



Knowledge Checks for Performance Evaluation

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Learning Objective: The student will be able to describe how knowledge checks can be used throughout a training course.

Knowledge checks are nothing more than short assessments to determine if students are grasping the content of the material. These assessments can be graded (*summative*, which determine how much has been learned) or nongraded (*formative*, which support learning during the training process by identifying problematic units, lessons, or material within lessons when a majority of students are struggling). The results are used to identify weak areas in the instructional methods and modify instruction to make improvements.

For a training specialist, designer, or design team, knowledge checks can serve several valuable purposes:

- As a grading tool, these checks do not need much time, providing a quick evaluation that can also be designed for students to complete as individuals, with a partner, or in a group.
- Short checks take little time, allowing retakes which offer students the highest grade possible, with a bonus of added exposure to the material.
- In a short training class (e.g., 2 days), these checks provide an additional means of grading that will combine with a final test, exam, or project to produce a legitimate end-of-course grade. They might be used at the end of each unit or at the end of each lesson if there are a limited number of units.
- Knowledge checks can also be used to ensure all learning outcomes are being addressed. Develop the checks while designing the training, and make sure all objectives are met along the way.

Types of Knowledge Checks

- simple, verbal question and answer exercises in the classroom;
- short/extended answer or multiple choice questions;
- quizzes with 5–10 identification questions;
- projects (provide assessment measures to students in advance); and/or
- homework exercises.

Knowledge checks can be a useful tool from the early stages of designing training through the delivery of the material in a classroom. They identify problems within the composition, structure, or delivery of the material, motivate students to keep up with their learning of the material, and provide additional assessment opportunities for short training programs.



Knowledge checks are an essential part of any training program to verify that learning objectives are met.