

50 Ways to Check for Understanding in the Virtual Classroom

1. Misconception Check

- Give a common misconception about a topic.
- Ask students to give a green check if they agree or a red x if they disagree.
- Have students explain why they agree or disagree in the Q&A pod.
- Call on a student and ask him/her to use the microphone to explain his/her reasoning.

2. Pick Your Poison

- Write 6 higher-order thinking questions related to the content.
- Create 6 chat pods and place one question in each pod.
- Ask students to select one question and respond to it in the appropriate chat pod.

3. Create a Word Cloud

- Upload the Word Cloud app to a share pod.
- Ask students to each contribute 3 key words from the lesson in the chat pod.
- Copy and paste the words into the app.

4. Collaborate and learn

- Place students in small groups. List the student names in a note pod so they know which group they are in.
- Create a series of chat pods, one for each group, and rename each pod with the group name or number (ex. Group 1, Group 2, etc.).
- Place a question in each chat pod and instruct students to work together to solve the equation or develop an answer.
- Then ask students to circulate through the pods and pose an alternate process, solution, or answer to each question.

5. Superlatives

- Display a series of superlative categories and options (Equation Most Likely to Find Area; Process Most Likely to Produce Energy; etc.)
- Ask students to vote through a poll pod.

6. Summary Poem Activity

- In a note pod, list ten key words from an assigned text or lesson.
- Ask students to compose a free verse poem with the words you listed and share in a chat pod.

7. Rate Understanding

- Have students rate their understanding in a poll pod.
- Don't broadcast the results!

8. The 4 I I

- Describe the objective (author's objective, lesson objective, research objective, etc.) in a short answer pod.

9. Opinion Chart

- As a class, brainstorm opinions about the content in the left column of a T-chart.
- Ask students to raise their hands if they'd like to contribute an opinion. Allow students to use their microphones to verbally offer their opinions.
- Use your Starboard pen to write the student answers in the left column of the T-chart.

- Place a chat pod next to each opinion (in the right column) and ask students to type in their reasoning and support for the opinions shared.

10. Main Idea Check

- List key words from a lesson in a note pod.
- Ask students to write a summary of their learning based on these words and share in a short answer pod. They must use each word in their response.

11. Compare and Contrast

- Identify the theory or idea the author is advancing. Then identify an opposite theory. What are the similarities and differences between these ideas?
- Create a Venn diagram as a PPT or PDF and upload it into a share pod.
- Ask students to raise their hands if they'd like to contribute.
- Give students the pen so they can write on the Venn diagram.

12. Color Cards—Status Symbols

- Red X= "Stop, I need help."
- Green Check= "Keep going, I understand."
- Turtle = "I'm a little confused."

13. So What? Journal

- Identify the main idea of the lesson. Why is it important?
- Share in a short answer pod.

14. Explain Your Solution

- Ask students to describe how they solved an academic problem, step by step, in the chat pod.

15. Offer Another Solution

- After working through a problem, ask students to offer different ways to solve the problem in a specific chat pod.

16. Explain

- Explain the main idea using an analogy.
- Share in a specific chat pod.

17. Evaluate

- What is the author's main point? What are the arguments for and against this idea?
- Create a T-chart. Place a chat pod in each column. Ask students to type their arguments for on the right side and arguments against on the left side.

18. Describe

- What are the important characteristics or features of the main concept or idea of the reading?
- Share answers in a chat pod.

19. Define

- Pick out an important word, phrase, or concept. What does it mean?
- Ask students to provide a quick definition in the Q&A pod.

20. Illustrate

- Give each student a whiteboard.
- Ask each student to illustrate the meaning of a word, phrase, or concept.
- Have students use their microphones to verbally explain their illustrations.

21. Question Stems

- I believe that _____ because _____.
- I was most confused by _____.
- Place these stems in a note pod.

- Ask students share their answers in a specific chat pod.

22. Pod Practice

- Create a share pod for each student (or groups of students if you have more than 15 students).
- Upload a PDF activity to each pod.
- Assign students to pods and give pen rights (or promote all students to presenters).

23. Mind Map

- Create a mind map that represents a concept.
- Give each student a whiteboard or link to a prepared Google Doc.

24. Intrigue Journal

- List the five most interesting, controversial, or resonant ideas you found in the readings or in today's lesson.
- Create 5 chat pods and label each (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th).
- Ask students to type their responses in the corresponding chat pods.
- As a class, identify trends. What was most shocking or interesting? What didn't make the list?

