

# Assessing Understanding

(Adapted from the UW Institute for Clinical and Translational Research)

## Assessing understanding is important because it:

- 1) reveals misunderstandings while knowledge and skills are forming thus allowing the assessor to provide reinforcing or corrective feedback.
- 2) contributes to learning by encouraging students to reflect on their own work, how they are doing, and what they need to work on.

## Strategies for assessing understanding include:

1. Reflect on any assumptions you have made about your learner's current knowledge.
2. Ask your learner to explain their results and how they got to those results in their own words.
3. Ask the learner to explain their work or results to another lab member.
4. Ask your learner to create a flowchart, diagram, concept map or other visualization.
5. Ask questions to encourage reflection on their own thinking processes (meta-cognition). For example,
  - a. How did you come to that conclusion? What evidence supports it?
  - b. What experience or literature made you choose that course of action?
  - c. Can you illustrate your thinking process on this project?

## Reference

Mentors: Supporting Learning and Assessing Understanding. UW Institute for Clinical and Translational Research. Accessed February 24, 2025.

<https://ogefacultymentoring.web.unc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/11490/2016/03/MENTORS-SUPPORTING-LEARNING-AND-ASSESSING-UNDERSTANDING.pdf>