

# REMOTE TEACHING: ASSESSMENT



For master teachers  
of math and science

## Group Assessments

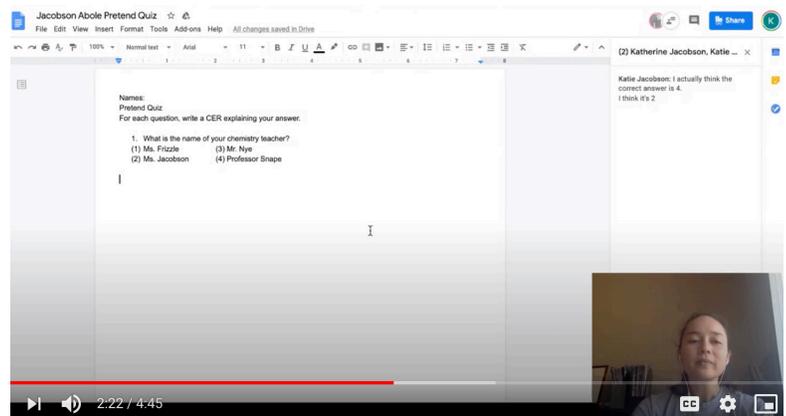
Katie Jacobson, MfA Emeritus Teacher  
Nyack High School

Even before the move to remote teaching, Katie had been using group quizzes as a way to encourage students to talk through their thinking with their peers. Katie has taken this practice remote by giving students Google Doc assessments, where they use some combination of the chat feature, breakout rooms in Zoom, and even FaceTime to converse with each other.

**“One of the things that I tried to build in as I became a more experienced teacher is allowing students to talk through problems together.”**

### ► How did Katie use technology to design group assessments?

Before remote teaching, Katie designed her group quizzes so that students worked through a series of multiple-choice questions together. After a certain amount of time, students would work independently to explain how they got the answer to a particular question Katie chose at random. In the virtual classroom, these quizzes became asynchronous where students would work in pairs on a shared Google Doc. Students then used the chat feature and even FaceTime to interact with each other. For the new school year, Katie plans on trying the quizzes synchronously again by utilizing the breakout room feature of Zoom.



Katie introduces one of the first group assessments to students.

**“It’s important to make sure that everyone’s participating, but sometimes you’ll have kids who just sit back and don’t say anything. So what I added was this part where students did the first part together, but then would do an individual part where it could be any of the questions on the quiz and they’d have to explain how they got the answer.”**

### ► Start using group assessments regularly by following these two pieces of advice:

1. The first time you do assessments in a group should be about practice, not content. The point is to establish norms and to help students become comfortable with the aspects of the group assessment before ‘raising the stakes.’
2. Have a system for forming groups. Katie uses a random number generator in Google Sheets to make her groups (and then makes a few changes afterwards to insure students get to work with a diverse set of peers).

**“The random group assignment is really important because in such a small group everyone’s required to talk. And then having that individual piece really makes it so that they’re all accountable.”**