

Tools for Formative Assessment Techniques to Check for Understanding Processing Activities

1. Index Card Summaries/ Questions	Periodically, distribute index cards and ask students to write on both sides, with these instructions: (Side 1) Based on our study of (unit topic), list a big idea that you understand and word it as a summary statement. (Side 2) Identify something about (unit topic) that you do not yet fully understand and word it as a statement or question.
2. Hand Signals	Ask students to display a designated hand signal to indicate their understanding of a specific concept, principal, or process: - I understand _____ and can explain it (e.g., thumbs up). - I do not yet understand _____ (e.g., thumbs down). - I'm not completely sure about _____ (e.g., wave hand).
3. One Minute Essay	A one-minute essay question (or one-minute question) is a focused question with a specific goal that can, in fact, be answered within a minute or two.
4. Analogy Prompt	Present students with an analogy prompt: (A designated concept, principle, or process) is like _____ because _____.
5. Web or Concept Map	Any of several forms of graphical organizers which allow learners to perceive relationships between concepts through diagramming key words representing those concepts. http://www.graphic.org/concept.html
6. Misconception Check	Present students with common or predictable misconceptions about a designated concept, principle, or process. Ask them whether they agree or disagree and explain why. The misconception check can also be presented in the form of a multiple-choice or true-false quiz.
7. Student Conference	One on one conversation with students to check their level of understanding.
8. 3-Minute Pause	The Three-Minute Pause provides a chance for students to stop, reflect on the concepts and ideas that have just been introduced, make connections to prior knowledge or experience, and seek clarification. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I changed my attitude about ... • I became more aware of ... • I was surprised about ... • I felt ... • I related to ... • I empathized with ...
9. Observation	Walk around the classroom and observe students as they work to check for learning. Strategies include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anecdotal Records • Conferences • Checklists
10. Self-Assessment	A process in which students collect information about their own learning, analyze what it reveals about their progress toward the intended learning goals and plan the next steps in their learning.
11. Exit Card	Exit cards are written student responses to questions posed at the end of a class or learning activity or at the end of a day.
12. Portfolio Check	Check the progress of a student's portfolio. A portfolio is a purposeful collection of significant work, carefully selected, dated and presented to tell the story of a student's achievement or growth in well-defined areas of performance, such as reading, writing, math, etc. A portfolio usually includes personal reflections where the student explains why each piece was chosen and what it shows about his/her growing skills and abilities.

13. Quiz	Quizzes assess students for factual information, concepts and discrete skill. There is usually a single best answer. Some quiz examples are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple Choice • True/False • Short Answer • Paper and Pencil • Matching • Extended Response
14. Journal Entry	Students record in a journal their understanding of the topic, concept or lesson taught. The teacher reviews the entry to see if the student has gained an understanding of the topic, lesson or concept that was taught.
15. Choral Response	In response to a cue, all students respond verbally at the same time. The response can be either to answer a question or to repeat something the teacher has said.
16. A-B-C Summaries	Each student in the class is assigned a different letter of the alphabet and they must select a word starting with that letter that is related to the topic being studied.
17. Debriefing	A form of reflection immediately following an activity.
18. Idea Spinner	The teacher creates a spinner marked into 4 quadrants and labeled “Predict, Explain, Summarize, Evaluate.” After new material is presented, the teacher spins the spinner and asks students to answer a question based on the location of the spinner. For example, if the spinner lands in the “Summarize” quadrant, the teacher might say, “List the key concepts just presented.”
19. Inside-Outside Circle	Inside and outside circles of students face each other. Within each pair of facing students, students quiz each other with questions they have written. Outside circle moves to create new pairs. Repeat.
20. Reader’s Theater	From an assigned text have students create a script and perform it.
21. One Sentence Summary	Students are asked to write a summary sentence that answers the “who, what where, when, why, how” questions about the topic.
22. Summary Frames	<p><u>Description:</u> A _____ is a kind of _____ that ...</p> <p><u>Compare/Contrast:</u> _____ and _____ are similar in that they both but _____, while _____</p> <p><u>Problem/Solution:</u> _____ wanted, but, so</p> <p><u>Cause/Effect:</u> _____ happens because</p>
23. One Word Summary	Select (or invent) one word which best summarizes a topic.
24. Think-Pair-Share/ Turn to Your Partner	Teacher gives direction to students. Students formulate individual response, and then turn to a partner to share their answers. Teacher calls on several random pairs to share their answers with the class.
25. Think-Write-Pair-Share	Students think individually, write their thinking, pair and discuss with partner, then share with the class.
26. Talk a Mile a Minute	Partner up – giver and receiver – Kind of like “Password” or “Pyramid.” Both know the category, but the receiver has his back to the board/screen. A set of terms will appear based on the category– giver gives clues, while receiver tries to guess the terms. First group done stands up

