de l’enseignement obligatoire et de la pédagogie spécialisée (DGEO), 2022a), which can be categorized as: 1. co-assessment, conducted jointly between the teacher and the student; 2. mutual peer assessment, conducted between students and 3. self-assessment, whereby the student assesses his/her own work and learning. These three approaches have the advantage of enabling students to acquire skills specifically for assessment. They support the development of reflective approaches and maintain a certain critical distance from the work carried out, enabling pupils to take more responsibility for their learning.

For individual assessment in the classroom, so-called orientation papers and task collections developed by cantons or regions exist (e.g., Bildungsdirektoren-Konferenz Zentralschweiz (BKZ), Bern and others) which contain qualitatively sound tasks, however, these are not validated or calibrated. These instruments can be used either for summative or formative purposes (Bildungsdirektoren-Konferenz Zentralschweiz (BKZ), 2013). Orientation tasks are part of the transfer procedure from one school level to the next in some cantons. This mix of functions creates confusion among teachers and governmental actors, however, its formative function is emphasized.

Formative instruments used in the French region of Switzerland include criteria lists, portfolios, self-assessment grids, annotations on a piece of work, feedback and comments, etc. (Mottier Lopez, 2019). However, it appears that these instruments are used more frequently at primary level and

only to a lesser extent at secondary level. In the German area of Switzerland, teachers apply similar instruments for formative assessment to those mentioned above in the French region.

Mottier Lopez (2019) points out that assessment which supports students' learning (assessment for learning) also includes summative aspects, when it is used to assess where the students stand in their learning, what they need to progress and how best to achieve this. In the case of kindergarten and elementary school, assessment should be conducted, when children are in a real learning situation, which they experience daily in the classroom (free-play, guided activity, hands-on approach, etc.). This assessment is intended to provide a global image of the pupil, evaluating how the child thinks and learns independently, with others and in a group, in order to allow the expert to regulate his/her teaching, so as to provide for the learning of all pupils (Kappeler, 2019).

Learning assessment tasks can be used formatively or summatively. As regards the formative use, it makes sense to examine the learning processes in learning situations and to reflect on the work process (Abteilung Volksschule Kanton Glarus, 2021). It is recommended that the timing be flexible, rather than a summative exam at the end of the unit (Abteilung Volksschule Kanton Glarus, 2021). Phases should be included during which reflection can take place and the assessment results should be discussed in detail (preferably with the teacher). Learners should have the opportunity to apply assessment criteria themselves (self-assessment). The assessment tasks should be reworked or a new assessment written to check whether a student has improved. Meaningful follow-up tasks and exercises should also be available. Such formative assessment tasks can be used, for example, to assess children's pre-conceptions about the functioning of human body parts on the human skeleton in science (Futter et al., 2019).

Oral activities are particularly suitable for process-oriented, formative assessment. The following activity can be found in a brochure of the University of Teacher Education Schwyz (Futter et al., 2019): the teacher develops competence cards to be used with a picture book in a German lesson. These cards are derived from Curriculum 21, according to the developmental stage of the children. In an open, unguided learning sequence, five to six different competence cards are offered. The pupils choose the cards themselves and practise independently. The following formative assessment situations are suggested: practising the story with a picture book; imitating the story in a table theatre; placing the pictures of the story in the correct order and retelling them, then listening to the story and checking it; listening to the story and retelling it; supplementing individual pictures of the story with the children's own drawings; inventing a continuation of the story. The children should decide themselves when they have mastered the task, nevertheless, the teacher has the opportunity to join the children and observe them.

The following setting is suggested to specifically foster peer-assessment skills: students are given a writing assignment in which they have to write, for example, about the pros and cons of mobile phones in class and convince one of their peers of their arguments. During the writing process, teachers can rely on the formative feedback of the pupils, in order to achieve better texts through subsequent text revisions. For example, the teaching book, "Sprachwelt Deutsch" can be used for this purpose. It contains working techniques for the competence area of writing, which enable young people to give qualified feedback by means of guiding questions or criteria (Bildungsdirektion Kanton Zürich - Volksschulamt, n.d.).

A well-known instrument that can be used formatively, but is rarely utilized in all regions, is the portfolio. A portfolio is a collection of documents that show students' learning and performance. It contains examples of good work, reports, certificates and/or reflections on students' work (Abteilung Volksschule Kanton Glarus, 2021). If a portfolio is created over a longer period of time, the learning development of a child becomes visible, and this can be used for formative purposes. If primarily selected documents on talents and interests are stored within it, a talent portfolio is created and this might have a summative focus. Practical work on a portfolio relates to designing a longer process in which the learners are actively involved. When working with the portfolio, the focal point is the student's reflection on the work. The students should explain why this work is included in their portfolio or where they had difficulties and how they overcame them. Student products in the portfolio can be revised. In this way, performance - in contrast to summative learning assessments - is introduced into a longer process, which takes place at several stages, in which learners are supported, advised and monitored until they have reached their performance potential.

The portfolio can also be combined with observations made by the teacher. For example, the teacher can note observations during experimentation phases in science lessons (Bildungsdirektion Kanton Zürich - Volksschulamt, n.d.). The teacher assesses the students' performance with the help of a list of criteria. To establish the criteria, the teacher thinks in advance about the characteristics he/she expects in the answers and how he/she weights them. The students also assess their competences in conducting the experiments and file the self-assessment with the protocols of the performed experiments in the portfolio. The teacher compares his/her assessment with that of the learners in a formative talk.

Regarding reflective work, which is also an aspect of formative assessment, the *learning journal (journal writing)* is a suitable instrument (Lötscher et al., 2021). In addition to the processes of tasks, students also enter their error analyses, reflections and reviews in the learning journal. In addition, the teacher comments on this work from time to time by providing formative feedback. The feedback should be appreciative and should highlight the often-implicit potential of the text in the learning journal. It is not the consideration of errors that triggers development, but the awareness of what has been achieved (Ruf & Winter, 2012). Metacognitive monitoring strategies help the student to monitor their own understanding. For example, the student should ask him/herself what was understood well and where there are still difficulties (Philipp, 2021).

