



Education
Services
Australia

 **improve**

**IMS Global Learning Consortium
– Learning Impact Awards 2013**

Improve - Formative Assessment Tool

Improve is a formative assessment tool that supports continuous diagnostic and formative assessment of students and allows teachers to use more than 16,000 digital curriculum resources to target specific learning outcomes in English, science and mathematics. Improve was launched in February 2012 and is freely available to all teachers in Australia.

The challenge

Although selected publically released items from national and international test programs have previously been available to teachers, there has not been an established approach to link these test items to digital resources aligned to the Australian Curriculum. The lack of a structured approach affected the speed and ease with which teachers could deliver formative and diagnostic assessment online and subsequently locate effective learning resources for their students.

Solution

As a formative and diagnostic assessment tool, Improve provides a practical link between teachers and the assessment requirements of their students.

Over 8000 assessment items have been drawn from teacher created tests and publicly released items from national and international test programs in which Australian students participate. These include the National Assessment Program including sample assessments, the Trends in Mathematics and Science Study and the Programme for International Student Assessment. The assessment framework, resources and guidance materials for Improve are aligned with the Australian Curriculum.

Using Improve, teachers can select pre-made items from the collection or design their own with the user-friendly 'item creator' tool. Teachers can then create custom tests, select linked learning materials, upload their own resources and share tests with other teachers.

Improve has many advanced diagnostic features, including a 'confidence levels' asset that asks students how confident they feel that their answer is correct. These features give teachers a richer understanding of the abilities of each student and, at a group level, the skills that require reinforcement.

Learning impact outcomes

A key feature of Improve is the ability to provide a personalised learning experience. After a student has completed their assigned test, Improve captures evidence of their achievement and then makes available digital resources linked to test items to support their individual learning.

Access to the test items and resources within Improve is via registration and login so that teachers can personalise tests for individual students. The data collected during testing allows teachers to easily identify patterns of performance in individuals, small groups or entire classes.

Return on investment

The Australian Government has committed to the implementation of evidence-based strategies that improve the literacy and numeracy skills of students. Improve is an Australian Government funded initiative which leverages existing curriculum and assessment resources to support this broader educational reform agenda. Since its launch 14 months ago, over 82,000 teachers and students have registered with Improve, reflecting enthusiasm in the teaching community for an effective diagnostic and formative assessment tool. Approximately 5400 tests have been created, with over 92,000 tests undertaken by students.

Education Services Australia is working closely with a number of national and international agencies to add test items to Improve and link them to resources in all priority learning areas of the Australian Curriculum to ensure that teachers and Australian students are continuously supported.