The

Amplify Science

K-8 Newsletter

You have a *lot* going on and we appreciate everything you're juggling. Our goal is to equip you with resources that make your day easier every time this newsletter lands in your inbox. Read below for updates this month or refer back to the NYC Resource Site for previous information.

Formative Assessment Opportunities in Amplify Science

The assessments for each unit are designed to work together as a system. While all of them work toward assessment of a coherent set of learning goals, defined by the Progress Build, individual assessment opportunities intentionally span a range of modalities (e.g., multiple choice constructed-response questions, performance tasks, informal observation) and assess content at different grain sizes (e.g., comprehensive of unit content, chapter-level understanding, and individual concepts or elements of practices).

Pre-Unit Assessment
Written responses (K–5) or a combination of auto-scored multiple-choice questions and rubric-scored written responses (6–8). At the beginning of each unit, individually scorable assessment opportunities reveal students' prior knowledge and preconceptions, and gauge their facility for using the science and engineering practices (SEPs) and crosscutting concepts (CCCs). Guidance is provided to support teachers to use entry-level assessment information to monitor and support progress along the unit Progress Build, which is the learning progression that grounds each Additional guidance is provided early in each unit to make use of students' demonstrations of facility with SEPs and CCCs to guide instructional decisions and determine modifications for students.

Critical Juncture Assessment (CJ) :

Occurring toward the end of each chapter (K–5) or toward the midpoint of each unit (6–8), these help teachers to ensure all students are ready before moving on to a new phase of instruction. Furthermore, the CJs include recommendations for differentiating classroom instruction based on student performance on the assessment.
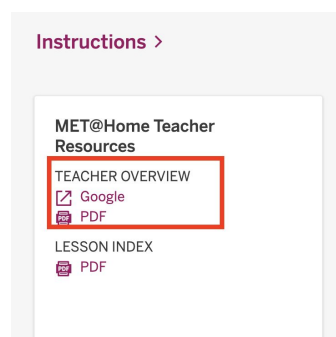
Learn more about these here:
Embedded Formative Assessments K-8
Amplify Science Progress Builds and Assessment Essentials K-5

Amplify Science @Home Resources Spotlight

Assessment Considerations

Refer to the Teacher Overview for each @Home unit for assessment and feedback considerations for each chapter in the unit. (Available in the Program Hub)

Each Chapter Outline contains considerations for assessment and feedback in the Amplify Science units, and in some cases, the pre-unit and end-of-unit assessments. Generally, we recommend the following:
● You may need to adapt the format in which you collect student work.
● When providing feedback to students, you may wish to focus on how students are attending to the Investigation and/or the Chapter Questions, if they are using evidence they have gathered to support their responses to questions, and if they are using appropriate unit vocabulary in their responses.

Example from Inheritance and Traits:

Chapter 1 Assessment and Feedback Considerations
Students' responses on the Gathering Information about Wolves pages (@Home Lesson 7) provide information about their understanding that traits of organisms vary within a species. See Inheritance and Variation Lesson 1.7, Activity 1 Embedded Formative Assessment (Critical Juncture Assessment 1) and the Possible Responses tab for more information.

Example from Metabolism:

Chapter 2 Assessment and Feedback Considerations
Students' written argument (Writing an Argument to Support a Diagnosis, @Home Lesson 7) provides information about students' understanding of how the body's systems take in, break down, and deliver molecules to the cells and how they use that understanding to support a claim. See Metabolism Lesson 2.7, Activity 3, Embedded Formative Assessment for more information.

On-the-Fly Assessments

On-the-Fly Assessments (OTFAs) (formative): Three-dimensional formative assessment opportunities integrated throughout the lessons. OTFAs are designed to help a teacher make sense of student activity

during a learning experience (e.g., student-to-student talk, writing, model construction) and provide evidence of how a student is coming to understand core concepts and developing dexterity with SEPs and CCCs.

Description	Student Experience	Teacher Resources
Embedded formative assessments for noting students' progress with one or more of the following: disciplinary core ideas, science and engineering practices, and cross-cutting concepts	Activities are embedded into existing instructional activities, leveraged for assessment opportunities. Artifacts can include discussion, use of a digital tool, notebook pages, etc.	● Full text of assessment includes "What to look for" and "Now what?" instructional suggestions accessible in Instructional Guide by clicking hummingbird icon ● All On-the-Fly Assessments are included in Embedded Formative Assessments (available in the Unit Guide) GRADES K-1 ● Clipboard Assessment Tool includes tailored sets of questions and the specific activities that present an opportunity to ask those questions. Also included is space to write notes about students' ideas.

