Show Students How to Evaluate Their Work

Step 1: Create your activity

Step 2: Introduce the activity to your students

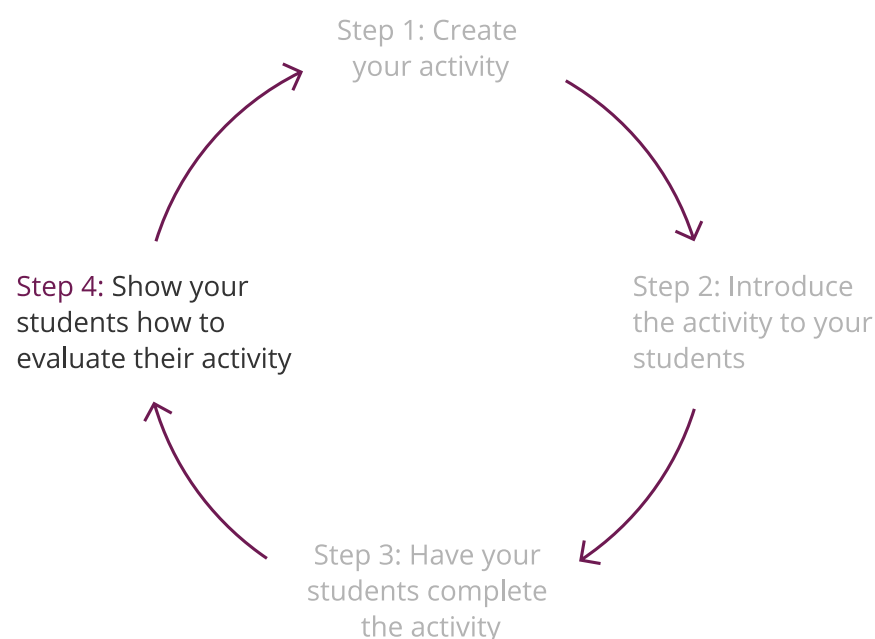Step 3: Have your students complete the activity

Step 4: Show your students how to evaluate their activity

A crucial component of every activity – and one that is often forgotten – is making sure that students have the right information to evaluate how they did on an activity. Students are taking time to actually do something, and it's important for them to understand how it went. If students do an activity without getting feedback or taking the time to reflect on it, they won't be able to improve on their work.

Different ways to give feedback:

There are 4 primary ways for students to receive feedback, and we will share best practices for each of them so you can choose what works best for you and your activity.

1. Instructor Feedback
Direct feedback from the instructor can be very powerful for certain topics and activities. You are the expert, you know how the assignment should have been completed, and you can best identify places your students can improve. But depending on your time and the number of students, it might not be feasible to evaluate each student work individually.

One thing you can do, though, is highlight the best student work in a given week, or a given month. This can be very motivating for students, and serves as examples for others to compare their work against (see self-evaluation below).

2. Self-evaluation
Self-evaluation is another way for students to reflect on how they've done and find areas of improvement. But just like it's hard to copy-edit your own essay, it's hard for students to identify where they did well and where they need to improve. You can do two things to help them out:

▸ Provide examples: Show them good and not-so-good examples and explain WHY they are good or not-so-good. Then prompt your students to compare their work to these examples.
▸ Provide a rubric or checklist: If you have a rubric or checklist, students know which criteria to pay attention to when evaluating the quality of their work.

We recommend including a self-evaluation worksheet in the resource section of the lecture that follows the project, where you go over what they did, what they learned, and common mistakes they might have made. You can reference the self-evaluation worksheet to prompt students to dig deeper into their own work.

3. **Peer-to-peer feedback**

Students within the class can also provide feedback to each other. This is great because by giving feedback, the student is exposed to different solutions and can learn from those as well. For the feedback to be valuable, it can help to have a rubric or checklist, because not all students will know what to give feedback on, and might focus on criteria that aren't as relevant.

Make sure to provide instructions on how students should provide feedback. This could be something like: "Upload your image to the Q&A dashboard, and find one other student's image to give feedback on. The students who give feedback to the most images will get a private coaching call with me!"

4. **Automated feedback**

The last and simplest form of feedback is automated feedback. This is very common with quizzes and coding exercises where the instructor determines the right and wrong answer ahead of time. One thing you can do to make this feedback more useful is to add which lecture(s) the quiz question is referencing. This helps students to recap the content before moving on. It's also helpful to quickly summarize the key concepts behind the question once students submitted their answer.

How to create a self-evaluation checklist:

Think about 3-5 criteria that show the student has done a good job. What would you like the student work to look like? How should it work? The criteria you determine should be measurable and tied to the goal of the activity (i.e. don't give feedback on baking a cake if your activity is around coding exercises). Make sure the criteria you list are related to what students will actually be doing in the activity.

In it's simplest form, this could look something like this:

Checklist:

| Image is perfectly lit | Image is sharp | Image uses the rule of thirds |

Rubric:

Criteria	Needs work	Pretty good	Terrific
Lighting	Image is too bright or too dark	Image is a bit bright / dark	Image is perfectly lit
Focus	Image is blurry	Image isn't fully sharp	Image is perfectly sharp

Include the self-evaluation checklist when introducing your activity. You can introduce it via video, but you should also attach the checklist as a PDF.