27. Oral Questioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How is _____ similar to/different from _____? - What are the characteristics/parts of _____? - In what other ways might we show/show/illustrate _____? - What is the big idea, key concept, moral in _____? - How does _____ relate to _____? - What ideas/details can you add to _____? - Give an example of _____? - What is wrong with _____? - What might you infer from _____? - What conclusions might be drawn from _____? - What question are we trying to answer? What problem are we trying to solve? - What are you assuming about _____? - What might happen if _____? - What criteria would you use to judge/evaluate _____? - What evidence supports _____? - How might we prove/confirm _____? - How might this be viewed from the perspective of _____? - What alternatives should be considered _____? - What approach/strategy could you use to _____?
28. Tic-Tac-Toe/ Think-Tac-Toe	<p>A collection of activities from which students can choose to do to demonstrate their understanding. It is presented in the form of a nine square grid similar to a tic-tac-toe board and students may be expected to complete from one to "three in a row". The activities vary in content, process, and product and can be tailored to address DOK levels.</p>
29. Four Corners	<p>Students choose a corner based on their level of expertise of a given subject. Based on your knowledge of _____, which corner would you choose? Corner 1: The Dirt Road – (There's so much dust, I can't see where I'm going! Help!!) Corner 2: The Paved Road (It's fairly smooth, but there are many potholes along the way.) Corner 3: The Highway (I feel fairly confident but have an occasional need to slow down.) Corner 4: The Interstate (I'm traveling along and could easily give directions to someone else.) Once students are in their chosen corners, allow students to discuss their progress with others. Questions may be prompted by teacher. Corner One will pair with Corner Three; Corner Two will pair with Corner Four for peer tutoring.</p>
30. Muddiest (or Clearest) Point	<p>This is a variation on the one-minute paper, though you may wish to give students a slightly longer time period to answer the question. Here you ask (at the end of a class period, or at a natural break in the presentation), "What was the "muddiest point" in today's lecture?" or, perhaps, you might be more specific, asking, for example: "What (if anything) do you find unclear about the concept of 'personal identity' ('inertia', 'natural selection', etc.)?"</p>
31. 3-2-1	<p>3 things you found out 2 interesting things 1 question you still have</p> <hr/> <p>3 differences between ____ 2 effects of ____ on ____ 1 question you still have about the topic</p> <hr/> <p>3 important facts 2 interesting ideas 1 insight about yourself as a learner</p> <hr/> <p>3 key words 2 new ideas 1 thought to think about</p> <hr/> <p>Write 3 questions about the text (unfamiliar words, confusing passages or ideas) Write 2 predictions based on the text (what will happen next based on the reading) Make one connection based on the text (connect to something you know or have experienced)</p>

32. Cubing	Display 6 questions from the lesson Have students in groups of 4. Each group has 1 die. Each student rolls the die and answers the question with the corresponding number. If a number is rolled more than once the student may elaborate on the previous response or roll again. Responses may also be written.
33. Quick Write	The strategy asks learners to respond in 2–10 minutes to an open-ended question or prompt posed by the teacher before, during, or after reading.
34. Directed Paraphrasing	Students summarize in well-chosen (own) words a key idea presented during the class period or the one just past.
35. RSQC2	In two minutes, students <i>recall</i> and list in rank order the most important ideas from a previous day's class; in two more minutes, they <i>summarize</i> those points in a single sentence, then write one major <i>question</i> they want answered, then identify a thread or theme to <i>connect</i> this material to the course's major goal.
36. Writing Frames	<p style="text-align: center;">Problem/Solution Paragraph</p> <p>_____ present(s) a dilemma that is _____. The problem is _____ _____. This <i>has/have</i> occurred because _____ _____. A resolution <i>is/was</i> possible. To solve <i>it/this</i>, it <i>will be/has been</i> necessary to _____ _____. The solution(s) include(s) _____.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Compare and Contrast Paragraph</p> <p>There are several differences between _____ and _____. They _____. In contrast to _____, _____ has _____. Unlike _____, _____ does not _____. _____. On the other hand, _____ _____.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Description Paragraph</p> <p>Have you ever _____? _____ <i>has/have</i> very interesting characteristics. <i>It/they has/have</i> _____. For instance, <i>it/they has/have</i> _____ which enhances _____. <i>It/they also</i> _____. For these reasons, _____.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Cause and Effect Paragraph</p> <p>_____ is influenced by _____. Since _____ happened, then _____. Therefore, _____. This provides explanation for _____ _____ and _____. The impact is _____.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sequence Paragraph</p> <p>The <i>events/process</i> of _____ is _____. The first _____ _____. Then, _____ _____. Next, _____ _____. Finally, _____.</p>

