Problem Scenario:

You have just finished grading a test (or paper, presentations, etc.). Your students, as a group, performed much worse than you expected. They all report that they studied hard (prepared, worked, put in effort, etc.), but their performance was not even close to the standard you hoped they would reach.

What might have happened to explain their poor performance?

How can you and your students avoid this kind of "surprise" in the future?

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Classroom Assessment Techniques are anything you do in the classroom to gather information about student learning. CATs are typically designed as efficient activities that do not take much class time – and that allow you to further explain a concept or topic, if lack of understanding is revealed.

Common CATs

Method		Sample Prompt
Minute Paper	Students write a response to a prompt and submit it anonymously (e.g. index card, online survey)	What is the most important thing you learned during class?
Muddiest Point		What is the most confusing concept from today's class?
Directed Paraphrasing	Students develop a response then engage in small or large group discussion (e.g. in person or through a breakout room).	How would you describe <this concept/procedure> in your own words?
Application Card		How can we apply <this principle> in the real world?
Note Comparison		Take 5 minutes to compare your notes with your neighbor(s), clarify things you missed, and identify items your group still doesn't understand.
Self-Assessment Questions	Multiple choice questions targeting students' perceived level of knowledge, skills, and/or experiences (e.g. a quiz given in person or on the learning management system).	How familiar are you with free body diagrams? a. I have never heard of them. b. I have heard of them but I don't know what they are. c. I have heard of them and can explain what they are, but I don't know how to draw them. d. I can explain what they are and I can draw them.
Problem Recognition Tasks	Multiple choice questions asking students to identify the appropriate method to solve a problem (e.g. through a polling platform).	We have learned about methods X,Y,Z. Which of the following methods is the best choice for a problem like this one?

Assessment Flow Example

Learning Goal	Low/No Stakes Assessment 1	Low/No Stakes Assessment 2	Low/No Stakes Assessment 3	Major Assessment
After this module, students should be able to know/do…	Before Module: Students answer a few questions about their conceptual understanding about the material they've reviewed prior to class	During Module: Students answer one or more questions relevant to the day's topic	Following Module: Students complete an assignment practicing the topic of the class	How will students demonstrate mastery of the learning goal?
Students will explain the concept of oppositional academic identity and use it to develop a mentoring strategy.	Students read chapter from Tatum's "Why do all the Black Kids Sit Together in the Cafeteria?" and submit a reading response prior to class. Instructor reads comments, provides feedback and incorporates student responses into the discussion plan.	Students work in small groups to use the concept to oppositional academic identity to analyze a case study. They report out the insights from their deliberation as part of the debrief.	Students develop a mentoring strategy based on the concept of oppositional academic identity and receive feedback. Students implement the strategy as appropriate in their mentoring work and report on the results in their mentoring journal.	Students write an analysis paper in which they select one or more concepts from class to analyze a mentoring challenge that they experienced.

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