Whether digital tools have a formative or a summative function depends on their application. There are several commercial and non-commercial publishers offering such tools; for an overview, see Amt für Kindergarten Volksschulen und Beratung (2021). However, there is little or no literature on experiences of or research into these digital tools when used in formative assessment. It may be assumed that the use of such tools for (formative) assessment in the classroom is not yet widespread in Switzerland. Recently, the University of Teacher Education Schwyz developed a digital tool for individualized learning (Hielscher, 2022). Some features are also related to formative assessment. Students can enter reflexive thoughts in a learning journal and teachers can provide formative feedback on the students' entries or assess their progress.

1.5 Review of the literature on formative assessment focusing on Switzerland

Almost all cantons have brochures that guide teachers' assessment practices. Two of these listed below may be particularly useful for the practice of formative assessment:

- Kompetenzorientiert beurteilen, Bildungsdirektion Kanton Zürich (Bildungsdirektion Kanton Zürich - Volksschulamt, n.d.)
- Beurteilen im kompetenzorientierten Unterricht (biku), Amt für Volksschule St. Gallen (Birri, 2020)

A new book regarding assessment in connection with the introduction of Curriculum 21 has been published in German by Lötscher et al. (2021). The book covers assessment practices in many subjects. There is also an introduction to assessment based on Curriculum 21.

The Syndicat des enseignants romands (SER) (2019) dedicated an issue of their magazine "*Educateur*" to the topic of assessment, with references to formative assessment in several articles.

Based on Hattie's book "*Visible Learning*", Prof. Wolfgang Beywl produced a wiki related to the results of Hattie's meta-analysis. In the wiki, 19 methods for feedback and formative assessment are presented (Beywl, 2012).

There is also a classic book on formative assessment by Linda Allal, a former professor at the University of Geneva (Allal, 1991). As a result of this book, formative assessment has become more widespread in Switzerland. The content of the book is still relevant but may be more generally related to the topic.

Specifically for the use of portfolios, the office of the compulsory school in the Canton of Zurich has published a brochure providing suggestions for the application of portfolios in practice (Bildungsdirektion Kanton Zürich - Volksschulamt, 2021).

Other resources are mentioned within the text above and may be found in the reference list.

2. Country findings

2.1 National approach to teacher-led learning circles

In Switzerland, the teachers' unions in German-speaking and French-speaking Switzerland/Ticino were contacted. They were asked to make an appeal for participation in the T3LFA project in their magazine or via other channels. While no one was found in French-speaking Switzerland, four people came forward in German-speaking Switzerland, one of whom took on the role of moderator. The union had a single contact person for the project.

The four participating teachers came from four different regions, mostly urban or semi-urban regions, with typical school buildings consisting of six classes, grades 1-6 and class sizes of 16-20 students. The school of the moderating teacher comprised multi-grade classes, located in a remote area. One teacher left the project during the workshops because she could not identify with the process, therefore, two teachers and one moderator made up the learning circle. The two teachers had been in the teaching profession for a relatively short time (six-seven years), while the moderator had 20 years of teaching experience. According to their own assessment, all teachers had good prior knowledge of formative assessment and its related practices.

2.2 Promising teacher-led formative assessment practices

2.2.1 Teacher-led formative assessment practices used and their implementation

Preliminary note: The data for the information presented in 2.2 were derived from documents that were created during the T3LFA project, based on templates from HertsCam. Section 2.2.1 presents examples of formative assessment practices that teachers had already used before or alongside the T3LFA project. Specific descriptions of T3LFA development projects are provided in 2.2.2.

In order to anonymize the two teachers participating in the project, they are referred to below as Teacher 1 and Teacher 2.

Teacher 1:

In mathematics, formative learning assessments were used to determine in which areas the students achieved the basic requirements. The feedback results should help the students determine the next learning steps, as well as the tasks they need to work on more intensively.

Before the annual compulsory exchange talks with the parents, Teacher 1 conducted exchanges with the pupils about their current level of achievement. The aim was to listen to the children's questions, opinions, assessments, etc. in advance. If necessary, agreements regarding the learning process could be made from this discussion, which could then be communicated to the parents. From the exchange, the students learn where they stand, and they can have a personal conversation with the teacher. Pupils can talk to the teacher without their classmates overhearing.

The teacher gave constant feedback to the students by regularly correcting tasks. The lessons were prepared in alignment with the individual mistakes and difficulties of the students, but their positive experiences were also taken into account. This was about strengthening diversity in the classroom. Everyone is different and everyone brings something valuable to the table. The teaching of Teacher 1 was very individualized; feedback was given on strengths, providing opportunities for students to develop these further.

In addition, Teacher 1 employed peer- and self-feedback. For example, students had to assess the extent to which they had achieved the learning objectives before, during and after completing a topic.

Teacher 2:

Teacher 2 used rubrics to assess pupils' interdisciplinary projects. This was done at the beginning of the project for them to see what was expected, as well as during the project to self-assess whether they were on the right track (self-reflection and self-assessment). Rubrics were applied during a project in class to obtain feedback from other classmates (peer feedback) and from the teacher. In the case of the teacher, rubrics were applied to make a final assessment of a student at the end of the project, either in a joint discussion between student and teacher or all together in class. To communicate to the children their levels of proficiency, Teacher 2 used the illustration of ski slopes with different difficulties. For example, blue was the easiest ski slope and the children knew that this represented the basic skills. The teacher used this representation in connection with a rubric showing the competencies and the classmates helped the teacher assess the level of competence. The teacher believed that the ski slopes and the rubric with the competencies made student self-assessment easier.

Teacher 2 used feedback burgers. A burger consisted of different "layers": naming strengths, pointing out weaknesses, giving suggestions and giving praise. Burgers were not only employed by the teacher but also by the students to give peer feedback during the lessons. The teacher offered weekly learning counselling for individual children, which constituted a protected setting to work on personal goals together with the teacher. The feedback burger assessment tool helped to build a good relationship between teacher and student.

