

70 + Formative Assessment Strategies: Assessment *FOR* Learning

Dr. Judy VanVoorhis, 2008

1. **Admit/Exit Slips**

Students are given short prompts to write about upon entering the room. These are generally about the previous day's lesson or they are given 2 or 3 minutes at the end of class to summarize what they learned in that day's lesson.

2. **Application Article** - During last 15 minutes of class, ask students to write a short news article about how a major point applies to a real-world situation. An alternative is to have students write a short article about how the point applies to their major. (Sort articles and pick several to read at next class, illustrating range of applications, depth of understanding, and creativity.)

3. **Audience Response**

This is a handheld device that allows each learner to respond to questions individually.

4. **Authentic Questioning**

Questions we ask students that represent the range of knowledge that should be taught in the classroom. These questions can be made up by the students about a story or already planned in advance by the teacher.

5. **Awards**

Students recommend someone or something for an award that the teacher has created based on units being studied. Example: most helpful molecule – most insidious leader

6. **Brainstorm**

Examples:

- On your scratch paper, jot down as many terms as you can think of that are related to the topic we began studying yesterday.
- Repeat the same process as in the previous example, but share the ideas with a partner.

7. **Chain Notes**- Pass around a large envelope with a question about the class content. Each student writes a short answer, puts it in the envelope, and passes it on. (Sort answers by type of answer. At next class meeting, use to discuss ways of understanding.)

8. **Challenging Action**

Would encourage the learners to use their current knowledge to predict outcomes or solve a problem.

9. **Chunking**

Chunking shows students how one idea is linked or is similar to another and how it relates to **other ideas in a category**. **Graphic organizers are very helpful and powerful tools to demonstrate chunking.**

10. **Class Vote**

After a student response or a teacher statement, ask students to vote “How many agree with that statement?”

11. **Clip Board Pass Around**

Pre-write 3-4 questions on a piece of paper. Provide each group with the questions. Have the group pass around the clipboard so that every student responds to at least one question. Encourage small group discussion.

12. **Concept Cartoon**

These are used in activities to promote peer discussion. They encourage learners to work out what they do know, partly know and do not know about a specific idea or concept.

13. **Concept Link**

Have students do a pair share and describe one way that a current learning relates to something that has already been learned in a prior lesson, unit, or concept.

14. **Cross/Uncross Arms**

Examples:

- I'll read a series of statements about different kinds of angles. If you agree with the statement, cross your arms; if you don't agree, don't cross your arms.
- If you agree with Toby's opinion, cross your arms, etc.

15. **Crystal Ball**

Students describe what they think class will be about, what might happen next in the novel they're reading, or the next step in a science lab.

16. **Diagrams**

Picture used to represent information. There are many types of diagrams, such as: graphs, flowcharts, maps, Venn diagram, charts, etc.

17. **Dialogue**

Dialogue between the teacher and the pupils is one type of classroom talk. In a conversation between teacher and student, feedback and questions arise. A teacher could question a student's ideas while attempting to understand what the student might have said or written.

18. Dioramas

Visual displays of a 3-D representation on a smaller scale. Dioramas are typically made using a shoebox turned on its side.

19. Discuss with a Partner

Examples:

- Share with your partner the guidelines to keep in mind when writing an expository paragraph.
- Discuss with your partner the meanings of these _____ terms from our anatomy unit.

20. Draft

A first or preliminary form of any writing, subject to revision, coping, etc. The most appropriate time for extensive written comments, designed to aid progress to be made.

21. Elaborating

The more variety in the ways one refines and extends a skill or concept, the more effectively it can be recalled. The use of the following techniques will help students remember what they are learning: paraphrasing; note taking with summaries; predicting and verifying the prediction; making meaningful associations; visualizing and verbalizing conclusions and summaries of what they are learning; applying to problem-solving situations; and creating something using skills and concepts.

22. Exam Evaluations - Select a test that you use regularly and add a few questions at the end which ask students to evaluate how well the test measures their knowledge or skills. (Make changes to the test that are reasonable. Track student responses over time.)

23. Finger Signals (Done at chest level in a personal, low-key manner) Examples:

- The 3 kinds of rock formations are listed on the board by number. I'll say a characteristic of a certain rock formation; you put up the appropriate number of fingers for the one that is described.
- The five main characteristics from the novel are listed on the board by number, etc.
- I'll play several chords on the piano. If it's a major chord put up one finger; if it's a minor chord, put up two fingers.

24. Flash Answers in Groups Examples:

- We've talked about the three branches of our federal government. They've divided into groups, and each group has three cards, each one stating a different government branch. I'll read a government duty (such as making laws). As a group, decide which branch of government would be responsible for that duty, and then hold up the correct card.

25. Flash Cards Examples:

- You've made flash cards for your new _____ vocabulary words. Study them alone for five minutes. Then we'll do some "spot checking".
- You've made flash cards for the week's vocabulary words. Practice them with a partner for ten minutes. Then we'll have a quiz.