37. Decisions, Decisions (Philosophical Chairs)	Given a prompt, class goes to the side that corresponds to their opinion on the topic, side share out reasoning, and students are allowed to change sides after discussion
38. Somebody Wanted But So	Students respond to narrative text with structured story grammar either orally, pictorially, or in writing. (Character(s)/Event/Problem/Solution)
39. Likert Scale	<p>Provide 3-5 statements that aren't clearly true or false, but are somewhat debatable. The purpose is to help students reflect on a text and engage in discussion with their peers afterwards. These scales focus on generalizations about characters, themes, conflicts, or symbolism. There are no clear cut answers in the book. They help students to analyze, synthesize and evaluate information)</p> <p>One question on a Likert Scale might look like this: 1. The character (name) should not have done (action).</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">strongly agree disagree agree strongly agree</p>
40. I Have the Question, Who Has the Answer?	The teacher makes two sets of cards. One set contains questions related to the unit of study. The second set contains the answers to the questions. Distribute the answer cards to the students and either you or a student will read the question cards to the class. All students check their answer cards to see if they have the correct answer. <i>A variation is to make cards into a chain activity:</i> The student chosen to begin the chain will read the given card aloud and then wait for the next participant to read the only card that would correctly follow the progression. Play continues until all of the cards are read and the initial student is ready to read his card for the second time.
41. Whip Around	The teacher poses a question or a task. Students then individually respond on a scrap piece of paper listing at least 3 thoughts/responses/statements. When they have done so, students stand up. The teacher then randomly calls on a student to share one of his or her ideas from the paper. Students check off any items that are said by another student and sit down when all of their ideas have been shared with the group, whether or not they were the one to share them. The teacher continues to call on students until they are all seated. As the teacher listens to the ideas or information shared by the students, he or she can determine if there is a general level of understanding or if there are gaps in students' thinking."
42. Word Sort	Given a set of vocabulary terms, students sort in to given categories or create their own categories for sorting
43. Triangular Prism (Red, Yellow, Green)	Students give feedback to teacher by displaying the color that corresponds to their level of understanding
44. Take and Pass	Cooperative group activity used to share or collect information from each member of the group; students write a response, then pass to the right, add their response to next paper, continue until they get their paper back, then group debriefs.
45. Student Data Notebooks	A tool for students to track their learning: Where am I going? Where am I now? How will I get there?
46. Slap It	Students are divided into two teams to identify correct answers to questions given by the teacher. Students use a fly swatter to slap the correct response posted on the wall.
47. Say Something	Students take turns leading discussions in a cooperative group on sections of a reading or video
48. Flag It	Students use this strategy to help them remember information that is important to them. They will "flag" their ideas on a sticky note or flag die cut ...

49. Fill In Your Thoughts	Written check for understanding strategy where students fill the blank. (Another term for rate of change is _____ or _____.)
50. Circle, Triangle, Square	Something that is still going around in your head (Triangle) Something pointed that stood out in your mind (Square) Something that “Squared” or agreed with your thinking.
51. ABCD Whisper	Students should get in groups of four where one student is A, the next is B, etc. Each student will be asked to reflect on a concept and draw a visual of his/her interpretation. Then they will share their answer with each other in a zigzag pattern within their group.
52. Onion Ring	Students form an inner and outer circle facing a partner. The teacher asks a question and the students are given time to respond to their partner. Next, the inner circle rotates one person to the left. The teacher asks another question and the cycle repeats itself.
53. ReQuest/ Reciprocal Questioning	ReQuest, or reciprocal questioning, gives the teacher and students opportunities to ask each other their own questions following the reading of a selection. The ReQuest strategy can be used with most novels or expository material. It is important that the strategy be modeled by the teacher using each genre. A portion of the text is read silently by both the teacher and the students. The students may leave their books open, but the teacher's text is closed. Students then are encouraged to ask the teacher and other students questions about what has been read. The teacher makes every attempt to help students get answers to their questions. The roles then become reversed. The students close their books, and the teacher asks the students information about the material. This procedure continues until the students have enough information to predict logically what is contained in the remainder of the selection. The students then are assigned to complete the reading.
54. K-W-L & KWL+	Students respond as whole group, small group, or individually to a topic as to “What they already Know, what they want to learn, what they have learned”. PLUS (+) asks students to organize their new learnings using a concept map or graphic organizer that reflects the key information. Then, each student writes a summary paragraph about what they have learned.
55. Choral Reading	Students mark the text to identify a particular concept and chime in, reading the marked text aloud in unison.
56. Socratic Seminar	Students ask questions of one another about an essential question, topic, or selected text. The questions initiate a conversation that continues with a series of responses and additional questions.
57. Newspaper Headline	Create a newspaper headline that may have been written for the topic we are studying. Capture the main idea of the event.
58. Numbered Heads Together	Students sit in groups and each group member is given a number. The teacher poses a problem and all four students discuss. The teacher calls a number and that student is responsible for sharing for the group.
59. Gallery Walk	After teams have generated ideas on a topic using a piece of chart paper, they appoint a “docent” to stay with their work. Teams rotate around examining other team’s ideas and ask questions of the docent. Teams then meet together to discuss and add to their information so the docent also can learn from other teams. Graffiti– Groups receive a large piece of paper and felt pens of different colors. Students generate ideas in the form of graffiti. Groups can move to other papers and discuss/add to the ideas.
60. One Question and One Comment	Students are assigned a chapter or passage to read and create one question and one comment generated from the reading. In class, students will meet in either small or whole class groups for discussion. Each student shares at least one comment or question. As the discussion moves student by student around the room, the next person can answer a previous question posed by another student, respond to a comment, or share their own comments and questions. As the activity builds around the room, the conversation becomes in-depth with opportunity for all students to learn new perspectives on the text.