

These strategies are taken from Angelo, T & Cross, K (1993). Classroom Assessment Techniques: A Handbook for College Teachers (2nd Ed). Jossey-Bass: San Francisco, CA. This book has over 50 such strategies explained with examples provided.

Employing Assessment in the Classroom: Some selected strategies, part 1

Background knowledge probes: Short, simple questionnaires prepared by instructors at the beginning of a course or topic to assess prior knowledge. Knowledge probes may be used for pre- and post-assessment, inform the instructor of student needs and also help focus student attention on important material to be covered. These are ungraded tasks and should not be viewed as tests or quizzes. Results (in aggregate) should be shared with the class once the task is collected and reviewed and should be used to inform your instructional decisions.

Minute Paper: This may be the most popular classroom assessment technique for gathering immediate and succinct feedback. Typically students are asked derivatives of one of the following questions and are given a set short amount of time (1-5 minutes) to construct a short (half page) response: “What was the most important thing you learned in class today” or “What important questions remains unanswered?”. This technique is best done without students using their names on their sheets. Use the responses to inform your instructional decisions or to organize the review for the start of the next class.

Misconception/Preconception Check: These typically involve questions that target specific areas of a course that are most likely to be subject to student misconceptions or preconceptions. They are most typically written as T/F statements or as a few specific open ended questions. When T/F options are used students may choose from responses on a range such as “I’m absolutely certain this is true” to “I’m pretty sure it is true” to “I have no idea if this is true or false” to “I’m pretty sure it is false” to “I’m absolutely certain it is false”. Responses should be reviewed and the most common misconceptions should be shared (in aggregate) with the class and should be used to inform instructional decisions.

One Sentence Summaries: One sentence summaries allow teachers to find out how concisely, completely and creatively students can summarize large amounts of information on a topic. Students are typically asked to summarize information from a class session or unit using the following set of prompts: Who? Does what? To what or whom? When? Where? How? Why? A one sentence summary following a unit on assessment might read: “Teachers assess their student’s learning throughout a course by using both informal and formal techniques and tools so that they can better understand and improve teaching effectiveness and the quality of student learning.”

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