

Assessment in the Classroom

Assessment is used in a classroom as a method to gauge how well students understand the lesson material. These assessments can be used as quick check on a particular subject or as a collective evaluation over the material as a whole.

An assessment used to continually check the students understanding at any given point in the class is known as formative assessment. I often use class discussions and probing questions as formative assessments to receive feedback from my students. Formative assessment is utilized by teachers to amend their lessons to best fit each individual class. For example, when teaching fractions I prepared an exit slip quiz to quickly assess my students at the end of the lesson. I noticed most of them understood multiplying fractions but majority of them missed dividing with fractions. I was able to amend my lesson the following day to review dividing with fractions in hopes of clearing up any misconceptions.

Formative assessment is also beneficial to the students. Teachers can ask questions and have students answer them on personal white boards or iPads. This allows students to solve questions on their own to see if they can formulate the correct processes and answers. If students notice they are not quite on the right track, they can ask their classmates who came to the correct answers for help, or the teacher can step in to provide guidance. By providing the class with formative assessments, students will be able to gauge their own understanding and catch any misconceptions before their final assessment.

Summative assessments usually take place at the end of an entire unit and measure the combined understanding of a student over the whole lesson material. Tests and final projects are often used as summative assessments which provide a more personalized evaluation than formative assessments. Teachers can review the summative assessments to help determine which students did not understand the material. Moving forward, the teacher can spend extra time with these students to make sure they do not fall behind.

The use of formative and summative assessment helps teachers measure the level of understanding in the classroom. Teachers use this feedback as a guide to amend their lessons to meet the needs of all students in their classroom.