

How do we know when students understand?

The purpose of this tool is to develop a way of determining when students understand, are unsure, or have no idea about what is being explored in their classroom.



Consider the following assessment approach by *Black & Wiliam, Working Inside the Black Box*:

The teacher is exploring a new topic with the class and wants feedback on student understanding at key points in the lesson.

- During the teacher's explanation there are a number of times when they would like to check student understanding
- Students are aware of the traffic light symbols for understanding:
 - i. Green for complete understanding**
 - ii. Orange for partial understanding**
 - iii. Red for little or no understanding**
- At key points the teacher pauses in the lesson to ask students to indicate their understanding by choosing a traffic light colour. Students may raise their hand, nod their head or hold up a coloured card.
- The teacher is now in a position to re-explain to some students and scaffold the learning in a different way.
- Students feel empowered and are able to ask questions to support their understanding when they are not sure.

How will this formative assessment tool help you in your current classroom program?

Assessment is the ongoing process of gathering, analysing and reflecting on evidence to make informed and consistent judgements to improve future student learning.

Assessment for learning occurs when teachers use inferences about student progress to inform their teaching.

Assessment as learning occurs when students reflect on and monitor their progress to inform their future learning goals.

Assessment of learning occurs when teachers use evidence of student learning to make judgements on student achievement against goals and standards.