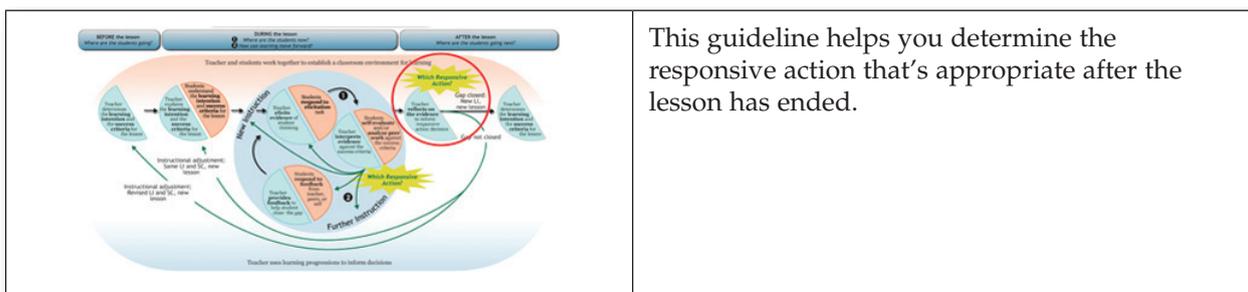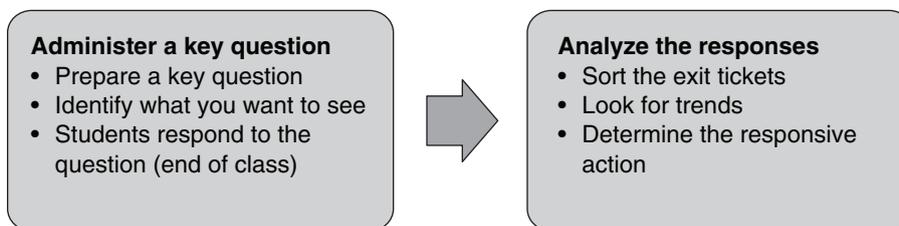# Planning Guideline

Using Exit Tickets as Evidence

■ OVERVIEW

This guideline describes a way to sort exit tickets to inform your work for the next day. See the Exit Ticket Strategy for more information about selecting an effective question for your exit ticket.

Where the Guideline Fits in the Formative Assessment (FA) Cycle

This guideline helps you determine the responsive action that's appropriate after the lesson has ended.

Snapshot

Administer a key question
- Prepare a key question
- Identify what you want to see
- Students respond to the question (end of class)

Analyze the responses
- Sort the exit tickets
- Look for trends
- Determine the responsive action

■ STEPS TO USING EXIT TICKETS AS EVIDENCE

Administer a Key Question

1. **Prepare a key question**

   Before class starts, decide what you would like to ask students by the end of your lesson that captures at least one big idea they need to explain. You may choose to include a skill question on the exit ticket as well, but this guideline focuses on something students need to be able to *understand* and *explain*.

2. **Identify what you want to see**

   Also before class starts, create for yourself an example of a solid response, or at least jot down for yourself a list of phrases, words, or ideas you would want to see in a solid response. You'll use this later.

3. **Students respond**

   Leave 3 to 5 minutes at the end of class for students to silently and individually write their response to your exit ticket question, and collect them as students leave.

Analyze the Responses

4. **Sort the exit tickets**

   Read through the student responses, doing a quick sort as you read them. You don't necessarily need to spend a lot of time going through them thoroughly; just read and do a quick first-impressions sort into three piles:

   o **Solid**: I'm convinced they're on the right track.
   o **Iffy**: they've got parts of it, but they are missing some pieces. (You may want to make 2 piles—correct-but-incomplete versus partly incorrect)
   o **Needs work**: I'm not convinced they really understand this yet.

5. **Look for patterns**

   a) First, go back just through the "solid" pile and do a *quick scan* to see if anything that was included in your sample solid response (from Step 2) is *obviously missing* across most of them. The goal here is to just look for glaring omissions across the whole group, not to assess each student individually.

   b) Next, go back just through the "iffy" pile, again looking for which things from your sample response are the glaring omissions across the whole "iffy" pile.

   c) Last, go through the "needs work" pile, making note of whether there is anything common across *most of them* that you could address with the whole class or a selected group the next day.

6. **Determine your responsive action**

   Decide how you will revisit any of the glaring omissions in your upcoming lessons.

   Ask yourself:

   * *Do they understand well enough that feedback will move their learning forward? Do they all need the same feedback?*
   * *Should another day be spent on the same learning intention, with the same success criteria?*
   * *Do we need to step back and try again with a modified (possibly less ambitious) learning intention or success criteria?*

For example, you might decide to offer feedback to the class at the start of the next lesson before you move on. Or you might start the next day by grouping students into pairs or trios based on how solid they were and asking them to explain the idea to each other in their own words, then collect ideas from the whole class on the board to summarize what they know so far.

■ FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. **What if I don't have time to do this for all my classes?**

   If you are using the exit tickets to look for patterns, then you don't need to look at every single student's exit ticket. You may decide to choose a representative sample (perhaps 10 to 12, or 15 to 20) of your students who you feel are indicative of the spectrum you have across all your classes, and do the sort with them. Or you may decide to just look at one class's tickets. Although not all classes have the same needs, the patterns you see from one class may often be common to other classes as well

2. **When I look at the "needs work" pile, their mistakes and gaps span everything we worked on; there's not really a single thing that rises to the top for all or most of them. Now what?**

   This is still useful information for you. If the "needs work" group is a few of your students, then some individualized extra help may be in order.

   If this group is most of the class, then some other approach to the lesson is needed. You might consider starting the next day with a short discussion with the class of what a solid response on the exit ticket would have included. You can use this discussion to help them understand better what successful work would look like or sound like. Maybe give them a few minutes to then write down a question they have or a statement of something they don't understand; collect the responses (without names); redistribute them randomly to the students; and then have students read for the class what's in front of them. You can scribe what they say and generate a class list of what you'll try to address today (or in the next few days) as part of the lesson.