

Using Critical Incident Questionnaires (CIQs) to Foster Critical Reflection and Formative Assessment--simplified with Google Forms

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In [Becoming a Critically Reflective Teacher](#) Stephen Brookfield explains his use of Critical Incident Questionnaires (CIQs) to gather weekly feedback from his students--in particular, about moments when they felt especially engaged or dis-engaged from the learning experience. His original method involved the use of [carbon paper](#) (remember that?) to give students a copy of their anonymous feedback, which they would save and use to reflect on their overall learning process. The original copies would be gathered and reviewed by Brookfield, and he would use them to facilitate ongoing conversations with his students regarding crucial moments of insight or confusion as well as ongoing patterns in their learning community.

During [our longitudinal study of confusion and engagement in college writing classes](#), Amy Rupiper Taggart and I experimented with alternative ways to phrase questions within the Critical Incident Questionnaire in order to help students identify and articulate critical incidents as well as potential instances of integrative learning--connections to other courses in their university curriculum. Since that time, I've continued to experiment with different approaches to the CIQ, including the use of Google Forms to capture student responses and to make those responses visible to the entire class. By sharing a link to the form you can permit students to respond anonymously while retaining access to their original response and, if you wish, those of everyone else in class. The following templates can help you get started with your own CIQ experimentation. Remember that these weekly questionnaires are also a great way to reflect on your own teaching and learning experiences during class. I encourage you to complete them along with your students and to use them in your teaching portfolio for ongoing critical reflection.

[CIQ Template - Wording modified from Brookfield's original](#)

[CIQ Template - Using Brookfield's original wording](#)

Quick tips:

- If you are planning to use a CIQ in more than one course, modify the heading of your form so that it includes your course title and section number; e.g.: [ENGL 1113.30 - FA2015].
- Make a fresh copy of the form for each time you plan to collect data, and update the title accordingly (e.g., Week 1, Week 2). Note that when you click "Share" Google gives you the option of generating a short link that is simpler to email or publish for student access.

Works Cited:

Brookfield, Stephen D. *Becoming a Critically Reflective Teacher*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1995.

Hessler, H. Brooke and Amy Rupiper Taggart. "What's Stalling Learning? Using A Formative Assessment Tool to Assess Critical Incidents in Class. *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*. 5.1. 2011. Available at:
<http://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/ij-sotl/vol5/iss1/9>

Any questions?

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