



**Indicator:** All teachers include self-checks, peer-checks, and documentation of learning strategies as part of assignment completion. (D8)

**Explanation:** Student self-checks, through self-monitoring, improves academic achievement and evaluation of peer work helps to improve self-evaluation. Students develop their pool of strategies by learning to revise and refine their own work in cooperation with the teacher, and by editing and helping other students to improve theirs (Beaven, 1977; Pianko & Radzik, 1980; Thompson, 1981; Chater, 1984).

**Questions:** What are ways that teachers can model the behavior and skills they want to see in their students? When are the most appropriate times to use peer-checks?

Dunlosky and colleagues (Culosky, Rawson, Marsh, Nathan, & Willingham, 2013) studies learning techniques and their effectiveness. They created a list of ten techniques which included interrogation, self-explanation, summarization, highlighting, imagery for text, rereading, practice testing, distributed practice, interleaved practice, and keyword mnemonics (as cited in Redding, 2014, p. 11). Their study concluded that students tend to cling to familiar practices rather than learn new practices which might be more effective. A teacher's role, then, is to teach effective practices as well as guide students to which practices are most effective for their own self-regulation.

*Why should teachers include self-checks, peer-checks and documentation of learning strategies?*

**Self checks.** Self-monitoring improves academic performance (e.g., Wood, Murdock & Cronin, 2002) and has a positive feedback effect, with students seeking to raise their goals based on observed outcomes (Zimmerman, 1990). Learners can be taught to evaluate their performances through self-recording, which provides individuals with systematic, often visual, data regarding their performance, which they collect themselves. With those data, learners can evaluate the effects of any instruction or intervention on their own performance.

**Peer checks.** The most readily available material for students to work on for evaluative and remedial experience is that of fellow students. Apart from availability, Sadler (1989) suggests that engaging in evaluative and corrective activity on other students' work has the advantages that: (a) the work is of the same type and addressed to the same task as their own; (b) students encounter a wide range of solutions to creative, design, and procedural problems, and exposure to these expands their own repertoire of solutions; (c) other students' attempts cover a wide spectrum of mistakes for students to observe; and (d) the use of other students' work in a cooperative environment assists in achieving some objectivity in that students are less defensive of, and committed emotionally to, other students' work than to their own.

According to Lindemann (1982), "Students who become conscious of what they're doing by explaining their decisions to other students also learn new strategies for solving writing problems. And because students should become progressively more independent and self-confident as writers, they need to evaluate each other's work and their own

frequently, a practice which teaches constructive criticism, close reading, and rewriting” (p. 234).

**Documentation of learning strategies.** Dunlosky and colleagues (Dunlosky, Rawson, Marsh, Nathan, & Willingham, 2013) studied learning techniques and their effectiveness. They created a list of ten techniques which included self-interrogation, self-explanation, summarization, highlighting, imagery for text, rereading, practice testing, distributed practice, interleaved practice, and keyword mnemonics (as cited in Redding, 2014, p. 11). Their study concluded that students tend to cling to familiar practices rather than learn new techniques that might be more effective. A teacher’s role, then, is to teach effective practices as well as guide students to which practices are most effective for their own self-regulation.

As part of evaluating the performance of themselves and others, students should document which learning strategies were more effective than others in improving learning outcomes. Only when training provides practice in attributing changes in performance to strategies, in order to select the more effective strategy, are children able to use that information to guide their strategy choices in a subsequent learning task (Ghatala, Levin, Pressley, & Goodwin, 1986). This result is supported by other findings with young children (Ghatala, Levitt, Pressley, & Lodico, 1985; Lodico, Ghatala, Levin, Pressley, & Bell, 1983).

*What are the best practices for self-checks and peer-checks?*

Students’ self-recording of performance in real time is a convenient and effective way to provide immediate feedback to learners (O’Leary & Dubey, 1979). Recording progress toward a goal may be particularly effective when the symbolic marks entered on the records are seen, by the learner, as marks of achievement (Morgan, 1984). In self-evaluation, the self-monitoring process should be followed by an evaluation of the performance, usually with an externally provided criterion, such as a rubric or exemplar (Rosenbaum & Drabman, 1979). Students need to be shown explicitly how to complete self-checks through self-monitoring (Ghatala, Levin, Pressley, & Goodwin, 1986). Self-monitoring interventions also tend to be more effective when reinforcement for self-monitoring is provided to students (Otero & Haut, 2015).

Students need to be shown explicitly how to complete evaluations of peers’ work as well, and reinforcement for the evaluation should be provided. Teachers should also take steps to ensure that mutual exchange of evaluation between peers does not cause resentment among students or make weaker students feel humiliated.

Students should be taught that self-monitoring of performance is valuable in school and in life in general. Wilson and Conyers (2016) suggest that teachers should 1) emphasize that self-monitoring should cover a lesson’s content, and students should continually question their knowledge and consider the strategies and skills they are using for learning; 2) build in regular opportunities for students to “check in” on their learning during a lesson through individual or whole-group questioning; and, 3) frequently assign students to work in pairs or small groups, reminding them they can and should learn from each other, and explaining and discussing lesson content enhances memory and learning.

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