

### Checking for Understanding Workshop

1. Go beyond simply asking, “Any questions?”
2. Check for understanding frequently
3. Check for understanding in a variety of ways
4. Avoid Yes/No questions or overusing “Okay?” or “Right?”

#### START OF CLASS CHECK-IN

- **Entrance Tickets:** Ask students to prepare a discussion question, write down topics they want to review, or compile a list of the most challenging homework problems
- **Entrance Poll or Survey:** Use GoogleDocs/ Poll Everything/ a paper survey to ask students which topics or readings they want to review during that section
- **Partner Check-in:** Ask students to talk to the person next to them about how the course, unit, or week is going and have each pair report out with highlights or concerns
- **3-Minute Notes Review:** Give students three minutes at the start of class to look over their notes and ask everyone to share out one takeaway or one question

#### A HELPFUL FLOW FOR INCREASING UNDERSTANDING

Help students access their prior knowledge about a topic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask students to review their notes, discuss the previous lecture, review a familiar idea or term</li> </ul>
Introduce the new topic, idea, or exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain how the new topic is similar/different</li> <li>• State learning objective + why it's important</li> </ul>
Model or explain the new topic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Break the process down into clear steps, verbalize your thought process, use visuals</li> </ul>
Do guided practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain steps in words + increase participation</li> <li>• After each answer, ask "how?" or "why?"</li> </ul>
Observe independent or group practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Circulate, observe, do individual re-teaching as necessary, identify patterns of error to discuss</li> </ul>
End with reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have multiple students restate the main takeaway + name significance or application</li> </ul>

**QUICK IN-CLASS CHECK-INS**

- **Develop non-verbal signals:** Thumbs up/down/middle, hold up 1 to 5 fingers
- **Stop and jot:** Have all students write a response (ex. think of two examples of the concept we discussed, predict an outcome, write when or why you'd use this approach)
- **Pause and summarize notes or discussion so far:** Bonus: Have multiple students read out their short summaries
- **Whip around:** Have all students share one word, one a-HA! moment, or one question
- **I-clicker /phone apps:** Do quick content checks or capture self-reported understanding

**IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES**

- **Quiz:** Have students complete graded or self-graded quizzes. Alternately, have students write potential quiz questions and swap them with a classmate
- **Application:** Once students indicate that they understand an idea, ask them to discuss when/where they would use the concept or ask them to apply the idea to a new situation
- **Comparison:** Identify similarities and differences between subsequent problems or examples, have students exchange papers with a peer and compare approaches
- **Graphic organizer:** Ask students to display their knowledge in a different form + explain the choices they made to a partner
- **Misconception test:** Share a list of common misunderstandings or misconceptions and ask students to explain whether or not they agree and why
- **Label my steps or fix my error:** Pass out a successful sample paper or completed problem and ask students to label the components or steps. Alternately, pass out a less successful paper or a deliberately incorrect problem and ask students to identify changes
- **Freewrite:** Have students write a response to a reading or challenging discussion question. Bonus: Ask students to share it with a partner or the whole class
- **Visible practice:** Have students work through concepts or problems where you can see the process. For example, ask groups of students to complete problems on the board or type their responses into a shared GoogleDoc that you display on the projector
- **Jigsaw activity:** Students become experts on a certain topic by discussing in groups. Then, have students form new groups with one representative from each original group, and teach the other members about their expert area
- **Metacognitive reflection:** After assignments or papers, have students write about their study or writing processes, their struggles and strengths, and what they plan to work on

**AFTER + BETWEEN CLASS**

- **Use Exit Tickets:** Gather feedback from students as they leave using GoogleDocs or half-sheets (ex. Write one takeaway/one question or answer a challenging problem)
- **Collect questions:** Ask students to add questions or confusing topics to an anonymous GoogleDoc or Gauchospace forum between class sessions. Bonus: Have this forum be student-moderated, where students respond to their classmates' posts

## **OFFICE HOURS**

- Proactively email students who are struggling and invite them to attend scheduled office hours or review sessions
- When students come to office hours, increase your question to statement ratio!
- As students leave, ask them to tell you what they took away from the meeting or what they will do next

### **If you're worried that students won't respond or participate:**

- Get to know your students: learn names and/or use name tents, do icebreakers
- Get students comfortable talking to each other and the class with low-stakes questions
- Cold call or “warm” call on students to participate if no one volunteers
- Allow students to practice their responses by writing about or discussing topics with a partner before sharing with the whole class