To give learners feedback after class, the teacher also used Microsoft Teams software. This was done, for example, when using tests with Microsoft Forms or giving feedback on reading progress. The children could show the feedback to their parents if they so wished. Sometimes the children gave feedback to each other via Teams. This was done to promote computer literacy.

2.2.2 Teacher-led formative assessment practices developed in the T3LFA project

Teacher 1:

Teacher 1 developed her own teaching material for writing skills in German, which was a kind of workbook or learning book. The available commercial teaching materials did not provide her with the desired thread or the possibility to formatively assess the children at their own pace and level. To date, she has not come across any teaching material that has allowed her to teach "writing a story" in a differentiated way and in a way that would be as individualized

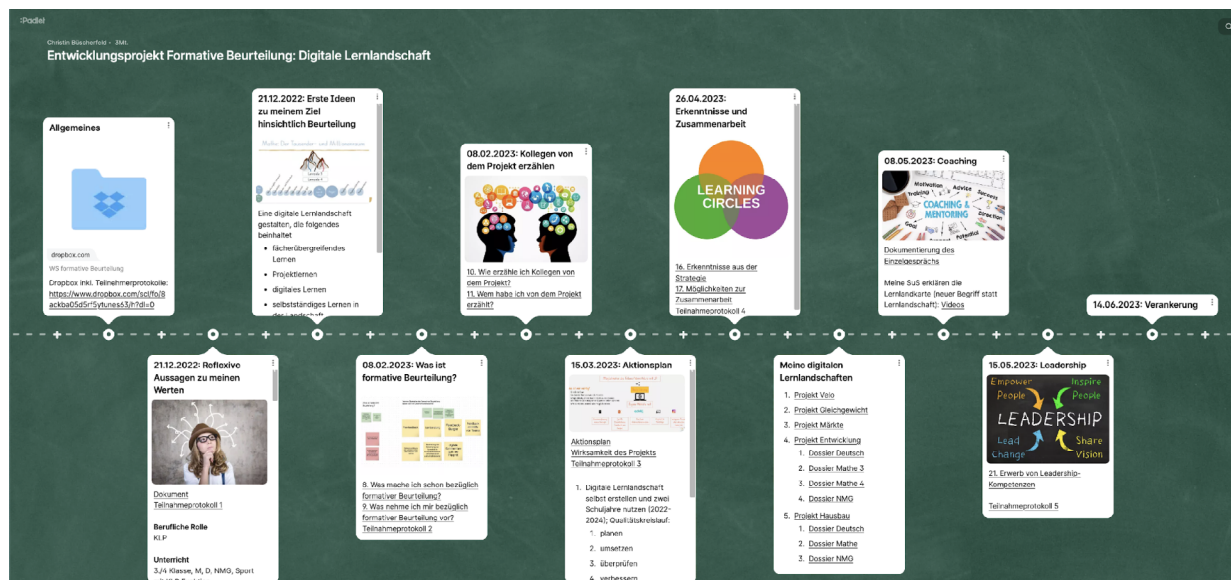
for each student as possible. Consequently, she created her own teaching material for the competencies, as presented in the current curriculum and developed appropriate criteria grids (rubrics) for the assessment of spelling and text quality. She used these rubrics formatively, but a summative assessment could also be possible in principle.

As a specific type of formative assessment, she integrated peer feedback, based on predefined criteria regarding text quality in her lessons. A possible self-assessment by means of rubrics, suitable for children, was also included. Another tool used by the teacher was a review or learning journal by the children, indicating what had already been worked on or written, and the subsequent comparison of their learning level before and after. The teacher had a constant exchange with the pupils regarding what they were working on by correcting exercises and being involved in the feedback process between the individual versions of the text. In this process, the learners made use of the teacher's model-like example. The teacher, as a model, served as an important aspect of formative assessment for orientation and the goals to be achieved.

Teacher 2:

Teacher 2's goal was the construction of digital learning environments, e.g., on the overarching topic of "My Development" with learning content for the students relating to the subjects of German, mathematics, physical education and ethics. In Figure 2, the teacher's steps in the project are depicted as part of a timeline. The content of the digital learning environment, in the form of projects, is shown in Step 8 (from the left) in Figure 2: Project Bicycle, Project Balance, Project Markets, Project Development and Project House Building.

Figure 2: Timeline of the project's digital learning environment on Padlet



Teacher 2 developed a PowerPoint Presentation, which led to various tasks using links. Figure 3 shows that different subjects have been brought together with the content in one main project. These various subprojects were amalgamated into the digital learning environment, "My Development". The children were able to choose which learning content they wanted to work on, based on a work plan (Figure 4). It was evident that Teacher 2 emphasized digital learning in the T3LFA project. This provided a smooth transition to the next section.

Figure 3: Excerpt from the PowerPoint presentation, "My Development", with links to the different learning content of various subjects

