INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES



Sticky Bars

This strategy quickly assesses students' ideas concerning a concept or question and can be used as either formative or summative assessment (but is most appropriate for a formative assessment). Sticky Bars helps students see that there is often a range of opinions concerning a concept.

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STICKY BARS

Summary

Students are presented with a question and choose their response from a selection of answers. They record their answers on sticky notes. They then attach them to a board or wall. The sticky notes will create a bar graph that shows the opinion of the class in a readable way. A discussion follows. This activity can replace the use of clickers or other class survey technology.

Procedure

1. Present students with a question.
2. A selection of answers are listed on a board or wall (or an unlabeled space can be designated for each answer during step four). Students can generate these answers or the teacher can supply answers to select from.
3. Each student writes one answer on the front of a sticky note with their reasoning written on the back.
4. Students place sticky notes in their answer's designated space on a board or wall, creating a real-time bar graph of answers. For the best sticky bar visual, ensure that students place these answers side by side, creating lines of sticky notes that each have the same answer.
5. Students participate in a whole-class discussion using the information shown by the bar graph created by the sticky notes. Student reasoning listed on the back of the sticky notes can be used to gather information about students' thinking and can be used to uncover and address misconceptions.

Keeley, P. (2008). Science formative assessment: 75 practical strategies for linking assessment, instruction, and learning. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, SAGE.