26. Foldables

These are three dimensional interactive graphic organizers. They provide students with a way of manipulating concepts and information in ways that are far more kinesthetic than ordinary worksheets. Paper is folded into simple shapes that reflect the conceptual relationships represented by notes.

27. Found Poems

Students reread a piece of text, either something they have written or something already published – they copy a selected selection and cross out non-descriptive words, they then find key phrases and arrange them into a poem.

28. Graphic Organizers

Visual displays that help students organize information.

29. Group Q & A

Have all students individually write down several questions they have about a chapter. In the group, encourage students to discuss all questions. Any questions, still unanswered at the end of the discussion are listed on one paper and given to the teacher for a large group discussion.

30. Hand Signals

Hand signals can be a good management tool or can be used to indicate a student's understanding of the content. For example "Give me five" is a management tool in which students are taught specific behavioral expectations for each number.

31. Homework

Before assigning homework, the teacher should be quite certain the student has demonstrated an understanding of the skill to be practiced. What is practiced tends to be remembered. The purpose of homework is for students to *practice skills they have learned*.

32. Inspirations

Software programs that allow users to create user tools such as graphic organizers, import text, transform ideas and graphics and select from a range of graphic organizers and tools.

33. Journals - Ask students to keep journals that detail their thoughts about the class. May ask them to be specific, recording only attitudes, values, or self-awareness. (Have students turn in the journals several times during the semester so you can chart changes and development.)

34. Letters

Students write letters to others, including elected officials, people from history, the principal, family members or other important people.

35. Mental Rehearsals

Limited practice to the smallest amount of content that has the greatest meaning. At first, do daily practice in short, intense periods. Practice intermittently, but regularly, after the skill is learned well. Then distribute practice over longer periods of time.

36. Modeling

Modeling first requires the teacher to demonstrate each step of a process while the students follow along using a rubric or checklist. The next step is to ask the students a similar task while the teacher works with them, followed by working through the steps with a partner, and then finally alone.

37. Muddiest Point - Similar to One-Minute Paper but only ask students to describe what they didn't understand and what they think might help.

38. Multimedia

Combined text, graphics, video, sound, and even animation to allow learners an opportunity to share what they know.

39. No Hands

Unless asked, students do not raise their hand if they can answer a question. All students should be able to respond even if it is as to what they do not know; this allows students not to feel pressured to come up with an answer.

40. Non-verbal

Convey a tone of respect for the respondent and encourage the target student and others to continue to participate.

41. Note-taking

- a. start lessons by having students jot down what they already know about the topic. (have students keep a spiral 100 page journal - \$.50 Wal-Mart).
- b. several times throughout the lesson, have students pause and record in word and/or pictures from what they learned.
- c. Have students record examples of ideas presented.
- d. Ask students to share their notes with a partner and fill in any missing pieces. Then, give an open note quiz at the end of class or at the beginning of the next class. This process forces students to review their notes at least three times – not atypical practice for many students.

42. One-Minute Paper

During last few minutes of class period, ask students to use a half-sheet of paper and write "Most important thing I learned today and what I understood least."

43. **Outcome Sentences**

List outcome sentences on overhead or board (One thing I learned. One thing I still don't understand. One thing I would more help with). Have all students respond to questions in writing.

44. **Pen/Pencil or Thumb signals** (Done at chest level in a personal, low-key manner) Examples:

- I'll read several statements about _____. If the statement is true, put your thumb up. If it is false, put your thumb down. If you're not sure, put your thumb to the side.
- If you agree with Jim's explanation of _____, put your thumb up, etc.

45. **Portfolio**

A collection of items intended to reflect the body of work. Paper portfolios are generally easier for younger children to handle, as they can easily add new items and remove others with little assistance from an adult. Digital portfolios are increasingly used with older students.

46. **Provide "Wait Time"** Examples:

- Which were the three Axis countries during World War II? (Pause) I can tell you're thinking. I see five hands, six, eight, and lots more. Let's see, I think I'll call on Ted.
- I want you to think about whether this blueprint would be practical for a house in an area that has a climate like Southern California's. I'll call upon someone in about one minute.

47. **Public Performers**

Public exhibitions of knowledge that can be a memorable experience for students and teachers. Can also be used as a means for checking for understanding and to gauge the learning of students.

48. **RAFT**

Writing to learn prompt that prompts students to take on a different perspective and consider the audience they are writing to. Example:

Role	R: butterfly
Audience	A: scientist
Format	F: journal entry
Topic	T: my experience with metamorphosis

49. **Reader's Theater**

Classroom activity in which students read directly from scripts to tell a story or inform an audience. They do so without props, costumes, or sets.