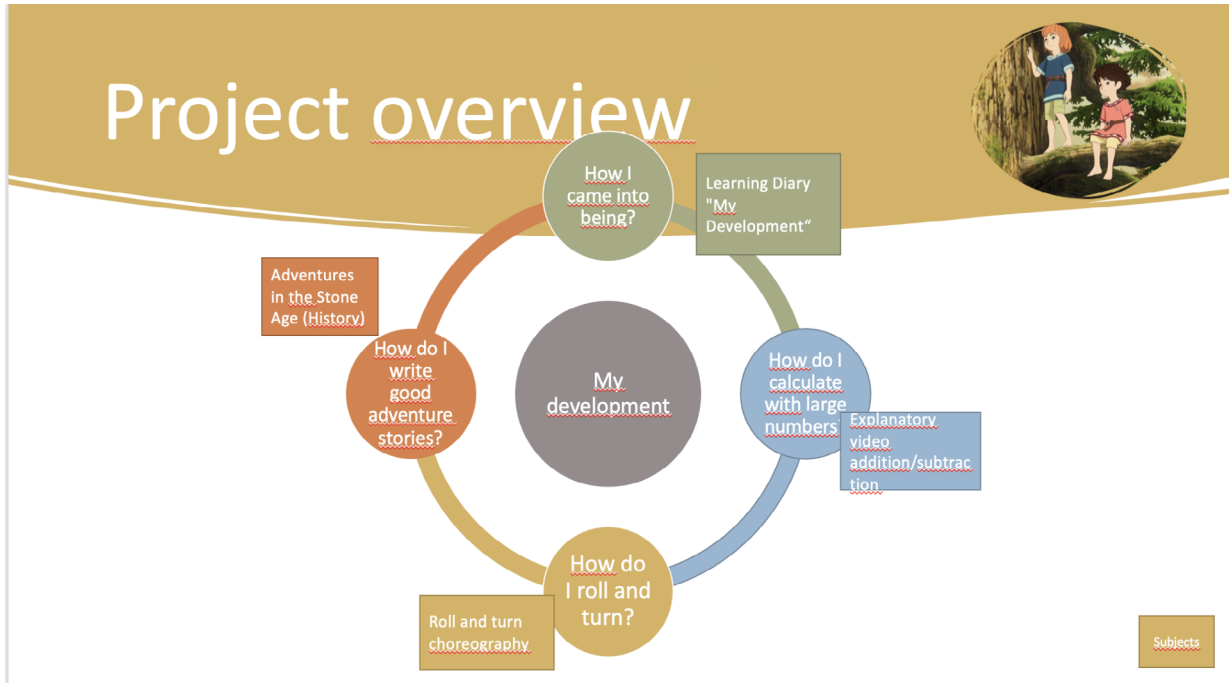


Figure 4: Work plan for the learning environment, "My Development"

Independent work / plan

Project task: Work independently on the dossiers on the topic of "My development" and thereby develop further in your independent learning.

| Sports | Science | Math | German |
|---|---|---|---------------------------------|
| Station cards for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forward and/or backward roll • Rim lift • Rolls on high bar • Rotation in the rings • Wheel | Post sheet and learning diary on the topics of development of the body and the human being. | Dossier on (semi-)written addition and subtraction in mathematics | Story workshop on the Stone Age |

subjects

2.2.3 Technology support for the implementation of formative assessment practices

As already mentioned, the digital learning environment project of Teacher 2 involved many digital tools, for example, an interactive PowerPoint presentation, formative tests with Microsoft Forms or videos where students explained their understanding of certain topics.

Both teachers used the software, Microsoft Teams, to provide feedback. In addition, Teacher 2 provided comments—teacher feedback—on students' ideas using the app, "Flipgrid" (now "Flip"). To give learners feedback after class, she also used Teams software. This was done, for example, when using tests with Forms or to give feedback on reading progress. If the children so wished, they could also show the teacher's feedback to their parents. Sometimes the children gave peer feedback to each other via Teams. This promoted their computer literacy.

2.2.4 Teacher-led formative assessment practices that provided effective feedback to students

Up to this point, much has been mentioned about feedback. For this reason, there are also some repetitions in this section. Both teachers used rubrics that related to the competencies shown in the national curriculum. This was done during phases of learning and after completion of a topic; feedback was aligned to these rubrics. Teacher 1 developed such rubrics related to her story-writing project. These were used to give feedback on spelling and text quality (Figure 5). Teacher 1 had a constant exchange with the pupils about what they were working on, by correcting exercises and being involved in the feedback process between the individual versions of the text.

In German-speaking countries, the term "competence" underwent a reorientation around the turn of the millennium in order to replace the term "learning objective". In short, while learning objectives cover knowledge, competencies are suitable for describing performance in complex situations, which require the linking of knowledge and action. Curricula now describe competencies, not (only) learning objectives. This discussion is somewhat academic and does not play a significant role in teaching practice. In the project, T3LFA, written feedback was more often given by ticking the competence levels achieved and less often by means of formulated text.

Both teachers used peer and self-assessment. There were student templates for this, such as criteria lists or rubrics.

2.2.5 Benefits of using formative assessment identified for teachers' practices

Teacher 1:

Teacher 1 was able to give much more individualized feedback, tailored to the abilities and skills of the pupils (the child's "rucksack" could be taken into account). In particular, she was able to adapt spontaneous questions better to the mood and situation of the child. She was clearly able to show a child where she wanted to go by asking herself: What should this individual child achieve? Furthermore, not all children had to reach the same goal at the same time.

In her lessons, the pupils were increasingly less interested in what others were doing. Comparisons became less important and, through transparent demonstration, the teacher was able to make it clear that everyone is different and not everyone has the same goals. Through formative assessment, she could create a positive impact on the classroom climate, reduce pressure to perform and minimize comparisons between pupils.

She found that when using the formative assessment method, all students achieved their learning goals, whereas, when using the summative assessment, lower-performing students were always at a disadvantage because they had far fewer positive (success) experiences.

Teacher 2:

The children often assessed themselves together with the teacher. They were able to explain to their parents exactly why they had received a particular assessment/grade. By asking them to assess themselves, this took the pressure off Teacher 2 because she could not always recapitulate everything from her observations (difficult with 23 children).

By working in a digital learning environment, she could supply the parents with feedback on the students' ability to work in a self-regulated manner. She also had an insight into the progress of the students, with reference to the individual tasks in the work plans, by keeping a list of each student. The list showed which tasks had already been completed. In addition, the teacher realized that she could involve the pupils much more consciously in the assessment process. This makes assessment more of a tool for the learner, not just the teacher. The digital learning environment allowed students to progress more individually and flexibly, thus enabling differentiated instruction with the included formative assessment.

The project created a practical opportunity for students to apply their knowledge and make it useful, and the rubric showing the competencies the students worked on allowed the teacher to give them an indication of what was expected of them. The rubric became familiar and could be used throughout the school year, allowing Teacher 2 to make the final assessment at the end of the year easier to understand. The project met with great interest from participants in the CAS Media and Information Technology course, which the teacher is currently completing. Many of her colleagues in the school team felt overwhelmed and under pressure when Teacher 2 reported on her developments; they were of the opinion that she was not supporting the children properly because she carried out "too few" summative assessments.

