



# Developing and Supporting K-12 Student Reflection and Self-Assessment of Core Competencies

## Purpose of this resource

This K-12 teacher resource provides guidance on supporting student reflection and self-assessment of B.C.'s Core Competencies. The Core Competencies – Communication, Thinking, and Personal and Social – are sets of intellectual, personal, and social and emotional proficiencies that students continually develop as they grow as educated citizens and lifelong learners.

In the interest of flexibility for students and their learning, the ministry does not specify how the Core Competencies should be taught or self-assessed. Rather, embedded within this resource are suggestions for supporting student development through reflection and self-assessment in K-12 classrooms.

Teachers are encouraged to provide students with opportunities to reflect on their experiences both at school and outside of school and to select illustrations of their growth in relation to the Core Competencies throughout the year. The end-of-year self-assessment is an opportunity for students to assess their development in the three broad Core Competencies and to share highlights of their learning journey from a strengths-based perspective.



## Core Competencies and the curriculum

By design, the Core Competencies are the foundation for the Big Ideas, Curricular Competencies, and Content of the curriculum. This ensures that students are always mindful of their growth in the Core Competencies through awareness and self-reflection, self-assessment, and evidence of growth. As self-reflection becomes a natural part of the learning process, it promotes personalization, inclusion, diversity, and student ownership of learning.

Teachers can support students in self-assessment by intentionally noticing, naming, and connecting the Core Competencies with their learning in school and beyond. The Core Competencies are

embedded within the curriculum's subject-specific Curricular Competencies; therefore, through their formative and summative assessment of the Curricular Competencies in each area of learning, teachers are also supporting and assessing student growth in the Core Competencies. This relationship between student self-assessment of the Core Competencies and subject-specific teacher assessment of the Curricular Competencies is an intentional one, designed to provide teachers with opportunities to support students in their Core Competency growth through an area or areas of learning.

## Importance of reflection and self-assessment

Students come to the classroom with experiences and knowledge related to the Core Competencies. Reflection and self-assessment allow them to develop the ability to describe themselves as unique individuals in relation to the Core Competencies. They will set goals and gain greater ownership of their learning when they self-assess, describe who they are as learners, document their progress, and share their accomplishments in an ongoing and holistic manner.



Research on assessment\* emphasizes the importance of students developing reflective language and metacognition (i.e., the ability to think about thinking) to engage in effective self-assessment. It is important that, over time, students:

- gain the ability to assess their own strengths
- create realistic and achievable goals
- construct a clear plan to reach their goals
- provide illustrations of their learning
- revisit previous self-assessments, where applicable, to monitor their growth

*\*See the reference section of this resource for further information on assessment research.*

## Guidelines for self-assessment of the Core Competencies

Ongoing opportunities for self-assessment and goal setting may happen at any point that seems appropriate for teachers and students during the learning process. Building relationships by simply taking opportunities to talk with students about how self-reflection can support them in achieving their learning goals can jump-start the self-assessment process.

Opportunities for students to demonstrate learning through an active process can be facilitated in a variety of ways. For example:

- Students, through ongoing opportunities, develop the ability to set goals and reflect on their learning, and take responsibility for their learning.
- Teachers explicitly develop the language of Core Competencies with their students through authentic experiences and learning opportunities.

- ✓ Teachers and administrators support students' personal understanding by intentionally noticing, naming, and connecting the Core Competencies with student learning as it occurs.
- ✓ Students take ownership of ongoing and year-end self-assessment, with teacher support provided as needed throughout the school year.

## Possibilities for student reflection

One of the ways in which teachers help students clarify their thinking and articulate their individual profiles is through open-ended and probing questions. Conversations with students help them make connections between the Communication, Thinking, and Personal and Social competencies. Since students come to the reflection process with different interests, prior knowledge, skills, and experiences, a variety of strategies should be available. Sample questions may include the following:



### Communication:

- ▶ How do you show that you are listening thoughtfully? In what ways does your listening contribute to your understanding?
- ▶ What are some ways that you like to use to show your learning? What makes [a form] work for you?
- ▶ What do you do when you disagree with someone in your group or discussion? How did you learn/develop that strategy?
- ▶ What are your strengths and stretches?

