



Formative Assessment Strategies

Strategy Name	Brief Description
1 Word Summary/ Whip Around	Students think of one word that comes to mind when they think of a given topic, or one word that summarizes the concept from the lesson. Then do a Quick Whip (see below) around the room so everyone can hear all the words. Remind students that if someone said the word they wanted to say before them, that's OK. Just repeat it.
3-2-1	Give a prompt to ask students to share 3, 2 or 1 concepts or ideas. For example, "share 3 keywords, 2 key points and 1 question from today's learning."
The 5 W's	Learners practice explaining their understanding by demonstrating their thoughts on one or more of the following Who, When, Where, Why and How.
5 Word Summary	Students define or explain a concept in 5 words. For example, what are the 5 words that are most critical to the concept?
10-2 Processing	Deliver information for 10 minutes, allow time to process for 2. This can come in the form of questions, discussion, writing, etc. For example, "Think about the information shared with you in the last 10 minutes, what are 3 key points? Share with a partner."
ABCD Cards/Whiteboard s	Create cards with an A, B, C and D. Ask questions in multiple choice form and ask students to hold up the letter that corresponds with that choice. Or ask them to write out an answer on a whiteboard and hold it directly in front of them, so other students can not see it.
Concept Map	Provide a graphic organizer for students to conceptualize a specific idea. For example, if you are looking at a number of things that need to be accomplished, you can provide a flow chart and ask students to conceptualize the ways that they could get completed.
Consensus Wall	Ask students to respond to a question or comment on a post-it note. Ask one student to share his or her answer and post it in the room. Any student who has a similar answer to the posted post-it places their post-it near it. Another student can share a response and post it in another part of the room, and others can post their response next to it, if it is similar. Continue until everyone posts their post-it.
Post Your Learning	Students write their name on a post-it note. Next, they post their name on a poster/picture or statement that most represents how they feel or what they understand. This can happen at the beginning, middle or end of a lesson, and can give you a picture of where students stand toward learning a concept.
First/Last Word	Start with a word that is key to the session. Students create an acrostic poem at the beginning of the lesson. Then, at the end, they revisit it and add to it with their new understanding.



I Got and I Need	Students write on a post-it note or card something they understood (I got) about a lesson and/or something they still do not understand (I need).
Hand Signals (Check understanding or for Management)	Place a hand on your chest. Open hand equals, “Yes, I understand.” or Closed hand equals, “I have a question.” This signal can also be used to indicate the end of an activity or to get attention back to the teacher.
Is/Is Not	Students define a concept by creating a “T” chart to explain what it “is” and what it “is not.” They can do so with examples or definitions.
Misconception Questions	Teacher asks a question designed explicitly to elicit specific student misconceptions that are commonly associated with a particular topic, so that she can identify and remediate those misconceptions.
Numbered Heads	In groups, give each member a number. You can use this number to ask questions or ask for responses. For example, “All 2s stand up. What do you think...”
Quick Whip	Each student has ten seconds to report something learned in the lesson or answer a question.
Quiz - Quiz Trade	Create index cards with questions on review content. Distribute a card to each student. Students partner up--TLS recommends teacher control who works with whom. Each person asks a question and confirms the answer. Once the partners answer and discuss both questions, they trade cards and find a new partner. The teacher can include answers on the back of the cards, or ask students to place check marks on questions that they were confused by, so you can review those questions at the end of the session.
Stand Up/ Sit Down	Teacher asks a series of questions and asks learners to stand or sit according to their answers. This could be a competition where the last person standing wins.
Text Rendering	Provide students with a short amount of text and ask them to highlight and comment on what stood out for them. You can follow this up with a partner/group share. Potential protocols for text rendering: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Read and annotate the text independently● Read and locate one sentence that stands out to you; share without discussion● Now go back and locate one phrase; share without discussion● Now go back and locate one word; share without discussion● Now go around and share why you selected what you selected; no discussion● Now discuss freely
Think/Pair/Share	Teacher asks a question; first the students think on their own, then they share ideas in pairs (perhaps receiving feedback from a partner), and then share their best thinking with the whole class.



Thumbs Up/ Thumbs Down	Students can put their thumbs up to show understanding, thumbs down to show confusion or thumbs to the side to show “almost got it, but have some questions.”
Traffic Light Self-Assessment	Have learners hold up a colored card that represents their understanding or agreement with a concept. Red- don't get it or no; Yellow- sort of or maybe; Green- got it or yes.
Whiteboards	Teacher asks or presents a question, waits an appropriate amount of time while students write responses on white boards, then the students individually and simultaneously hold up their boards for the teacher to see. Ask students to focus on their board.

These strategies were not all created by TLS. Some of these are common to many classrooms. TLS organized them here for teachers' benefit.