CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUE EXAMPLES

By Thomas A. Angelo and K. Patricia Cross
From Classroom Assessment Techniques: A Handbook for College Teachers, 2nd Ed.

Fifty Classroom Assessment Techniques are presented in this book with examples of how they have been used, pros, cons, time commitment, and ideas for adaptation. A shortened description of 10 CATs that either assess: course-related knowledge and skills; learner attitude, values, and self-awareness; and reactions to instruction are below. For more information, two copies of the book are located in the TLC library and many websites can be found with descriptions and examples by just searching by CAT name.

Minute Paper

Description:

No other technique has been used more often or by more college teachers than the Minute Paper. This technique -- also known as the One-Minute Paper and the Half-Sheet Response -- provides a quick and extremely simple way to collect written feedback on student learning. To use the Minute Paper, an instructor stops class two or three minutes early and asks students to respond briefly to some variation on the following two questions: "What was the most important thing you learned during this class?" and "What important question remains unanswered?" Students they write their responses on index cards or half-sheets of scrap paper and hand them in.

Step-by-Step Procedure:

1. Using the two basic questions from the "Description" above as starting points, write Minute Paper prompts that fit your course and students. Try out your Minute Paper on a colleague or teaching assistant before using it in class.
2. Plan to set aside five to ten minutes of your next class to use the technique, as well as time later to discuss the results.
3. Before class, write one or, at the most, two Minute Paper questions on the chalkboard or prepare an overhead transparency.
4. At a convenient time, hand out index cards or half-sheets of scrap paper.
5. Unless there is a very good reason to know who wrote what, direct students to leave their names off the papers or cards.
6. Let the students know how much time they will have (two to five minutes per question is usually enough), what kinds of answers you want (words, phrases, or short sentences), and when they can expect your feedback.
What's the Principle?

Description:
After students figure out what type of problem they are dealing with, they often must then decide what principle or principles to apply in order to solve the problem. This technique focuses on this step in problem solving. It provides students with a few problems and asks them to state the principle that best applies to each problem.

Step-by-Step Procedure:
1. Identify the basic principles that you expect students to learn in your course. Make sure focus only on those that students have been taught.
2. Find or create sample problems or short examples that illustrate each of these principles. Each example should illustrate only one principle.
3. Create a What's the Principle? form that includes a listing of the relevant principles and specific examples or problems for students to match to those principles.
4. Try out your assessment on a graduate student or colleague to make certain it is not too difficult or too time-consuming to use in class.
5. After you make any necessary revisions to the form, apply the assessment.

Pro-Con Grid

Description:
Students write quick lists of pros and cons to help them more clearly consider an issue. This assessment provides information students’ objectivity and extent of analysis.

Step-by-Step Procedure:
1. Identify a decision, judgment, dilemma, or issue that is relevant to the course.
2. Create a prompt to elicit pros and cons. You may specify a particular point of view for the students to adopt when considering the issue.
3. Identify how many pros and cons should be identified and then describe the response format you expect from the students.
4. Prepare the questionnaire to be display-ready by writing it on the board, a transparency, or digitally projected. It could also be written on a half-sheet of paper and distributed to the students. It is important the prompts are presented in writing. Do not only read the question(s).
5. Hand out index cards or half-sheets of paper. It is best if students do not write their names, unless there is a very good reason to know who wrote which comments.
Goal Ranking and Matching

Description:
An excellent CAT for the first or second day of class. Students list/rank learning goals and match these to instructor goals. This assessment technique assesses the “degree of fit” 1) between students’ personal learning goals and teachers; course-specific instructional goals and 2) between teachers’ and students’ rankings of the relative importance of those goals. Students learn to identify and clarify their own learning goals.

Step-by-Step Procedure:
1. Before coming to class, make sure you have clearly identified your goals for the course.
2. Decide if you are willing to substitute or alter your goals to accommodate student interests.
3. Hand out a simple form (see below) and have students fill in 3-5 goals they hope to achieve by taking you course. These should be specific things they hope to learn.
4. Have the students rank these goals by their importance.
5. Articulate your instructional goals to the class.
6. Have students determine if their goals will be met by circling yes/no to each item.
7. Collect and review the responses. Can unmatched goals be incorporated into the course? If not, suggest other courses or programs that might address those goals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SAMPLE FORM: Your Goals for this Session</th>
<th>Your Rankings</th>
<th>Do they match the instructors?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Group Work Evaluations

Description:
Simple questionnaires used to collect feedback on students’ reactions to group work. Group Work Evaluations can help students and teachers see what is going well and what is not going well.

Step-by-Step Procedure:
1. Compose four or five questions regarding group work (see below).
2. Before handing out the forms, explain the purpose of the assessment and the process to students. If you want to analyze responses by group, make sure that students indicate the groups they belong to without giving away their individual identities.
3. Tally the responses and summarized between groups and for the entire class.
4. Have groups suggest solutions to the concerns raised through the assessment.

1. Overall, how effective did your group work together on this assignment? (Check the appropriate response)
   □ Poorly    □ Adequately    □ Well    □ Extremely well

2. How many of the five group members participated actively most of the time? (Check the appropriate response)
   □ 0    □ 1    □ 2    □ 3    □ 4    □ 5

3. How many of you were fully prepared for the group-work most of the time? (Check the appropriate response)
   □ 0    □ 1    □ 2    □ 3    □ 4    □ 5

4. Give one specific example of something you learned from the group that you probably wouldn’t have learned working alone.

5. Give one specific example of something the other group members learned from you that they probably wouldn’t have learned otherwise.

6. Give one specific change that the group could make to improve its performance.