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Category | Formative Assessment

The Ultimate List – 65 Digital Tools and Apps to Support Formative Assessment Practices

There is no shortage of strategies, techniques, and tools available to teachers (and students) who use formative instructional practice in their classrooms. We've compiled an extensive list of 65 digital tools, apps, and platforms that can help teachers use formative assessment to elicit evidence of student learning.

These tools and apps for formative assessment success give teachers (and students) many options and opportunities for classroom success. To get the most out of formative instructional strategies, check out our NWEA® [formative practices workshops](#). You'll gain a better understanding of the role formative practice plays within your instruction and about the four foundational practices to use in the classroom.

And, share your tools, ideas, and thoughts with us, so we can keep this list growing and current! You can tweet me directly [@kdyer13](#).



- **AnswerGarden** – A tool for online brainstorming or polling, educators can use this real-time tool to see student feedback on questions.
- **Animoto** – Gives students the ability to make a short, 30-second share video of what they learned in a given lesson.
- **Answer Pad** – A graphical student response system with the ability to poll and leave feedback. The blank pad functions like an individual whiteboard for each student.
- **AudioNote** – A combination of a voice recorder and notepad that captures both audio and notes for student collaboration.
- **Backchannel Chat** – (Now MasteryConnect Student.) Like TodaysMeet, this site offers a teacher-moderated version of Twitter. An extension of the in-the-moment conversation might be to capture the chat, create a tag cloud, and see what surfaces as a focus of the conversation.
- **Biblionasium** – This online, safe, and simple book network allows teachers to view books students have read (a digital reading log), create reading challenges for students, and track progress. Students also can review and recommend books to their peers on the site.
- **BookSnap** – While currently this app is only available for iOS, it truly provides a digital way for learners to interact with text and with other learners.
- **Bunce** – A creation and presentation tool that helps students and teachers visualize, communicate, and engage with classroom concepts and ideas.
- **Chatzy** – Use Chatzy like you would use TodaysMeet to support backchannel conversations in a private setting. These live chats make great companions to classroom discussion, provide exit tickets, or keep a discussion going after the class is over.
- **ClassKick** – This app allows teachers to post assignments for students, so both the teacher and peers can provide feedback on the assignment. Students can monitor their progress and work.
- **Coggle** – A mind-mapping tool designed to understand student thinking.
- **Conceptboard** – This software facilitates team collaboration in a visual format – similar to mind mapping, but using visual and textual inputs. Compatible on tablets and PCs, Conceptboard can work from multiple devices.
- **Dotstorming** – A whiteboard app that allows digital sticky notes to be posted and voted on. This tool is best for generating class discussion and brainstorming on different topics and questions.
- **Educreations Interactive Whiteboard** – A whiteboard app that provides students the tool to share understanding and comprehension.
- **Five Card Flickr** – Designed to foster visual thinking, this tool uses the tag feature from photos in Flickr.
- **Flipgrid** – This tool has been recently updated. Students can use 15-second to 5-minute videos to respond to prompts; teachers and peers can provide feedback.
- **ForAllRubrics** – This software is free for all teachers and allows you to import, create, and score rubrics on your iPad, tablet, or smartphone. You can collect data offline with no internet access, compute scores automatically, and print or save the rubrics as a PDF or spreadsheet.
- **Formative** – This online, all-student response system provides teachers the opportunity to assign activities to students, receive the results in real time, and then provide immediate feedback to students.
- **Formative Feedback for Learning** – An iPad app that is designed to foster and encourage communication between students and teachers. Through a conference setting, it uses icons to

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The Ultimate List
65 Digital Tools &
Apps to Support

prompt discussions.