2.2.6 Benefits of using formative assessment identified for student learning

Teacher 1:

The pressure to perform was taken away from the students, but summative thinking was still prevalent. The students perceived formative assessment as help and not as 'judgement'. The formative support provided by the teacher made the students feel recognized. They maintained that they were able to do something concrete with the feedback; they also realized that the learning process continues after the assessment and is not complete.

By revising their own text three times, the students were encouraged to reflect again and again on how they could personally improve their writing process. They were supported by their peers and the teacher. Since at least two texts were examined using the same rubric, a child's

improvement could be pointed out specifically and concretely. With a criteria grid for self- and peer assessment, conversations about academic performance could be initiated.

Overall, the students reported less test stress or test anxiety.

Teacher 2:

In the digital learning environment introduced earlier, the students worked very independently. Students dared to express their opinions about their performance to the teacher. In addition, it became apparent that the students gained confidence when giving feedback to others. The digital learning environment, which also included a work plan, allowed students to work more freely. They could choose for themselves which subject they wanted to work on. The work plan gave them a structure. In preparation for the work plan, the students completed a course to learn the necessary self-regulation competencies. The students were also allowed to participate in the discussion of the criteria for the rubric. Consequently, the students now demand more involvement in the learning process from the teacher, even during the previous planning stage of the lessons.

2.3 Professional learning processes supporting teachers' formative assessment practices in teacher-led learning circles in Switzerland

2.3.1 How teachers were supported in developing and implementing formative assessment practices

All participants commented that the exchanges with the other teachers in the learning circles were extremely helpful and encouraging. In addition, the teaching material of Teacher 1 was reviewed/edited by a former school principal. Teacher 2 found that sharing ideas with teachers from her own team was difficult because their attitudes were very different from hers (their focus was still on summative assessment) and because the technology skills of her team members were still very poor, e.g., a digital PowerPoint presentation overwhelms them. Nevertheless, she was visited by a colleague from time to time and also received feedback from the special needs teacher who taught with her during individual lessons. She realized that leadership can also be thought of differently. It is possible to form groups of people who all have a common interest in a topic and in further development, and who adopt a shared perspective. It is not always the case that people who work together in a group do not wish to do so (e.g., teams of teachers who teach the same classes) as is normally the case in schools.

2.3.2 What helped or hindered the effective implementation of formative assessment practices?

Teacher 1:

Teacher 1 sees her personal values once again in black and white, meaning her values became clearer. She believes that changing long-standing ideas about school takes a lot of work and persistence, as well as a sufficient number of people pulling in the same direction.

She noted that the attitude of the children (or rather the parents in the background) was still very performance-orientated (is each task/assignment given a grade?) It takes time and clarification to introduce formative assessment.

The feedback discussions and formative support by the teacher require more time. Some children are impatient if they have to wait for the teacher or do not wish to continue. In this respect, the implementation of formative assessment is difficult, due to a lack of resources. This also includes the special needs teacher who is actually needed more. Teachers need to be patient with themselves if some children have to 'wait'.

Another obstacle is that parents and certain teachers are convinced that formative assessment is subjective: I like the child/I do not like the child. Teacher 1 is of the opinion that this is more a question of attitude, whereas some colleagues do not wish to hear anything else or do not wish to see the benefits of formative assessment.

Teacher 2:

Teacher 2 noticed that some of her students had difficulties working independently on the plan. Children received help from her in lessons when the special needs teacher was present or in her sessions of learning counselling. One element of formative assessment is that the learning objectives and thus, to some extent the tasks, should become comprehensible. Some pupils did not watch the learning videos intended to clarify the targets before working on the plan. They also did not read through the tasks that Teacher 2 gave them during the course as preparation for the plan work on each topic. Teacher 2 suggested that formulating the action plan even more concretely could help achieve a better understanding of the tasks in the action plan.

Teacher 2 was of the opinion that formative assessment requires a completely different attitude and considerable background knowledge on the part of the teacher. This attitude needs to be communicated well. The parents are not yet used to this way of assessing and working. They may wish to have formative assessment "proven" more precisely. In other words, formative assessment needs to be explained in an argumentative way and parents need to be brought on board. In addition, as a teacher, one also has to get away from the feeling of having to do and prove everything. It will never be possible to convince all parents completely and it is primarily important to allow the children to have good experiences.

It was difficult to find people in her school team who wanted to take part, but she was able to find people outside the team. It was also difficult for her to continually justify her teaching in this way within her team, even though it aligned with the new Curriculum 21. It was exhausting for her to convince other teachers who were reluctant to omit summative assessment, therefore, they held her back and it was a constant battle for her. In addition, the special needs teacher demanded that the lessons be adapted to the old format again. Teacher 2 sees one's own values as playing a significant role as a teacher (together with the children, with fellow teachers, etc.). She thinks that, as a teacher, one often has the feeling of having to battle with many people when implementing new ideas with little support. In this case, it is possible to feel as if you are the only one with these ideas. However, in the learning circles group, Teacher 2 realized that teachers who wish to change things are not alone, and can inspire and support each other.

In order to convince or inform other teachers, she had the students create explanatory videos about the digital learning environment, with the aim of sharing them with other teachers.

The difficulties with her school team resulted in her deciding to look for a new position and no longer wanting to work in the team.

Finally, from an educational policy perspective, it must be added that summative assessment, in connection with the transition from primary to secondary level, also posed a challenge for the introduction of formative assessment, as the issuing of grades is mandatory for this process.

2.2.3 Sustainability of the learning circle project

Another important question is whether the project has an impact in terms of sustainability. The following is a report on how the two teachers disseminated the ideas of the project.

Teacher 1:

Teacher 1 implemented her own learning circle in her primary school. She formed an exchange group, “formative assessment”, with the idea of inviting interested parties to discuss implementations and experiences regularly. The five teachers met six times for 1.5 hours over the course of a school year. If necessary, suitable literature was sought and included; concrete examples of action for individual lessons or the whole school were worked out, implemented and discussed. The meetings were based on prepared guiding questions and, if necessary, assignments. Since the exchange was valued as a kind of teacher-team collaboration, the school leader recognized it officially as part of the school’s institutional teamwork.

