

# Formative Assessment Checklist

Quick, practical formative assessment strategies to monitor student learning in real-time.

ASSESSMENT

## Formative Assessment Checklist

### CONTENTS

1. What Makes Formative Assessment Effective
2. Quick Check Techniques (0-5 minutes)
3. Observation Strategies
4. Digital Tools & Techniques
5. Subject-Specific Strategies
6. Assessment Planning Matrix
7. Implementation Schedule
8. Student Self-Assessment Tools
9. Data Collection & Analysis
10. Troubleshooting Common Issues
11. Building Assessment Culture
12. Quick Reference Guide

*"Assessment **for** learning, not **of** learning."*

*This checklist provides immediate strategies to check understanding and adjust instruction.*

## What Makes Formative Assessment Effective

### Core Principles

- **Immediate:** Provides real-time feedback

- **Actionable:** Results inform next instructional steps
- **Low-stakes:** No grades, just learning information
- **Student-friendly:** Helps learners understand their progress
- **Efficient:** Quick to implement and analyze

## The Assessment Cycle

1. **Plan:** Choose technique based on learning objective
2. **Implement:** Use during or right after instruction
3. **Analyze:** Look for patterns in responses
4. **Adjust:** Modify teaching based on results
5. **Follow-up:** Check if adjustments helped

## Quick Check Techniques (0-5 minutes)

### ✓ Thumbs Up/Down/Sideways

**When to use:** After explaining a concept

**How:** Students show thumbs up (got it), down (confused), sideways (sort of)

**Next steps:** Thumbs down → reteach differently; Sideways → provide examples

### ✓ Exit Tickets

**When to use:** Last 3 minutes of class

**How:** One question on paper or digital platform

**Sample questions:**

- "What's one thing you learned today?"
- "What's still confusing?"
- "Rate your confidence 1-5 and explain why"

### ✓ Fist to Five

**When to use:** Check confidence levels

**How:** 0 fingers (no understanding) to 5 fingers (could teach someone else)

**Follow-up:** 0-2 need reteaching; 3-4 need practice; 5 can peer tutor

### ✓ One Word Summary

**When to use:** End of lesson or unit

**How:** Students write one word that captures the main idea

**Analysis:** Look for patterns, misconceptions, or gaps

## ✓ 3-2-1 Reflection

**Format:**

- 3 things I learned
- 2 things I found interesting
- 1 question I still have

## ✓ Think-Pair-Share Response

**Steps:**

1. Pose question (30 seconds thinking)
2. Share with partner (2 minutes)
3. Listen to sample responses
4. Note common misconceptions

## Observation Strategies

### ✓ Gallery Walk

**Setup:** Post student work around room

**Process:** Students view work, leave feedback on sticky notes

**Teacher role:** Observe discussions, note common errors

### ✓ Traffic Light Self-Assessment

**Red:** I don't understand and need help

**Yellow:** I'm getting there but need practice

**Green:** I understand and can help others

**Implementation:** Use colored cards, digital polls, or hand signals

### ✓ Learning Stations Monitoring

**Strategy:** Rotate through stations during independent work

**Focus areas:**

- Who's struggling with which concepts?
- What questions keep coming up?
- Which students can peer tutor?

### ✓ Strategic Questioning

Instead of "Any questions?" try:

- "What questions do you have?"
- "Which part needs more explanation?"
- "Who can explain this in their own words?"

## Digital Tools & Techniques

### ✓ Real-Time Polling

**Tools:** Mentimeter, Poll Everywhere, Kahoot

**Best for:** Multiple choice, true/false, word clouds

**Advantage:** Anonymous responses increase participation

### ✓ Digital Exit Tickets

**Tools:** Google Forms, Padlet, Flipgrid

**Questions to try:**

- "On a scale of 1-10, how confident are you with today's objective?"
- "What would you like more practice with?"
- "Explain today's concept to a friend in one sentence"

### ✓ Collaborative Documents

**Platform:** Google Docs, Padlet, Jamboard

**Use:** Students add responses to shared document

**Monitor:** Watch entries in real-time, identify patterns

### ✓ Quick Quizzes

**Tools:** Quizizz, Blooket, Gimkit

**Format:** 3-5 questions, immediate results

**Focus:** Current lesson objectives, not cumulative content

## Subject-Specific Strategies

### Mathematics

#### ✓ SHOW YOUR WORK CHECKS

- Circulate during problem-solving
- Look for process, not just answers
- Note common calculation errors

#### ✓ MATH TALK PROTOCOLS

- "I agree/disagree because..."
- "I'd like to add to \_\_\_'s idea..."
- "Can you explain your thinking?"

#### ✓ ERROR ANALYSIS

Present incorrect solution, ask students to find and fix mistakes

#### ✓ NUMBER LINE STRATEGIES

Students place their confidence on a number line (0-10)

### Science

#### ✓ PREDICT-OBSERVE-EXPLAIN

Before demonstrations:

1. Students predict outcomes
2. Observe what happens
3. Explain discrepancies

#### ✓ CONCEPT SKETCHING

Draw and label scientific processes or structures

#### ✓ HYPOTHESIS TESTING

Quick experiments with immediate result analysis

#### ✓ SCIENCE TALKS

"What do you notice?" and "What makes you say that?"