### Thinking:

- ▶ How does [a topic or question] tie in with what you have learned before? How has your thinking about [the topic or question] changed? What made it change?
- ▶ Do you agree or disagree with this [statement, opinion, or hypothesis]? What evidence is there to support your answer?
- ▶ What strategies do you use to decide whether to believe something you read? How did you develop these strategies? What advice would you give a younger student about figuring out what is true?
- ▶ How do you come up with ideas when you want to make something new at school or at home? Tell me about a time when you felt good about a new idea you had.
- ▶ What helps you get new ideas?
- ▶ What makes you want to get new ideas or try something new?
- ▶ What goals have you met that you are proud of?

## Personal and Social:

- ▶ How do you use words and actions to encourage other students who might be feeling a bit sad or discouraged? [Prompt: What are some words and phrases you use?]
- ▶ What do you do to help yourself when you are feeling a bit discouraged?
- ▶ What contribution have you made to our school or community that you feel good about? How did you get started doing that?
- ▶ What are your strengths as a person? How do you use your strengths and abilities in your family, relationships, and community?
- ▶ How do you learn best?
- ▶ What culture(s) do you see yourself as belonging to? What are some aspects of your culture(s) that you value? What are some things about your culture(s) that you would like other people to know?
- ▶ Tell me about one of your learning goals. [Prompt: Something you want to get better at or learn how to do.] How did you come to choose that goal? Tell me about something you are doing to help you work toward meeting that goal.
- ▶ How have you improved this year in...?

## Documenting ongoing and year-end self-assessment

The Student Progress Report Order (2016) for students in Grades K-9 requires a student self-assessment on Core Competencies at the end of the school year. As lifelong learners, students in Grades 10-12 continue their ongoing reflection and self-assessment of the Core Competencies. They apply this self-assessment and learning journey documentation to their capstone as part of Career Education and graduation requirements.

Ways to document self-assessment include, but are not limited to:

- ✓ Advertisement/commercial
- ✓ Body language
- ✓ Charts made from sorting
- ✓ Collages
- ✓ Collections
- ✓ Constructions
- ✓ Dramatizations
- ✓ Equations
- ✓ Graphic stories
- ✓ Illustrations
- ✓ Interview (written or oral)
- ✓ Lists
- ✓ Mind map
- ✓ Other graphic organizers (e.g., Frayer model, story map)
- ✓ Photo essays
- ✓ Photographs
- ✓ Poems and acrostics
- ✓ Questions
- ✓ Reference letters or bios
- ✓ Spoken reflections
- ✓ Stories
- ✓ Symbols
- ✓ “The story behind the...”
- ✓ Videos
- ✓ Word clouds



## Considerations

### Opportunities for teachers when planning learning experiences

- ➔ Develop understanding and ownership of the Core Competencies with students by intentionally noticing, naming, and connecting the Core Competencies with their learning.
- ➔ Look for connections between the Core Competencies and the Curricular Competencies and share these connections with students.
- ➔ Consider how the Core Competencies are expressed in different disciplines (e.g., Communication in Math may look different from Communication in Language Arts; Thinking in Science may look different from Thinking in Social Studies).



### Ongoing assessment:

- ➔ Throughout the year, encourage students to talk about and document their strengths and stretches in relation to the Core Competencies and in different areas of learning.
- ➔ Ask open-ended questions to prompt student self-reflection and acquisition of the language and skills to increase metacognition.
- ➔ Use think-alouds to model what reflection looks like during learning and goal setting.
- ➔ Promote student ownership by providing multiple opportunities for students to document and access their reflections throughout the year.

The Ministry recognizes that there are still many questions regarding the self-assessment and reporting of the Core Competencies. Teachers and school districts throughout the province have provided samples of how the self-assessment of the Core Competencies is already taking place in schools. These examples will be added to the Ministry website this spring along with a list of frequently asked questions with answers, regarding the self-assessment and reporting of the Core Competencies.

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