Teacher 1 also presented all her learning material to other teachers and explained and presented formative assessment in more detail, as part of a course for interested parties. She implemented all the tools created (learning material) in her own class and used these as a basis for discussions with parents. If necessary, the tools were revised for a better use of formative assessment.

Teacher 2:

Teacher 2 focused more on interdisciplinary projects in a digital learning landscape in which formative assessment was embedded. She intended to share her interdisciplinary teaching project with interested teachers. For example, she discussed it with fellow students at the University of Teacher Education (PH) in her postgraduate programme on media education. In addition, she presented her project at conferences on digital learning in Lucerne and Berne. For the new 2024/25 school year, she is planning to move to another school that focuses on open education. There, she would like to implement her project on a broader scale.

2.4 Data sources

In this section, some of the tools, used by Teacher 1 for formative assessment, are described in more detail. Teacher 1 used various assessment aids in her self-developed workbook for writing stories and for spelling/grammar. Figure 5 shows a feedback checklist for students useful for peer assessment, which is a simplified version of the teacher’s own assessment tool.

The grid comprises three dimensions: Structure, Language and Linguistic Correctness and Writing Appearance. These aspects were categorized into three levels, and peer suggestions for improvement were written in the right-hand column.

In Figure 6, a rubric for the spelling quality of a text is depicted. The competence levels progress from left to right. At the beginning of the writing process, the teacher selects which spelling rules each child must observe individually; in the spelling quality rubric, the teacher only assesses the lines that have been ticked beforehand. The spelling rubric can also be printed out and used during the work process. This remains the same during the three years of upper primary school and any individual progress should be recognizable when comparing student artifacts.

The rubric in Figure 7 for the student and teacher assessment of the text quality is the counterpart to Figure 6, showing where the 'journey' is heading and what the next higher level is. The text quality can be assessed before and after a learning process so that the learning progress can be seen.

Finally, Figure 8 is a handout for students. This shows the process for peers to give feedback and apply formative assessment as part of a writing conference. The steps are as follows: 1. preparation in groups of 3/4, 2. reading of the texts and initial feedback, 3. distribution of correction tasks; each student corrects all texts using their card/assignment, 4. clarification on the corrections and 5. conclusion, thanks and checking of correction suggestions, as well as implementing these if necessary in their own texts.

Figure 5: Feedback checklist

Feedback-Checkliste: Rückmeldung von _____


| Kriterien Du hast... | ☹ | ☺ | ☺ | Kommentar Schreibe, was du gut und was du nicht so gut findest. Mache Verbesserungsvorschläge. |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| Aufbau | | | | |
| 1. Im ersten Abschnitt das Ziel der Anleitung beschrieben | | | | |
| 2. Im zweiten Abschnitt die benötigten Materialien benannt | | | | |
| 3. Im dritten Abschnitt mit einer übersichtlichen Schritt-für-Schritt-Anleitung den Ablauf kurz und verständlich beschrieben | | | | |
| 4. Im vierten Abschnitt zusätzliche Informationen gegeben, die vorgängig noch nicht vorgekommen sind | | | | |
| Sprache | | | | |
| 5. deine Beschreibung so geschrieben, dass jeder es nachmachen kann | | | | |
| 6. deinen Text im Präsens geschrieben | | | | |
| 7. in deinem Text eine einheitliche Ansprache (man / du / Sie) verwendet | | | | |
| 8. den zeitlichen Versuchsablauf mit Wörtern wie zunächst, zuerst, nun, jetzt, dann, danach, anschließend, schliesslich ... verdeutlicht | | | | |
| 9. den Satzbau variiert | | | | |
| 10. Sätze sinnvoll verbunden | | | | |
| 11. eine abwechslungsreiche Sprache verwendet | | | | |
| Sprachliche Richtigkeit und Schreibbild | | | | |
| 12. die Buchstaben sauber und deutlich geschrieben | | | | |
| 13. die aktuellen Rechtschreibregeln beachtet | | | | |
| 14. eine Nummerierung eingefügt | | | | |

Figure 6: Rubric for spelling/grammar

 Beurteilung der Rechtschreibung
Deine Lehrperson beurteilt hier die Rechtschreibung deiner Endfassung

