Classroom assessment ...

- Is about finding out how students think
- Gauges student understanding and identifies misconceptions confusions
- Is in the service of student learning and integrated daily into teaching
- Can be used to make teaching decisions (immediate and long-term)

Assessment questions can be used to ...

- Increase student interest in the topic at hand (Engagement)
- Collect information on what students already know about a topic (Pre-assessment)
- Guide students through a laboratory investigation or problem set (Scaffolding)
- Check for understanding midway through a lecture or lesson (Mid-assessment)
- Push students to think about what they already know and what they are learning (Meta-cognition)
- Probe what students have learned at the end of a lesson (Post-assessment)
- Quiz or examine students on what they have learned (Evaluation/Grading)

(1) Asking Higher Order Questions

Goals:
- Moving towards application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation questions
- Moving away from knowledge and comprehension questions.

Bloom’s Taxonomy

Knowledge Questions: Student remember and recall factual information

Comprehension Questions: Students demonstrate understanding of ideas

Application Questions: Student apply information to unfamiliar situations

Analysis Questions: Students break ideas down into parts

Synthesis Questions: Students transform ideas into something new

Evaluation Questions: Students think critically and defend a position

(2) Asking Open-Ended Questions:

Goals: Moving away from closed-ended questions and towards open-ended questions.

Close-ended questions: elicits responses that yes, no, or a single word.
  Often begin with is, does, do, can should, could, etc.
- Is your brain bigger if you're smarter?
- Is a virus alive?
- Can scientists classify living things into kingdoms?

Open-ended questions: elicit responses that are longer than a single word or explanatory.
  Often begins with how, what, describe, share, etc.
- How does brain size relate to how smart an animal is?
- What do you think makes a virus alive or not alive?
If you were in charge of classifying living things, how would you decide what things were grouped together?

(3) Asking Divergent Questions

Goal: Moving away from convergent questions and towards divergent questions.

Convergent questions: elicit responses that allow for one or a few answers that are correct. Often begins with what, who, when, where, etc.
- What is a neuron?
- What are the steps in the life cycle of a virus?
- What are the six kingdoms of living things?

Divergent questions: elicit responses that allow for many type of answers that may or may not be correct. Often begins with how, describe, share, etc.
- Describe neurons and how they work?
- Share what you know about how viruses reproduce and share what’s still confusing to you?
- Discuss the different ways that scientists have tried to classify living things?