Formative Assessment Strategies

Tools for Formative Assessment Techniques to Check for Understanding	
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.
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).
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.
Analogy Prompt	Periodically, present students with an analogy prompt: (A designated concept, principle, or process) is like _____ because _____.
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
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.
Student Conference	One on one conversation with students to check their level of understanding.
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. • I changed my attitude about… • I became more aware of… • I was surprised about… • I felt… • I related to… • I empathized with…
Observation	Walk around the classroom and observe students as they work to check for learning. Strategies include: •Anecdotal Records •Conferences •Checklists
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.
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.
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.
Quiz	Quizzes assess students for factual information, concepts and discrete skill. There is usually a single best answer. Some quiz examples are: • Multiple Choice • True/False • Short Answer • Paper and Pencil • Matching • Extended Response
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.
Choral Response	In response t o 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.
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.
Debriefing	A form of reflection immediately following an activity.
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."
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.
Numbered Heads Together	Each student is assigned a number. Members of a group work together to agree on an answer. The teacher randomly selects one number. Student with that number answers for the group.
One Sentence Summary	Students are asked to write a summary sentence that answers the "who, what where, when, why, how" questions about the topic.
One Word Summary	Select (or invent) one word which best summarizes a topic.
Think-Pair- Share	Students think individually, then pair (discuss with partner), then share with the class.
Ticket to Leave	Closing activity where students respond in writing or verbally to short assignments.
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.
Oral Questioning	- 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 _____?

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