| Bereich |  |  |  |  |
|----------------------------------|---|--|--|---|
| Grossschreibung von Nomen | kaum Nomen werden grossgeschrieben | Nomen werden teilweise grossgeschrieben | Nomen werden meist grossgeschrieben | Nomen und nominalisierte Verben und Adjektive werden grossgeschrieben |
| Grossschreibung von Satzanfängen | Satzanfänge werden nie grossgeschrieben | Satzanfänge werden teilweise grossgeschrieben | Satzanfänge werden durch deutliche Buchstabengrösse grossgeschrieben | Grossschreibung bei Satzanfängen und nach Doppelpunkt werden stets beachtet |
| Zeichensetzungen am Satzende | Schlusszeichen fehlen am Satzende, gewisse Sätze werden nicht als solche erkannt | Schlusszeichen fehlen teilweise am Satzende, gewisse Sätze werden nicht als solche erkannt | Sätze sind meist durch sinnvolle Zeichensetzung abgetrennt | Sätze sind durch sinnvolle Zeichensetzung konstant voneinander abgetrennt |
| ei/s und eu/äu - Regel | Es findet keine Ableitung durch Wortstämme statt. Altersentsprechender Schwortschatz ist fehlerhaft | Es findet teilweise eine Ableitung durch Wortstämme statt | Die Regel wird mit wenigen Flüchtigkeitsfehlern angewendet | Unbekannte Wörter werden richtig abgeleitet und die Regel wird fehlerlos angewendet. Ausnahmen werden beachtet |
| f/v - Regel | Der Laut /f/ wird stets mit 'f' verschriftlicht. Altersentsprechender Schwortschatz ist fehlerhaft | Der Laut /f/ wird teilweise fehlerhaft mit 'v' verschriftlicht. Es besteht ein altersentsprechender Schwortschatz | Die Morpheme 'vor-' und 'ver-' werden richtig geschrieben. Die Merkwörter werden richtig angewandt | Ausgeweiteter Wortschatz unter Beachtung von Fremdwörtern und Anwendung von 'v' / 'ph' / 'w' |
| ie - Regel | Ein langes /i/ wird nicht verschriftlicht. Bekannte Lernwörter werden falsch geschrieben | Ein langes /i/ wird teilweise verschriftlicht. Keine konsequente Nutzung, bei Anwendung von Lernwörtern fehlerhaft | Ein langes /i/ wird als 'ie' verschriftlicht. Lernwörter mit 'y' werden korrekt angewandt. Anwendung von 'lei' teilweise vorhanden | Ein langes /i/ wird als 'ie' / 'y' / 'lei' richtig verschriftlicht. Von der Regel abweichende (Fremd-) Wörter werden berücksichtigt |
| sp/ät - Regel | 'sp' / 'st' am Wortanfang wird stets lautgetreu geschrieben | 'sp' / 'st' am Wortanfang wird teilweise lautgetreu geschrieben | 'sp' / 'st' am Wortanfang wird richtig geschrieben. Ausnahmefälle im Wort werden teilweise erkannt | Der Laut /schp/ oder /schst/ wird je nach Wort richtig abgeleitet und folglich stets korrekt geschrieben |
| Doppelkonsonanten | Nach einem kurzen, betonten Vokal folgt keine Verdoppelung des Konsonanten | Lernwörter mit Doppelkonsonanten werden richtig geschrieben | Kurze, betonte Vokale werden erkannt und wenn nötig erfolgt eine Verdoppelung des Konsonanten | Ausnahmen mit Doppelvokal nach langem Vokal werden beachtet. Es erfolgt eine konsequente Anwendung der Doppelkonsonantenregel |
| Trennregel | Wörter werden nie getrennt | Wörter werden teilweise richtig getrennt | Es wird nach der Silbentechnik getrennt | Die einzelnen Trennregeln werden stets korrekt angewendet |
| Ableitung von Wortstamm | Der Wortstamm wird bei Wörtern aus dem Grundwortschatz nicht erkannt. Es besteht eine inkonsequente Rechtschreibung | Der Wortstamm der Wörter wird erkannt und wird teilweise für Ableitungen verwandter Wörter gebraucht | Der Wortstamm wird für Ableitungen verwandter Wörter gebraucht | Der Wortstamm wird für Ableitungen verwandter Wörter gebraucht und übersteigt die altersgerechte Anwendung |
| Komma bei Aufzählungen | Aufzählungen werden nicht als solche erkannt | Aufzählungen werden teilweise mit Kommas abgetrennt | Komplexere Aufzählungen werden erkannt und vor 'und' / 'oder' und kein Komma gesetzt | Aufzählungen bestehend aus Nomen / Adjektiven und Satzteilen werden korrekt mit Kommas getrennt |
| Komma bei Nebensätzen | Teilsätze werden nie mit einem Komma abgetrennt | Signalwörter für Teilsätze werden erkannt und folglich wird ein Komma gesetzt | Teilsätze werden vor Signalwörtern und zwischen zwei Verben mit einem Komma getrennt | Teilsätze und eingeschobene Teilsätze werden als solche erkannt und mit Komma korrekt getrennt |
| direkte Rede | Direkte Reden werden ohne Satzzeichen verschriftlicht | Die direkte Rede wird teilweise mit korrekter Zeichensetzung angewendet | Die direkte Rede mit Begleitsatz zu Beginn oder am Ende wird korrekt angewendet | Alle Formen der direkten Rede werden korrekt angewendet |
| individuelles | | | | |

Figure 7: Rubric for text quality

 Beurteilung der Textqualität
Deine Lehrperson beurteilt hier die Textqualität deiner Endfassung





