

Cool Tools for Online Assessment

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In this “Cool Tools” installment, we will explore some tools that can be used for diagnostic, formative, and summative assessment in the online environment. We want to remember that assessment is not that task that we do a couple of times in a semester for marks; rather, it is ongoing, varied, and explained. When we adopt the idea of varied assessment, we are aligning with the principles of Universal Design for Learning and the principal of multiple means of action and expression. The principle guides us to understand that multiple means of action and expression provide opportunities to demonstrate competency in a variety of different ways. Low risk diagnostic and formative assessments can reduce student stress about learning from 'errors.' Frequently integrating assessment into our classes provides scaffolding to summative assessment.

These days, we may be struggling with all the new information and possibilities that we can use in our online environments. So, as you read about these cool tools, adopt the idea of Thomas Tobin. In his book *Reach Everyone, Teach Everyone: Universal Design for Learning in Higher Education*, he encourages us to “+1”; just try 1 new idea that you think will have the best impact for your classes. Let’s explore!

Diagnostic Assessment

Diagnostic assessment helps us take the pulse of what our students already know! Consider using [Mentimeter*](#) with Seneca’s site license. Mentimeter has polls, multiple-choice questions, image selections, short-answer questions, and more, and is discussed further in a spotlight article in this newsletter (learn more about [Mentimeter at Seneca](#) in the article in this issue). Some faculty like the simplicity of a tool like [AnswerGarden](#) to quickly check in with students regarding a topic.

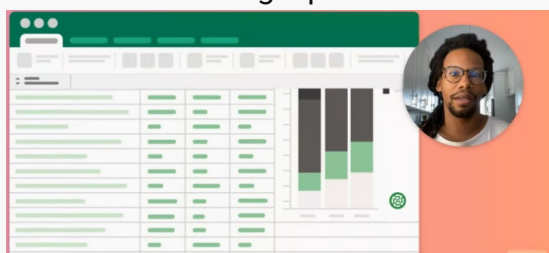
A screenshot of the AnswerGarden web application. At the top, there is a dark blue header bar with the text "AnswerGarden" and a small icon of two people. Below the header, the main question is displayed: "What are tools you use for quick polls?". Underneath the question is a text input field with the placeholder text "Type your answer here...". At the bottom of the input field, there is a small grey bar indicating "20 characters remaining".

Formative Assessment

Formative assessment gives both faculty and students an update on their learning progress. One cool tool you can use is the internet itself! Send your students on a focused scavenger hunt for resources/references that they can share with others in their class. Ask students to submit their ideas in multiple formats. Ask them to suggest an image using [Unsplash](#) or an icon from the [Noun Project](#) that represents a concept covered.

Summative Assessment

There are lots of ways for students to demonstrate their knowledge. Have you considered a video response? As we moved to online learning, you might have used tools to screen capture what you wanted your students to comprehend. Students can utilize the same tools to demonstrate competency. There are several cool tools that Seneca students could be using to do this including [VoiceThread*](#) and [Adobe Express](#). If you are looking for a simple video captures tool, consider [Synth](#). This video capture tool automatically produces an editable transcript. Check out [Loom](#), an extension for your Chrome browser for screen capture. It has the additional feature of having a presenter bubble for student presentations.



Now that you have learned more about these cool tools, remember to +1!

References

Behling, T. J. (2018). *Reach Everyone, Teach Everyone: Universal Design for Learning in Higher Education*. West Virginia University Press.

View the [June 2020 issue of the Academic Newsletter](#).

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