- **Google Forms** – A Google Drive app that allows you to create documents that students can collaborate on in real time using smartphones, tablets, and laptops.
- **GoSoapBox** – Free for less than 30 students, this all-student response system works with the Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) model, so no charge for a clicker. One of the most intriguing features for me is the Confusion Meter.
- **iBrainstorm** – An iPad app that allows students to collaborate on projects using a stylus or their finger on screen.
- **Kahoot** – A game-based classroom response system, where teachers can create quizzes using internet content.
- **Kaizena** – An online tool for providing students with real-time feedback on their digitally-uploaded work. Teachers can highlight or speak to give verbal feedback and attach teacher-created, reusable resources to student work.
- **Lino** – A virtual corkboard of sticky notes so students can provide questions or comments on their learning. These can be used like exit tickets or during the course of a lesson.
- **Mentimeter** – Allows you to use mobile phones or tablets to vote on any question a teacher asks, increasing student engagement.
- **Naiku** – Teachers can easily and quickly create quizzes that students can answer using their mobile devices. Great for checking for understanding before and after a lesson.
- **Nearpod** – This tool is nice in that you can not only gather evidence of student learning, like an all-student response system, but you can also create differentiated lessons based on the data you collected. The basic version (30 students or less) is free.
- **Observe** – Create surveys, polls, and questionnaires quickly and easily.
- **Padlet** – Provides an essentially blank canvas for students to create and design collaborative projects. Great for brainstorming.
- **Pear Deck** – Plan and build interactive presentations that students can participate in via their smart device. Limited free usage, and it offers unique question types.
- **Peergrade** – A platform that allows teachers to create assignments and upload rubrics. Students upload work and are anonymously assigned peer work to review according to the rubric.
- **Piazza** – A platform that allows teachers to upload lectures, assignments, and homework; pose and respond to student questions; and poll students about class content. This tool is better suited for older students as it mimics post-secondary class instructional formats.
- **Pick Me!** – An easy to use app for an iPod, iPad, or iPhone that facilitates random student selection. Can be organized by class for convenience.
- **PlayPosit** – An interactive video and assessment tool that allows teachers to add formative assessment features (pauses and questions) to survey what students know about the topic. Teachers choose from a library of video content from popular sites such as YouTube, Vimeo, and others.
- **Plickers** – Allows teachers to collect real-time formative assessment data without the need for student devices. Perfect for the one-device classroom.
- **PollDaddy** – Quick and easy way to create online polls, quizzes, and questions. Students can use smartphones, tablets, and computers to provide their answers, and information can be culled for reports.
- **Poll Everywhere** – Teachers can create a feedback poll or ask questions. Students respond in various ways, and teachers see the results in real-time. With open-ended questions, you can capture data and spin up tag clouds to aggregate response. There is a limit to the number of users.
- **ProProfs** – Build and test knowledge with quick quizzes, polls, and surveys.
- **RabbleBrowser** – An iPad app that allows a leader to facilitate a collaborative browsing experience.
- **RealtimeBoard** – Teachers can invite students and collaborate with the whole class in real-time.
- **Remind** – A free tool that allows teachers to text students and stay in touch with parents. A great ‘check for understanding’ tool that’s easy to use.
- **The Queue** – Free educational chat tool that mirrors Twitter and allows teachers to post questions and students to respond via the thread. Students can respond via text or video, and the tool allows “journeys” in which teachers introduce a topic via video and connect students to participating resources. Great for gathering formative assessment data at the beginning, middle, or end of units.
- **Quia** – Teachers can create games, quizzes, surveys, and more, and access a database of existing quizzes from other educators.
- **QuickVoice Recorder** – Another free voice recording app for the iPhone or iPad that allows you to record classes, discussions, or other project audio files. You can sync your recordings to your computer easily for use in presentations.
- **Quizlet** – Create flashcards, tests, quizzes, and study games that are engaging and accessible online and via a mobile device.
- **Random Name/Word Picker** – This tool allows the teacher to input a class list and facilitates random name picking. You can also add a list of keywords and use the tool to have the class prompt a student to guess the word by providing definitions.
- **Seesaw** – This tool helps teachers improve parent communication and makes formative assessment easy, while students can use the platform to document their learning.
- **ShowMe Interactive Whiteboard** – Another whiteboard tool that students and teachers can use to check understanding.
- **SMART Response VE** (for SMARTboards) – A cloud-based software that enables students to respond to planned and spontaneous questions and take quizzes using any of their favorite Internet-enabled devices, from anywhere.
- **Socrative** – Exercises and games that engage students using smartphones, laptops, and tablets.
- **Tagul** – This word cloud generator has an added feature that allows the user to make each word an active link to connect to a website you determine.
- **Tagxedo** – A tag cloud generator that allows you to examine student consensus and facilitate dialogue.
- **TitanPad** – This unique tool for collaborative work offers 8 colors to choose from so that each contributor may use a different color. You can easily imagine how group work, be it peer review or peer editing for starters, can be made interactive.
- **Today'sMeet** – This online collaboration tool allows educators to create a “room” in which students can share ideas, answers, and thoughts to lectures and lessons. Educators can view student responses in real time for evidence of learning.
- **Triventy** – A free quiz game platform that allows teachers to create quizzes students take in real-time. These live quizzes provide teachers with real-time data on student understanding of classroom

Apps to Support
Formative
Instructional
Practice

#edchat
#formativeassessment

nwea



concepts. Students need individual devices to respond to quiz questions (compatible with mobile devices and laptops).

- **Verso** – Described as a feedback tool, this app allows teachers to set up learning using a URL. Space is provided for directions. Students download the app and input their responses to the assignment. They can then post their comments and respond to the comments of others. The teacher can group responses and check engagement levels.
- **VoiceThread** – Allows you to create and share conversations on documents, diagrams, videos, pictures, or almost anything. This facilitates collaborative student discussion and work.
- **Vocaroo** – A free service that allows users to create audio recordings without the need for software. You can easily embed the recording into slide shows, presentations, or websites. Great for collaborative group work and presentations.
- **Voxer** – Consider using this voice recording tool as a way to let students listen and self assess their ideas and assignments. You can send recordings to parents so they can hear how their students are doing, let students chat about their work, or provide feedback to students.
- **Wordables** – The Word Cloud Guessing Game. This app allows you to elicit evidence of learning or determine background knowledge about a topic. These word clouds are pictures composed of a cloud of smaller words that form a clue to the topic.
- **Wordle** – Generates tag clouds from any entered text to help aggregate responses and facilitate discussion.
- **WordSalad** – This app generates word clouds from the text you provide, and they can be exported and shared.
- **XMind** – A mind-mapping software for use on computers and laptops.
- **Yacapaca!** – Allows teachers to create and assign quizzes with ease.



There are many Twitter chats related to formative instructional practices that could be considered tools, as well. One that is exceptionally lively and focused is regularly hosted by David Kwan (@davidwkwan) and Rachelle Dene Poth (@Rdene915) Monday evenings at 4:30 p.m. PT at #formativechat. I often tweet about formative instructional practices and you can follow me @kdye13.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Kathy Dyer is Manager of Innovation and Learning, Professional Learning at NWEA. Kathy has more than 25 years in education, many spent designing and facilitating learning opportunities for educators. Coaching teachers and school leadership on getting better at what they do is her passion. Follow Kathy on Twitter at @kdye13 or read her blogs here on Teach. Learn. Grow.

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