

Classroom Assessment Techniques (CATs)

Assessment Strategies for Student Learning.

Formative assessment - In-class; takes the pulse of the class; not high stakes; helps students learn or helps students reinforce what they have learned

Summative assessment - takes place at the end of the course; usually graded and therefore high stakes.

Classroom Assessment Techniques (CATs for short)

- in-class exercises that helps instructors teach or reinforce a concept in class
- collects feedback during class
- provides gauge for instructors on what students have learned in class (met learning outcomes). Indirectly, it helps us reflect on our teaching strategies and strengthen our teaching skills.
- for single-session classes, CATs can serve both as formative and/or summative assessments (for that session).
- CATs are useful active learning exercises appropriate for single- or multi-sessions classes.

Classroom Assessment Techniques

Contains detailed instructions for a variety of CATs for use in the class. Each link contains the activity and a lesson plan to guide the usage of the CAT in your classroom.

A. [Background Knowledge Probe](#)

Target Topic(s)

orient to basic web search
orient on boolean operators

Class Level

1000,2000

Class Type

single-session

Prep Time

print worksheet

Class Time

10 mins

B. [1000 Level Misconception](#)

Target Topic(s)

introduction to library catalog; conceptual

Class Level

1000

Class Type

single-session

Prep Time

Class Time

C. [Categorizing Grid](#)

Target Topic(s)

develop understanding of the organization of knowledge
help develop skills in selecting tools for research

Class Level

1000, 2000, 3000

Class Type

single-session

Prep Time

some, print exercise

Class Time

10-15 mins

D. [Checking for Understanding](#)

Target Topic(s)

applicable to any topic instructor wants

Class Level

all, incl. Grads

Class Type

single-session

multi-session

semester

Prep Time

some

Class Time

6 mins plus discussion

E. General Questions**Target Topic(s)**

class evaluation - most useful if doing 2 or more sessions

Class Level

all, incl. Grads

Class Type

single-session

multi-session

Prep Time

print questions

Class Time

3 mins

F. [Grouping Sources of Information](#)**Target Topic(s)**

understanding what different sources offer (e.g., Encyclopedias vs articles)

Class Level

1000,2000

Class Type

single-session

Prep Time

print worksheet

Class Time

full class outline

G. [How to find a scholarly article](#)**Target Topic(s)**

searching databases and catalog
using citation management tool

Class Level

all, incl. Grads

Class Type

single-session

multi-session

Prep Time

print worksheet

Class Time

full class outline

H. [Minute Paper](#)**Target Topic(s)**

concept evaluation tool - all topics
baseline info to start class - all topics

Class Level

all UG levels

Class Type

single-session

multi-session

semester

Prep Time

decide which option

Class Time

2 mins; 12-18 mins

depends on which outline chosen

I. [Evaluating Sources Checklist & Summary](#)

Target Topic(s)

evaluating sources - checklist
summarizing information concisely

Class Level

1000,2000

Class Type

single-session

multi-session

Prep Time

5 mins

Class Time

class demo and exercise

J. [Paraphrasing Boolean operators](#)

Target Topic(s)

overview on boolean operators
overview on truncation

Class Level

3000,4000

Class Type

single-session

Prep Time

5 mins

Class Time

3 mins

K. [Pre-Post Class Quiz](#)

Target Topic(s)

applicable to various topics covered in class (e.g., peer review; reading citations, etc.,)

Class Level

all levels, incl. Grads

Class Type

single-session

multi-session

Prep Time

print questions

Class Time

4 mins, 2 at start and 2 at end

L. [Scholarly Popular Categorization](#)

Target Topic(s)

understanding differences in scholarly and popular materials

Class Level

1000,2000

Class Type

single-session

multi-session

Prep Time

create questions, send to students in advance

Class Time

full class outline

M. [Working with a Topic](#)**Target Topic(s)**

construct searchable question

identify subject headings

narrow down research

Class Level

all UG levels

Class Type

multi-session

Prep Time

demo topics

Class Time

in class exercise, demo