25. Advertisement

- Create a slogan for the newly learned concept.
- Share in the chat pod.

26. 5 Words

- What five words would you use to describe _____?
- Share in a short answer pod.
- Call on students to explain and justify their choices.

27. Muddy Moment

- What frustrates and confuses you about this concept? Why?
- Share in a chat pod.

28. Email

- Explain _____ in a quick email to your best friend.
- Submit answers in the Q&A pod.

29. Talk Show Panel

- Have a cast of experts debate the finer points of _____.
- Make sure everyone has a working microphone!

30. Study Guide

- Upload a study guide to a share pod.
- Place a variety of pods (poll, short answer, chat) over the document, creating one pod for each question.
- Ask students to complete each question by collaborating within the pods. (Which answer in the poll pod got the most votes?; what is the common answer in the short answer and chat pods?)

31. KWL Chart

- What do you know, what do you want to know, and what have you learned?
- Upload a KWL chart to a share pod as a PPT or PDF.
- Place a chat pod in each column.
- Ask students to complete the chart by typing in the appropriate chat pods.

32. 3-2-1

- Three things you found out.
- Two interesting things.

- One question you still have.
- Share in a chat pod.

33. Outline

- Represent the organization of _____ by outlining it in the Q&A pod.

34. Simile

- What we learned today is like _____.
- Share in a short answer pod.

35. The Minute Paper

- In one minute, describe the most meaningful thing you've learned.
- Share in the Q&A pod.

36. Interview You

- You're the guest expert on 60 Minutes. Answer:
 1. What are component parts of _____?
 2. Why does this topic matter?
 3. Share in the Q&A pod.
 4. Call on students to share responses with their microphones.

37. Double Entry Notebook

- Create a two-column table and upload it to a share pod.
- Use the left column to write down 5-8 important quotations (use your Starboard software).
- Use the right column to record reactions to the quotations. Place a chat pod next to each quotation and ask students to type their reactions in each pod.

38. Tagxedo

- What are key words that express the main ideas or steps to remember?
- Share words in a chat pod.
- Call on students to explain.

39. Twitter Post

- Define _____ in under 140 characters.
- Submit answer in the short answer pod.

40. Ballad

- Ask students to summarize their learning in lyrics.
- Have them share their responses in a short answer pod.
- Ask for volunteers to use their microphones to share their ballads.

41. Bio Poem

- To describe a character or person, write a poem that includes:
 - (Line 1) First name
 - (Line 2) 3-4 adjectives that describe the person
 - (Line 3) Important relationship
 - (Line 4) 2-3 things, people, or ideas the person loved
 - (Line 5) Three feelings the person experienced
 - (Line 6) Three fears the person experienced
 - (Line 7) Accomplishments
 - (Line 8) 2-3 things the person wanted to see happen or wanted to experience
 - (Line 9) His or her residence
 - (Line 10) Last name
 - Share in the chat pod. If you have a small group of students, give each student his/her own chat pod.

42. Sketch

- Visually represent new knowledge.
- Give each student a whiteboard (can be done in Breakout Rooms if you have too many students).

43. Top Ten List

- What are the most important takeaways, written with humor?
- Give each student a chat pod to share his/her list or have everyone share in one chat pod.

44. Quickwrite

- Without stopping, write what most confuses you.
- Write in the Q&A pod.

45. Conference

- A short, focused discussion between the teacher and student.
- This can be facilitated in a private chat, the Q&A pod, or in a Breakout Room.

46. Take a count

- Upload the Hands Up app to a share pod.
- Pose a series of questions and use the symbols to represent answer options.
- Ask students to click on their answer (hand, thumbs up, thumbs down, applause, or smiley face).

47. Why are these wrong?

- Provide a series of wrong answers and mistakes.
- Ask students to explain why the answer is wrong or to identify the mistake that was made in the example work.
- Have students share their answers in the chat pod.
- Call on students to use their microphones to explain their reasoning.

48. Take a vote

- Pose a question and have students respond in the chat pod.
- Using a poll pod, have students vote on the best answer.
- Ask the winner to verbally explain his/her reasoning through the microphone.

49. Debrief

- Reflect immediately after an activity.
- Ask students to submit their reflections in the Q&A pod.

50. Exit Slip

- Have students reflect on lessons learned during class.
- Ask them to respond in a short answer or Q&A pod.

