CATS
(classroom assessment techniques)

An assessment tool among others

AMICAL 2015 workshop
by Sally Murray,
Jorge Sosa and
Michael Stöpel
of the American University
of Paris
Introduction

• Explain CATs (Classroom Assessment Techniques)
• Basic steps of how to do CATs
• Do 5 CATs
• Wrap up – take questions
What is a CAT? *(What is assessment?)*

**Assessment** – term used to describe ways to measure educational effectiveness

Assessment to know how well a class is going and **how to change it**

CAT is NOT test

Not graded *(usually)*

Usually anonymous

Mutually beneficial to teacher and student
Assessment Types

Institutional Assessment
- overall view
- summative (feedback to compare to others)
- detailed, complex
- example – accreditation assessment

Classroom Assessment Techniques
- context-specific (1 class)
- formative (feedback to improve teaching & learning)
- simple, quick to give (most)
- example – see if a concept is understood by class – find out if students prefer in-class quiz or short essay
What CATs assess

1. Course-related knowledge and skills
   1. Prior knowledge and recall (7)
   2. Skill in analysis and critical thinking (5)
   3. Skill in synthesis and creative thinking (6)
   4. Skill in problem solving (4)
   5. Skill in application and performance (5)

2. Learner attitudes, values, and self-awareness
   1. Students’ awareness of their attitudes and values (5)
   2. Students’ self-awareness as learners (4)
   3. Course-related learning and study skills, strategies, and behaviors (4)

3. Learner attitudes toward instruction
   1. Learner reactions to teachers and teaching (5)
   2. Learner reactions to class activities, assignments, and materials (5)
Steps for CATs (Classroom Assessment Techniques)

1. Plan
   - Topic?
   - Time?
   - Revise

2. Implement
   - Explain why
   - Give time

3. Respond
   - Change
## Defining Features Matrix

**Features**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Features</th>
<th>Mammals</th>
<th>Reptiles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hair/fur</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Produce milk</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live in a variety of places</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ready to survive alone at birth</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scales</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need parent to survive</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warm-blooded</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This CAT requires a two part response:

- Student summarizes text in ONE SINGLE WORD
- Student explains in 3-4 phrases the choice of such words

Both constitute a synopsis of the text.

This CAT requires a feedback from the teacher
Purpose:
1. Focuses on student ability to read carefully & deeply
2. It assesses creativity in summarizing and writing a condensed abstract.
3. It assesses the skills defending a point of view of why THAT ONE WORD.

Teaching goals:
Ability to synthesize ideas, improve memory skills, improve deep reading skills, develop study skills, helps build reading and summarizing habits, develop capacity to think by oneself.
Human tableau or class modeling

CAT 26 – Assessing skill in application and performance

https://stinsonphotography.wordpress.com/

Photography Lesson of Ivan Iannoli (after Rembrandt)
https://stinsonphotography.wordpress.com/
Focused autobiographical sketches

CAT 33 – Assessing Students’ Self-Awareness as Learners

Write a personal statement or an autobiographical essay, such as a self-portrait. This is a 1-2 page essay that provides a self-concept or self-awareness as learner in a specific field.

It might be on a specific successful or difficult experience.
Focused autobiographical sketches

CAT 33 – Assessing skill in synthesis and creative thinking

Purpose:

1. Provides the students’ self-awareness as a learner in a specific field.
2. Gives the teacher a portrait of the various levels of reflection in the group.
3. Gives a picture of where the class is and in order to reorient the class or adapt the level of it and re-set the course objectives realistically.

Teaching goals: develop a commitment to personal achievement, improve self-esteem and confidence, develop a commitment to one’s own values, develop respect for others, develop a capacity to make wise decisions
Let’s get started again

Thinking about today’s workshop, please answer the five questions on the hand out
Share my experience with RSQC2s
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Freshman level</th>
<th>Graduate level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Topic of class</strong></td>
<td><strong>Introduction to finding general information for a research project</strong></td>
<td><strong>Researching for a Literature Review</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How many library sessions?</strong></td>
<td><strong>Three sessions during the semester</strong></td>
<td><strong>One class session + one library visit in the same week</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RSQC2

CAT 46 – Assessing learner reactions to class activities, assignments, and materials

recall

summarize

question

connect

comment
Your turn again!
Turning collected data into useful information
Informing my teaching - some thoughts

• Re-emphasis a couple of things in Graduate Class
• Some of them understand, some don’t – how come?
• Different sum up of what we covered – how come?
• My Freshman did well – I did a good job (true or are they too shy to ask questions?)
• Freshman class easier ?!
RSQC2

My feedback – improving learning

• Two collective emails
  • Where to begin?
• Example of lit review
• Feedback email to professor
• Informal feedback during library visit three days later + hand outs
Other feedback options – closing the gap

• Compile their questions and send the answers back as a group email.
• Have participants share their questions, comments, and "connections" with each other in class.
• Instructor addressing the questions in class (anonymize the questions).
• Post questions to an online discussion board and have students post their own answers/strategies.
Wrap up

Fifty Cats – by Julia Marshall
https://juliamarshall.wordpress.com/art-prints/50-cats/
CATs (classroom assessment techniques) – an assessment tool among others


Thank you for your participation today.

We appreciate being a part of your AMICAL 2015 in Bulgaria!

Please contact us for questions or to continue discussing CATs!
Sally Murray  smurray@aup.edu
Jorge Sosa  jsosa@aup.edu
Michael Stöpel  mstoepe@uup.edu