



*Committed to Excellence*

## **Kingsway Regional School District**

### **Tips for Assessing in a Virtual Environment**

As we work to transform effective teaching practices from an in-person environment to a virtual one, it is equally as important to acknowledge the need to rethink the way we assess learning. *Teaching remotely requires teachers to be thoughtful about designing assessments that promote both student learning and academic integrity.*

Assessment in a virtual environment should differ from what is normally done in a physical classroom. Administering and proctoring traditional assessments through the use of remote proctoring tools like Zoom, Google Meet, etc. is not encouraged by the District. Instead, we recommend teachers design assessments that mitigate cheating and are designed to provide teachers and students with an assessment of learning.

#### **Formative & Summative Assessments:**

Although there are other types of assessments, like diagnostic and benchmark, revisiting and understanding the two major **types of assessments** used as part of the instruction is important

- **Formative assessment** (assessment for learning) is a process used during instruction that provides useful feedback to “form” your instruction. In other words, assessments that are delivered ‘along the way’ so that necessary changes can be made to help both teachers and students to improve performance.
- **Summative assessments** (assessment of learning) are used to evaluate student learning at the end of a defined instructional period. For example, a high-stakes assessment used to measure overall student performance at the end of a unit, course, semester, etc.

#### **Formative Assessments:**

When implementing formative assessments, *emphasis should be placed on quality, timely, and personalized feedback* provided to students on how to improve their learning. The following are suggestions for formative assessment in a virtual environment.

- **Exit tickets/exit slips:** Students answer one or more questions at the close of a class period or online course module to demonstrate how well they’ve absorbed that particular lesson. Each question should focus on a single concept or skill taught in that lesson.
- **One-minute paper/video:** Students are prompted to write or record a short response answering two questions related to a given week’s course content. These can also be posted in online discussion forums to spur conversation between students. Questions can be as simple as, *What was the most valuable, important, or useful thing you learned in the lesson? What key questions, problems, or issues remain unresolved?*
- **Think-pair-share:** Students work together in pairs or small groups to answer a question or solve a problem related to an assigned reading. These groups can use dedicated chat channels built-in to active learning platforms

to communicate and discuss their ideas. First, the instructor asks a question regarding the text for students to think about. Next, students pair up with one or more fellow students to discuss the question and their thoughts on the possible answers. Finally, each pair or group shares their conclusions with the rest of the class.

- **Directed paraphrasing:** Students take a lesson and paraphrase it with a particular audience in mind. This not only helps to assess a student's understanding of the topic, it also helps to assess their ability to reframe it in a way that people in a different context and setting can likewise understand and apply it.
- Other types of formative assessment include *online discussions, self-assessment or peer assessment according to predefined criteria, practicing key skills for homework, creating a quiz, or engaging in a game or puzzle to check for understanding.*
- For the virtual environment:
  - Click [HERE](#) for samples of formative assessments and how to convert them to virtual learning
  - For Click here to access our [Digital Tools & Tutorials](#), see the Assessment Resources section.

### **Summative Assessments:**

Moving from an in-person, secure assessment to a virtual assessment does not have to compromise authentic assessment opportunities. Even with online assessments, where the formality of the learning environment is not the same as the physical classroom, learning objectives should drive assessment decisions. Depending on your objectives and the purpose of your assessment, there are several ways you can deliver summative assessments in a virtual environment. There is nothing wrong with using an online multiple-choice exam (even one that closely mimics your in-person exam), but you can no longer have the same expectations of a secure, closed-book, in-person exam. You must create an assessment that engages students in the content with the expectation they will use available resources to determine their answers. The following suggestions for assessment may help you encourage academic integrity as you evaluate your students.

- Create **open-book/open-notes assessments**, with questions that assume all students have access to the book or other materials.
- Develop **open-ended, complex questions** that prioritize the thinking you want students to do. Think about questions that are not easy to search for online.
- Consider having students **submit graphs or drawings by taking pictures** of hand-drawn images or by creating them digitally on Excel or another program, then submitting images through Schoology.
- Utilize **different versions** of the same or similar assessment questions.
- Use **online presentations** where students share in an asynchronous forum. This provides an opportunity for students to demonstrate their mastery of a concept or topic.
- Use **case studies** in which students use problem-solving and decision-making skills while engaging with the course content. This provides students with an opportunity to explore different types of resources and various methods of submission (e.g. videos, written text, ppts).
- Implement **journals or blogs** in which students reflect and communicate their understanding or mastery of the content by submitting their evidence of learning in creative ways (e.g. text-based journal, video journal, interactive web-based journal).

**To learn more about using Schoology's Assessment creator for formative or summative assessments, see the following resources:**

- Video: [Schoology Assessments](#)
- Video: Schoology's [Assessment Creator](#) (Question Types)
- Schoology Support: [Grading Schoology Assessments](#)

In summary, a virtual environment provides excellent opportunities for assessment for learning and of learning. However, when assessing learning we need to move away from the traditional methods and focus on student progress through feedback and student assessment through deeper engagement with the material.