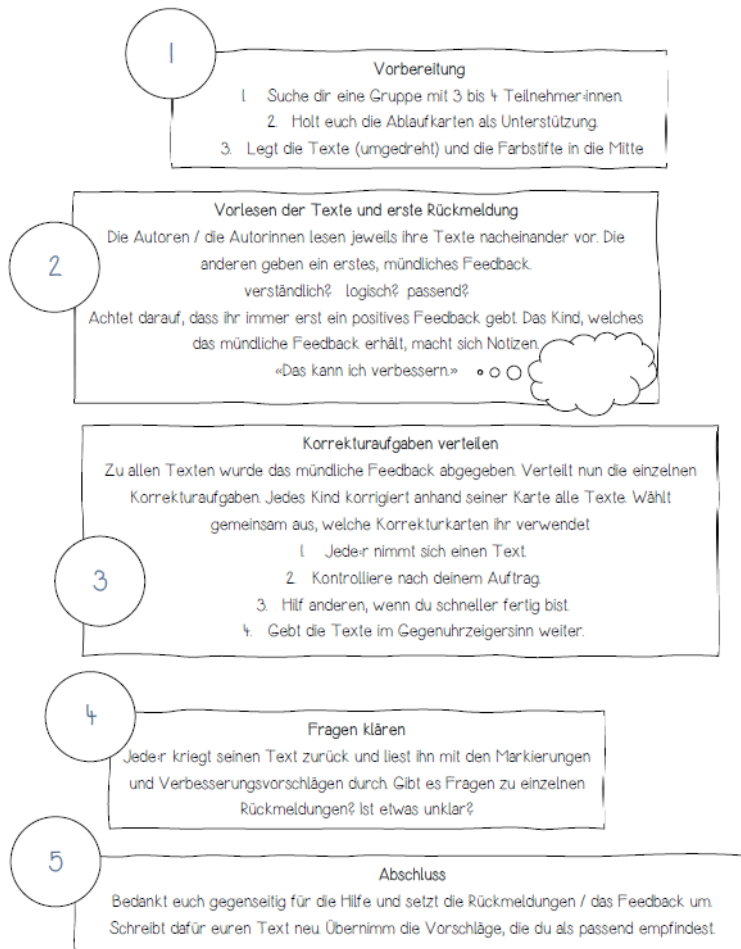
| Bereich |  |  |  |  |
|------------------------------------|---|---|--|---|
| Gliederung und Aufbau | keine Überschrift, keine Absätze Aufbau in Einleitung, Hauptteil und Schluss nicht erkennbar | an einfach zusammenhängender Text mit minimaler Gliederung, teilweise erkennbarer Aufbau mit Brüchen und Sprüngen | ein Text, der zusammenhängend ist und bei dem der Zusammenhang meist auch sprachlich deutlich wird | klarer und gut strukturierter Aufbau ohne Brüche und Sprünge |
| | Gedankengang nicht zusammenhängend und sprunghaft | das Thema wird in Ansätzen entwickelt | klarer Aufbau ohne Sprünge | das Thema wird sehr ausführlich und sinnvoll entwickelt |
| | Das Thema wird unzureichend vertieft | Es gibt wenige unterstützende Details | Das Thema wird mit unterstützenden Details entwickelt | Viele Details sind passend integriert |
| Orientierung und Übersichtlichkeit | Es sind keine Nummerierungen im Hauptteil vorhanden | Es gibt vereinzelte Hervorhebungen. Die Nummerierungen sind lückenhaft | Es sind Hervorhebungen vorhanden. Die Nummerierung ist mehrheitlich sinnvoll | Es besteht eine sinnvolle und durchsichtige Nummerierung. Zentrals ist stimmig hervorgehoben |
| | keine Übersetzungen | vereinzelte Übersetzungen | nur wenige Übersetzungen | passende Übersetzungen |
| Verständlichkeit und Richtigkeit | Die Gedanken sind meistens unklar ausgedrückt. Aussage ist selten klar | Die Gedanken sind teilweise unklar ausgedrückt. Aussage nicht immer klar | Die Gedanken sind weitgehend klar ausgedrückt. Aussage ist meist klar | Die Gedanken sind klar ausgedrückt. Aussage ist klar formuliert |
| | Notwendige Begriffe werden nicht erklärt | Notwendige Begriffe werden manchmal erklärt | Notwendige Begriffe werden häufig erklärt | Notwendige Begriffe werden immer erklärt |
| | Informationen sind mehrmals nicht korrekt | Informationen sind nicht immer korrekt | Informationen sind meist korrekt | Informationen sind korrekt |
| Adressantenorientierung | wird nicht deutlich | Ansätze zur Adressantenorientierung, jedoch teilweise sprunghafte Anwendung | deutliche Adressantenorientierung | Es wird an vielen Stellen deutlich, dass der Schreiber / die Schreiberin an den Leser / die Leserin denkt. Adressantenorientierung passend gewählt und korrekt angewendet |
| Sprachliche Mittel | Sätze, die kaum sprachlich verbunden sind | Bindewörter werden in Ansätzen genutzt | Zusammenhang wird meist auch sprachlich deutlich | Text, bei dem Kohäsionsmittel abwechslungsreich eingesetzt werden |
| Wortschatz | Es besteht ein begrenzter Wortschatz | Es besteht ein teilweise umfangreicher Wortschatz | Ein abwechslungsreicher Wortschatz ist im Text sichtbar | Es besteht ein differenzierter Wortschatz und eine variantenreiche Sprache |
| | häufige Wortwiederholungen | Wortwiederholungen vorhanden | teilweise Wortwiederholungen | bewusste Verwendung von Synonymen |
| Satzbau | Regelverfälsche beim Satzbau teilweise unvollständig oder nicht endende Sätze | einfache, meist richtige Sätze vor allem Hauptsätze, kaum variiert. Fehler bei komplexeren Sätzen | Hauptsätze und meist korrekte übersichtliche Satzgefüge. Satzbau variiert teilweise | Die Sätze sind so gebaut, dass der Text klar und flüssig zu lesen ist. Neben einfacheren Strukturen werden auch korrekte, übersichtliche, differenzierte und variierende Strukturen verwendet |

Figure 8: Procedure for the writing conference; handout for the attention of the students

Feedback mit einer Schreibkonferenz – ein Ablauf:



2.5 Summary of findings

Based on the two participating teachers, both of whom already had some experience in the area of formative assessment, the following can be summarized. Both teachers tended to start the project with a tool. On the one hand, this was a teaching tool for acquiring skills in the area of writing texts or stories. On the other hand, this was a digital learning environment using PowerPoint. Using these tools they integrated opportunities to clarify the learning objectives and to assess and provide feedback on the learning status. In most cases, these formative assessment tools could also be used by students to manage or regulate their own learning, for example, through self- and peer assessment. The teachers developed various lists of criteria or rubrics as aids for the students. It turned out that the tools could be used sensibly by the learners and that they helped in terms of communication with parents when the teacher needed to explain a pupil's learning status. This means that at the beginning of the project, the teachers were primarily involved in developing the tools for teaching and later became more involved in how the formative assessment was used. One of the consequences of this was that teachers began to delegate more responsibility for assessment to the pupils over time.

Both teachers mentioned that parents reacted with scepticism and that it would require considerable effort to communicate formative assessment to parents as beneficial for student learning since parents are generally more grade and test-orientated. While one teacher found other teachers within the school to be relatively interested in the project, the other teacher encountered significant resistance within her team in relation to formative assessment, but also with regard to digitalization, resulting in her becoming frustrated towards the end of the project.

2.6 Next steps for teacher-led learning circles

In Switzerland, the idea of teacher-led PD is not very well known. Teacher PD, e.g., for formative assessment, is primarily a matter for education policy or the schools themselves, i.e., it is orchestrated from above, although there are also short courses, for example, at teacher training colleges, which teachers can voluntarily attend. Consequently, it is not surprising that teachers in Switzerland responded rather hesitantly to the call of the teacher unions to take part in the T3LFA project. Moreover, many other topics are on the agenda in schools—e.g., inclusion and digitalization—and teachers are already involved in further training on these topics. Ultimately, the promotion of formative assessment in schools is less of a burning issue in Switzerland. This is and always has been an issue. Instead, it would be more important to spread teacher-led lesson development or as David Frost termed it: teacher leadership (Frost, 2018). However, education policy must create the necessary scope for this.

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Published by Education International - Sept. 2024



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