

Exit Ticket Strategy

The **Exit Ticket Strategy** is a commonly used strategy for getting a dipstick measure of where students' understanding is at the conclusion of a lesson. Exit tickets can provide a wealth of information in a short period of class time. While they are quick and easy to implement, making careful choices about how to focus the exit ticket can improve the value of the information a teacher gathers.

Particular Advantages

- Quick and easy to implement; can be adapted to many of the questions you want to ask
- Can be a valuable way to elicit evidence of the conceptual learning in the lesson
- Easily provides information both on individual students or for the class as a whole

How Does the Strategy Work?

1. The teacher selects a key question to pose to students at the end of a chunk of instruction and prepares it on a handout for students to write individual responses.
2. During the final 5 minutes of class time, students are given time to write their response, and they turn in the exit ticket as they are leaving class.

How Does the Strategy Support Formative Assessment?

Eliciting and interpreting evidence

- Teachers can gather very targeted information about a particular success criterion or some element of the learning intention. Exit tickets can be particularly useful in gathering evidence of students' understanding of the concepts in the lesson.

Learning intentions and success criteria

- The exit ticket highlights a selected success criterion or some part of the learning intention and can thus reiterate for students in another way what the important learning is for the lesson.

Student ownership and involvement

- With regular use, students grow accustomed to articulating and sharing their mathematical thinking and see the exit ticket as a way to share information with the teacher that will influence subsequent instruction.

What Are Some Considerations for Using the Strategy?

When using the exit ticket strategy, be sure to provide ample time for students to respond to the prompt. If students feel rushed, especially if they learn to expect this, they will no longer take time to clearly articulate their thinking.

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How Do You Decide What to Ask in an Exit Ticket?—Some Suggested Guidelines

- **Focus on conceptual understanding that was important in the lesson.** You can check skills easily in a variety of ways (often characterized in success criteria that ask students to demonstrate a skill), but it's harder to get an individual read on how each student is reasoning about the big understandings (often characterized in success criteria that ask students to explain or describe). Make the best of your exit ticket opportunity!
- **Don't try to assess everything from the lesson in one exit ticket.** The exit ticket is not intended as a quiz on the entire lesson. Keeping your prompt brief and focused on one piece of evidence you want to gather can provide plenty of information to help you plan your subsequent instruction.
- **Consider what would help you make a decision about the appropriate focus for the next lesson.** An important purpose of an exit ticket can be to help shed light on *how students are making sense* of the instruction they received. Focus your exit ticket prompt on something that helps you to learn about where students are relative to the lesson's success criteria or to think about the learning intention and success criteria for upcoming lessons.
- **Vary the kinds of prompts you use.** For example, exit tickets can
 - focus on a particular concept that you want to know about:
 - Explain in your own words why we need common denominators when adding fractions.
 - provide information more broadly about what students are taking away from the lesson:
 - List what you think are the three most important ideas that we talked about today, in your own words.
 - invite students to respond to sample student work:
 - *Look at the example of student work shown here. Do you agree with the student's response and reasoning? Why or why not? Show or explain your reasons.*

Related FACTs (Formative Assessment Classroom Techniques)¹

- 29: *Look Back* (p. 121)
- 33: *Muddiest Point* (p. 132)
- 43: *Point of Most Significance* (p. 155)
- 56: *Ten-Two* (p. 183)
- 57: *Thinking Log* (p. 185)
- 62: *3-2-1* (p. 194)
- 67: *Two-Minute Paper* (p. 204)

¹From *Mathematics Formative Assessment: 75 Practical Strategies for Linking Assessment, Instruction and Learning* (2011) by Keeley and Tobey

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