Portfolio Assessments

Portfolios are a good way for students to survey the work they have done over a period of time, and for the teacher to look at growth across a year's worth of learning. In addition, the process of selecting work to share in a portfolio can help students take stock of their accomplishments and reflect on their own areas of growth as well as set goals for areas they can work to improve.

Description	Student Experience	Teacher Resources
Opportunity for students to compile and reflect on key work products collected at the end of each unit. Final portfolio compilation occurs at the end of the school year and allows students to select and reflect on work products which they feel best demonstrate their growth in	● Compilation of work products (written explanations and/or arguments, models) that show growth over the course of the year ● Reflections on chosen work products	● Assessment rubrics (available in Program Guide → Assessments → *Additional Assessment Resources*) ● Guidance for communicating to parents about student

| understanding throughout the year. | ● Rubrics for evaluating work products (available in Program Guide → Assessments → *Additional Assessment Resources*) | progress (available in Program Guide → Assessments → *Additional Assessment Resources*) |

Student Self-Assessments

Another set of tools to help illuminate student thinking, and to support student metacognition, are Student Self-Assessments. Each chapter of an Amplify Science unit contains an optional Self Assessment opportunity for students to reflect on their own learning, ask questions and reveal ongoing thoughts about unit content.

Description	Student Experience	Teacher Resources
Opportunity for students to reflect on whether they understand or don't yet understand about the core concerts from the unit and key nature of science ideas	Grades K-1 ● Reflection Prompts through teacher-led discussion and partner talks ● Provided at or near the end of chapter ● K Example: Needs of Plants and Animals Chapter 2, Lesson 2.5, Activity 3 Grades 2-8 ● Reflection Prompts ● Provided at or near the end of each chapter ● MS Example: Traits and Reproductions Chapter 2, Lesson 2.4, Activity 5	● Information about Student Self-Assessments in Assessment System available in the unit guide) ● Teacher Support notes accessible in Instructional Guide by clicking the Teacher Support tab Grades K-1 ● Discussion prompts in the Instructional Guide

---

Teacher Spotlight

Jennifer Jensen, Oceanside Unified School District, CA

"Jennifer is an 8th grade teacher at MLK Middle School in Oceanside and has been an integral part of our middle school science team for many years. Throughout distance learning, Jennifer has worked to ensure that her students are receiving a high quality science education, despite the obvious challenges. She is constantly creating new resources for others to use and has been more than willing to reach out to others for collaboration opportunities. Jennifer has been able to see the opportunity in these challenging times and we are so grateful that she is a part of our OUSD team!"

[Nominate here](#)

Advice and Answers

You have questions and we have answers! Some frequently asked questions include:
- [How to easily access and review student work](#)
- [Can I link middle school activities to my Microsoft Teams channels?](#)

Calendar

Amplify Science NYC DOE Teacher PL Sessions & Office Hours

Teachers, we are thankful for you and all that you have done in these unprecedented times. With that, we want to support you in meeting your students' remote learning needs. These upcoming sessions will help deepen your understanding of how to utilize Amplify Science through these targeted topics.

Upcoming Sessions:

K-5 ([Register here](#))
- *Accessing Complex Text:* K-5 grade-specific sessions throughout December, 3-4 pm EST
- *Supporting ELLs in Amplify Science*: K-5 grade-specific sessions throughout December and January, 3-4 pm EST
- *Analyzing Student Assessment Data*: K-5 grade-specific sessions in January, 3-4 pm EST
- *Unit 3: Focusing on the Assessment System*: K-5 grade-specific sessions in January, 3-4 pm EST

6-8 ([Register here](#))
- *Accessing Complex Text A*synchronous Video and Office Hours: December 16 & 17 4 - 5 pm EST
- *Applying Reading and Writing Strategies to Support Claims, Evidence and Reasoning:* 6-8 grade-specific sessions on January 21, 4-6 pm EST

New "Assign in Amplify" Feature for 6-8

Assign in Amplify is a new feature that is being piloted as part of the beta lesson experience. Click [here](#) to learn more about how to opt into beta mode to try assigning and other features.

Assigning makes it easy to distribute middle school activities to your students with optional due dates. Check out this article which focuses on assigning within the Amplify platform.

Connect

If you have not done so already, join the **Amplify Science Facebook group** to collaborate, ask questions, and share ideas to create the best educational experience for your students.

Amplify.

Facebook
Instagram
Twitter
LinkedIn
YouTube

December, 2020 Newsletter