

Sharing Strategy: Cover-Up*

(See Teacher Summary Card, Student Summary Card)

The **Cover-Up Strategy** involves a brief whole-class discussion about the learning intention (LI) and success criteria (SC) in which students first read then recreate, in their own words, the LI and SC. Notably, the LI and SC are read twice: first by the teacher, to allow the students to hear and read the LI and SC, and second by the students themselves. The strategy is based on the idea that having students rephrase the LI and SC in their own words will help them better understand what is stated in the LI and SC and better internalize the LI as a learning goal.

Particular Advantages

- Draws on multiple modes of learning as students read, hear, and talk about the learning intention together
- Develops stronger understanding and ownership of the learning intention as a goal of the lesson and the success criteria as a gauge for their learning

How Does the Strategy Work?

1. The teacher posts the learning intention and success criteria for students to see and reads them aloud to the students, once.
2. Students are now asked to reread the LI and SC to themselves, once.
3. The teacher then covers up the LI and SC and asks students to talk with a partner about what they are going to learn and how they will know they have learned it.
4. When students have had a few minutes to talk together, the teacher asks for volunteers to share one part of what they discussed. The goal is to accurately recreate the LI and SC in the students' own words, so the teacher records, for all to see, the various parts of the LI and SC that are mentioned in students' comments.
5. The teacher continues calling on students to add whatever parts they remember and understand of the LI and SC until everything is included or no additional ideas can be added. This provides important information to the teacher about what elements of the LI and SC do and do not make sense to students and what needs further clarification or discussion.
6. The teacher then uncovers the LI and SC and points out anything that wasn't included in the discussion, offering further clarification—or asking students to clarify—as needed.

How Does the Strategy Support Formative Assessment?

Student ownership and involvement

- This strategy ensures that students understand the goal of their learning, and the success criteria for gauging it, sufficiently that they will be able to later evaluate their own learning against the success criteria.

*Our thanks to Ed Worcester of Waterville, Maine, for sharing this strategy with us.

2

Learning intentions and success criteria

- By having students rephrase the LI and SC in their own words, this strategy helps students to engage with the LI and SC enough to understand fully what they mean.

Eliciting and interpreting evidence

- A teacher can easily get valuable evidence about what students do and do not understand about the LI and SC.

How Might You Modify the Strategy, and Why?

For students who have difficulty recalling the LI and SC, the teacher may wish to give them an index card with the LI and SC listed on it. Students can hide or view the LI and SC by turning over the index card as needed.