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12 Best Practices Student Response Systems

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Student Response Systems (SRS) can be instrumental in ensuring that students are engaged, and in providing continuing formative evaluation of how well students are learning the material. SRS are flexible and can be used with large groups all at once, with small groups working collaboratively, or with individual students. When used with a carefully designed pedagogy, SRS can provide immediate observable outcomes in student performance. The following are selected best practices for helping to ensure the successful use of SRS.

These guidelines have proven useful when using SRS in the classroom:

1. Remember that the primary use of SRS should be for formative assessment. Increasing opportunities to evaluate student performance allows real-time adjustment of instruction.
2. Include only those questions that are pertinent to the targeted student learning outcomes; questions that are arbitrary or irrelevant should not be used.
3. Integrate questions throughout the lesson so that student understanding can be evaluated frequently and regularly. Leaving all questions until the end of the lesson does not allow for changing the instruction along the way.
4. Endeavor to write questions that target some of higher-level skills described by Bloom's Taxonomy (Pear et al, 2001). Multiple-choice questions are not restricted to low-level skills, if written properly.
5. When working on new skill acquisition, include enough questions with novel examples to ensure that students are getting sufficient practice and generalization opportunities.
6. Be careful not to give away an answer through irrelevant cues, such as a pattern of correct answers or the wording of the question.
7. If you include items in which the student must identify the answer that does NOT belong, write the word "NOT" in all capital letters and in bold, so that it is as clear as possible.
8. Ensure that the correct answer is clearly the best one, but do use plausible distracters. The point is not to trick the learners. The point is to use the questions to evaluate the instruction the learners have received.
9. When using Vote-Discuss-ReVote methods in class, do not show graphs of student response distribution following the first vote in order to avoid biased response shifting.
10. Make sure you review and analyze the data after the class is over. By examining the patterns of what worked and what did not, you can improve the instruction for next time!
11. If you want to increase attendance in your class, use the SRS daily.
12. Be willing to throw out or re-grade questions that are unclear.



To learn about Mimio's SRS, MimioVote™ assessment, visit mimio.com/SRS.



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