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10-24-2010

Instant Assessment: Using Response Systems to Evaluate Student Comprehension in Library Instruction

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Citation Information

Adebonojo, Leslie G.; Campbell, Kathy; and Ellis, Mark. 2010. Instant Assessment: Using Response Systems to Evaluate Student Comprehension in Library Instruction. *Association of Research Libraries, Library Assessment Conference*, Baltimore, MD. <https://www.libraryassessment.org/wp-content/uploads/bm~pix/14.jpg>

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Examples of Questions

These questions are used for freshman orientation and developmental studies classes. For the orientation classes we want the students to become familiar with the library and comfortable coming to the library facility. For the developmental classes, the students are not yet writing papers, but are expected to find one article and one book in the library's databases.



Instant Assessment : Using a Response System to Evaluate Student Comprehension in Library Instruction

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The Process

1. We have one shot to teach students everything they need to know about the library; so we use a preset menu.
2. How can we be sure that they leave with that knowledge? We use clickers during the LI session to verify whether the students get it!
3. The reference librarians decided on the 10 questions we want each student to be able to answer about the library.
-Five questions are asked about the resources after the first 15 minutes of instruction.
-Another five questions are asked about databases and searching after the next 25-30 minutes of instruction.
-We use simple *yes, no*, and *choose one* questions.

4. Instant assessment
-Students get it - you go on with the menu
-Students don't get it



- you fill in the knowledge gap
- review the material
- decide at that point to drop an item from the preset menu



Benefits & Caveats

- Clickers can give students a welcome break from a lecture and professors an opportunity to draw students who "drift off" back into the lesson.
- Your presentation can be modified to directly target the students' needs by using the clickers to calculate their comprehension.
- Since you know the total number of students who have answered the questions, you can move on if 85% of the students answered correctly.
• You can go over the information again if 30-50% answered the questions incorrectly.
- Anonymity allows the librarian to help students get answers without the embarrassment of asking what they might consider "stupid" questions. This can be particularly helpful with ESL students who are often shy about raising questions in class.
- As an instructor, you get a quick visual cue to whether the students are comprehending the information.
- Students are already oriented toward using handheld devices, so the technology doesn't create a problem for them.
- They engage students because they enjoy playing with technology.
- The process of using clickers does take time so instructors have to factor that into their preparation for the sessions.

