



9. Mini whiteboards

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What's the idea?

Mini whiteboards are an instant formative assessment tool that allow teachers to engage with the thinking, understanding and progress of all students at once.

What does it mean?

Coupled with erasable pens, mini whiteboards are simple and effective learning tools. They allow students to record and share their thinking, and teachers to instantly check pupils' understanding.

They are most commonly given to all students. You ask them to record their responses to a shared question and on cue ('1-2-3 show me!'), students hold up their whiteboard to show their answer to the teacher and the class.

Mini whiteboards allow for a range of response formats, ensure participation from all students and encourage students to forego neatness in favour of risk-taking. Teachers can also use the responses to determine what learning should come next.

What are the implications for teachers?

Act immediately: you can use the information gathered to give instant feedback and ask follow-up questions. You can ask students to justify correct answers, for example asking, 'How did you get there?' and, 'What was your thought process?'

You can also challenge incorrect answers, for example by asking, 'Can you explain where you went wrong?' This is a great source of reciprocal feedback. Look out for common misconceptions and unexpected

answers which can prove useful when consolidating learning.

You could combine mini whiteboards with 'Think-Pair-Share' so that students work with partners to write an answer before sharing their joint response with the teacher or class. Allow students to use the whiteboard to admit that they don't know or are stuck; this, too, is vital feedback.

To make this strategy effective, school leaders should make mini whiteboards easily accessible – ideally each teacher/classroom should have their own set so that they can be used spontaneously and embedded into everyday

TOP TIP / Ensure that whiteboards and markers are part of the normal classroom routine and lesson equipment; students should see them as an essential tool, not a novelty or a bore.

Want to know more?

Sherrington, T. (2012) *The Number 1 Bit of Classroom Kit: Mini Whiteboards*. Available at: <https://teacherhead.com/2012/08/28/the-number-1-bit-of-classroom-kit-mini-whiteboards/>