### Language Arts

#### ✓ READING COMPREHENSION CHECKS

- Summarize paragraph in 10 words
- Predict what happens next
- Identify main idea vs. details

#### ✓ WRITING PROCESS CHECKS

- Beginning, middle, end assessment
- Peer feedback protocols
- Self-editing checklists

#### ✓ VOCABULARY CHECKS

- Use new word in a sentence
- Draw the word's meaning
- Connect to personal experience

#### ✓ DISCUSSION PROTOCOLS

- Turn and talk stems
- Building on others' ideas
- Asking clarifying questions

## Social Studies

#### ✓ PERSPECTIVE TAKING

"How might \_\_\_\_ view this event?"

#### ✓ CAUSE AND EFFECT MAPPING

Quick graphic organizers during content delivery

#### ✓ CURRENT CONNECTIONS

"How does this relate to today?"

#### ✓ TIMELINE POSITIONING

Place events or concepts on class timeline

## Assessment Planning Matrix

Learning Objective	Quick Check	During Activity	Reflection
Understand main idea	Thumbs check	Turn and talk	Exit ticket
Apply math concept	Show work scan	Error analysis	Confidence scale
Recall vocabulary	Word association	Peer quiz	3-2-1
Analyze text	Think aloud	Annotation check	Summary writing

## Implementation Schedule

### Week 1-2: Foundation Building

- ☐ Choose 2 quick check techniques
- ☐ Try exit tickets daily

- ☐ Practice thumbs up/down signals
- ☐ Introduce confidence scales

### **Week 3-4: Expand Toolkit**

- ☐ Add digital polling tool
- ☐ Try 3-2-1 reflections
- ☐ Implement think-pair-share
- ☐ Use traffic light system

### **Week 5-6: Subject Integration**

- ☐ Choose subject-specific strategies
- ☐ Plan weekly assessment calendar
- ☐ Try gallery walks
- ☐ Use strategic questioning

### **Week 7-8: Refinement**

- ☐ Analyze what's working best
- ☐ Streamline favorites
- ☐ Train students on protocols
- ☐ Create assessment routine

## **Student Self-Assessment Tools**

### **✓ Learning Target Tracker**

Students rate their progress toward daily objectives:

- Not yet (1)
- Getting there (2)
- Got it (3)
- Can teach it (4)

### **✓ Reflection Stems**

- "I'm proud that I..."
- "I'm still working on..."
- "Next time I will..."

- "I need help with..."

## ✓ Goal Setting Sheets

Weekly goals with daily progress monitoring

## ✓ Portfolio Reflections

Students choose best work and explain why

# Data Collection & Analysis

## Simple Tracking Systems

### CLASS OVERVIEW GRID

Student	Concept A	Concept B	Concept C	Notes
Alex	✓	?	✓	Needs support with B
Jamie	✓	✓	-	Absent for C

### TRAFFIC LIGHT SPREADSHEET

Color-code student understanding:

- Green: Understands, can move forward
- Yellow: Partially understands, needs practice
- Red: Doesn't understand, needs reteaching

### WEEKLY PATTERNS LOG

Track which concepts need reteaching most often

## Making Data Actionable

### SAME DAY ADJUSTMENTS

- **High confusion:** Stop and reteach differently
- **Mixed understanding:** Pair strong with struggling students
- **Most understand:** Move forward, provide extension

### NEXT LESSON PLANNING

- **Common misconceptions:** Address explicitly
- **Missing prerequisite:** Back up and fill gaps



- **Ready for challenge:** Prepare extension activities

### **SMALL GROUP FORMATION**

Use assessment data to create flexible groups:

- **Intervention groups:** Students with similar gaps
- **Practice groups:** Students needing more time
- **Extension groups:** Students ready for challenge

## **Troubleshooting Common Issues**

### **"Students won't respond honestly"**

**Solutions:**

- Emphasize no grades attached
- Use anonymous digital tools
- Model that confusion is normal
- Celebrate questions as learning opportunities

### **"Takes too much time"**

**Solutions:**

- Start with 30-second techniques
- Use digital tools for instant collection
- Incorporate into existing routines
- Focus on one technique until automatic

### **"Don't know what to do with information"**

**Solutions:**

- Plan 2-3 response options in advance
- Use simple tracking systems
- Focus on patterns, not individual responses
- Start small with obvious next steps

### **"Students give expected answers"**

**Solutions:**

- Use varied question formats

- Ask for explanations, not just answers
- Create safe spaces for admitting confusion
- Use peer assessment opportunities

## Building Assessment Culture

### Student Ownership

- Teach students why formative assessment helps them
- Involve them in creating success criteria
- Have them track their own progress
- Celebrate growth over achievement

### Feedback Loops

- Share class trends (without names)
- Explain how their responses changed your teaching
- Ask students what assessment methods work best for them
- Adjust techniques based on effectiveness

### Colleague Collaboration

- Share successful techniques with team
- Observe others using formative assessment
- Plan cross-curricular assessment strategies
- Create shared bank of effective prompts

## Quick Reference Guide

### Daily Must-Haves

- ☐ One quick check during instruction
- ☐ One end-of-lesson reflection
- ☐ Response plan for next day

### Weekly Essentials

- ☐ Review assessment data patterns
- ☐ Plan adjustments for struggling concepts

- ☐ Try one new technique
- ☐ Student self-assessment opportunity

## Monthly Reflection

- ☐ Which techniques work best with your students?
- ☐ What patterns do you notice in learning gaps?
- ☐ How has your instruction changed based on data?
- ☐ What new strategies will you try?

---

© Zaza Technologies — Teacher resources. Use within your school. Not for resale.