50. **Read-Write-Pair-Share**

Students read the desired material, write a response on their own, engage partner(s) in conversation about what they have read and written, and then share their ideas with the class.

51. ReQuest (reciprocal questioning)

Was designed to teach students to ask and answer questions as they read. Simply thinking about questions while reading improves comprehension, whether the questions are “question-the-author” questions, “question-answer relationship” questions, or dense questions. The original version of

ReQuest requires that the teacher lead the whole class in silently reading a segment of text. Students then ask questions of the teacher about the content of the section of text they read. Next, students and teacher change roles. They all read the next section of the text silently. They take turns back and forth alternating between questioning and responding. As the ReQuest process continues, students learn to imitate the teacher’s questioning behavior.

52. Response Cards

These are dry-erase boards, index cards, magnetic boards or other items that can be held up by the student to respond to a question presented by the teacher. Two types: preprinted or write-on cards.

53. Retelling

New accounts or adaption of a text that allows students to consider information and then summarize, orally, what they understand about this information. Also think about sequence of ideas or events and their importance.

54. Rich Question

These require more than a one word answer and are asking for facts that are known or unknown.

55. Socratic Seminar

Art or practice of examining opinions or ideas logically by questions and answers to determine validity.

56. Student-generated test questions - Divide the class into groups and assign each group a topic on which they are each to write a question and answer for the next test. (Each student should be assured of getting at least one question right on the test. Use as many of the questions as possible, combining those that are similar.)

57. Summarizing

After a lesson segment, the teacher should tell students that they have two minutes to write a sentence or to do an illustration of the most important thing they learned during class. This can be done in a journal or on a 3”X 5” card handed to the teacher as they leave class. They may list any questions they have on the back of the card.

58. Summary Writing

A valuable tool for checking for understanding because it provides the teacher with insight into how learners condense information. It is analogous to retelling and serves as a way for students to demonstrate their ability to recapitulate what they have read, viewed, or done.

59. Take A Stand

Students discuss their opinions about a controversial topic. Example: “Is murder justified?”, “What’s worth fighting for?”

60. Think-Pair-Share

Think – teacher engages students to think with a prompt, reading, visual, or observation.

Pair – using designated partners students pair up to discuss their respective responses.

Share – share their thinking with the rest of the class.

61. Thumbs Up/Down/Sideways

Request all class feedback by asking students to respond thumbs up or thumbs down to a question.

62. Ticket Out the Door

Give students an index card. Ask that they respond to a question before leaving class. (Write down 2 differences between fractions and decimals).

63. Traffic Icons

Students label work red, green according to whether they thought they had good, partial or little understanding. Red signifies a piece of work needs to be revisited and green indicates understanding. Greens and reds pair up to help one another and the teacher can map the pace and content of future work according to students needs.

64. Transparency Check

This is a see through page protector that allows students to insert a paper and then write on the page protector with a dry-erase marker. The student can then remove the page protector to see what they drew. For example, a student can insert a graph grid and plot points and then remove the graph grid to see their graph.

65. Unison Responses Examples:

- I’ll point to a word and say a definition. If the definition I give is correct, please reply all together, “Yes”. If it’s incorrect, all say, “No” or if the statement is true everyone respond together, “True”, etc.

66. Value Line-up

Is an assessment opportunity for students to explore core concepts and understand problems by first analyzing their own beliefs and then listening to the position of others. Students have to evaluate a statement and are instructed to line up according to their degree of agree or disagree with the statement. Students who strongly disagree pair up with those that strongly agree.

67. Visual Display

Visual displays of information require students to represent knowledge in a nonlinguistic fashion, typically using images or movement to do so. There is evidence that students who generate visual representations of a concept are better able to understand and recall the concept. The drawings themselves served as another means for assessing misconceptions and inaccuracies. It is likely that the use of visual representations of understanding assist the learner in building mental models. 4 types of visual displays include: graphic organizers, Inspiration, foldables, and dioramas.

68. Vocabulary

A limited vocabulary is one of the most debilitating problems of low achievers. The least effective way to build strong vocabularies is to ask them to “Look up the definitions and study them.” A better way is to:

- a. Have the students say new words aloud multiple times;
- b. Make guesses about word meanings by using context; prior experience and other clues;
- c. Paraphrase the dictionary definition and give examples of what words mean;
- d. Use the words in conversation and in writing.
- e. Select six to eight vocabulary words to emphasize for each unit of study. These should be the key words to which all other vocabulary can be linked.

69. Whip Around

Ask a stem question such as “What is one property of a liquid?” Move quickly around the class asking each student to respond.

70. Write Questions

Examples:

- Write one question about what we have just been studying. Try it out on a person near you. If he can’t answer the question, pass it to me.
- Write two questions based on the topic, “Planning Nutritional Meals.”

71. Yesterday’s News

Students summarize the information from the day before from a discussion, reading, film or lecture.

72. Teacher Suggestion: _____

