

# 22 Powerful Closure Activities



Photo credit: [Stephen Luke via flickr \(CC BY 2.0\)](#)

Too many university supervisors and administrators criticize the absence of lesson closure, a dubious assessment practice likely caused by the improper use of [Madeline Hunter's lesson plan model \(PDF\)](#) as a de facto checklist of eight mandatory teaching practices -- anticipatory set, objective and purpose, input, modeling, checking for understanding, guided practice, independent practice, and closure -- a custom that [Hunter decried in 1985 \(PDF\)](#). Although it offers multiple benefits, please don't view closure as a professional must-do.

## What Is Closure?

Closure is the activity that ends a lesson and creates a lasting impression, a phenomenon that Colorado State University professor Rod Lucero calls [the recency effect](#).

Teachers use closure to:

- Check for understanding and inform subsequent instruction
- Emphasize key information
- Tie up loose ends
- Correct misunderstandings

Students find closure helpful for:

- Summarizing, reviewing, and demonstrating their understanding of major points
- Consolidating and internalizing key information

- Linking lesson ideas to a conceptual framework and/or previously-learned knowledge
- Transferring ideas to new situations

Like contracting your bicep at the top of a dumbbell curl, closure squeezes an extra *oomph* into a lesson. See my favorite closure strategies below!

## **Creative Closure Activities**

### **1. Snowstorm**

Students write down what they learned on a piece of scratch paper and wad it up. Given a signal, they throw their paper snowballs in the air. Then each learner picks up a nearby response and reads it aloud.

### **2. High-Five Hustle**

Ask students to stand up, raise their hands and high-five a peer -- their short-term hustle buddy. When there are no hands left, ask a question for them to discuss. Solicit answers. Then play "[Do the Hustle](#)" as a signal for them to raise their hands and high-five a different partner for the next question. (Source: [Gretchen Bridgers](#))

### **3. Parent Hotline**

Give students an interesting question about the lesson without further discussion. Email their guardians the answer so that the topic can be discussed over dinner.

### **4. Two-Dollar Summary**

Kids write a two-dollar (or more) summary of the lesson. Each word is worth ten cents. For extra scaffolding, ask students to include specific words in their statement. (Source (PDF): [Ann Lewis and Aleta Thompson](#))

### **5. Paper Slide**

On paper, small groups sketch and write what they learned. Then team representatives line up and, one and a time, [slide their work under a video camera](#) while quickly summarizing what was learned. The camera doesn't stop recording until each representative has completed his or her summary.

### **6. DJ Summary**

Learners write what they learned in the form of a favorite song. Offer extra praise if they sing.

### **7. Gallery Walk**

On chart paper, small groups of students write and draw what they learned. After the completed works are attached to the classroom walls, others students affix Stickies to the posters to extend on the ideas, add questions, or offer praise.

### **8. Sequence It**

Students can quickly create timelines with [Timetoast](#) to represent the sequence of a plot or historical events.

## 9. Low-Stakes Quizzes

Give a short quiz using technologies like [Socrative](#), [BubbleSheet](#), [GoSoapBox](#), or [Google Forms](#). Alternatively, have students write down three quiz questions (to ask at the beginning of the next class).

## 10. Cover It

Have kids sketch a book cover. The title is the class topic. The author is the student. A short celebrity endorsement or blurb should summarize and articulate the lesson's benefits.

## 11. Question Stems

Have students write questions about the lesson on cards, using [question stems framed around Bloom's Taxonomy](#). Have students exchange cards and answer the question they have acquired.

## 12. So What?

Kids answer the following prompts:

- What takeaways from the lesson will be important to know three years from now?
- Why?

## 13. Dramatize It

Have students dramatize a real-life application of a skill.

## 14. Beat the Clock

Ask a question. Give students ten seconds to confer with peers before you call on a random student to answer. Repeat.

## 15. Find a First-Grade Student

Have kids orally describe a concept, procedure, or skill in terms so simple that a child in first grade would get it.

## 16. Review It

Direct kids to raise their hands if they can answer your questions. Classmates agree (thumbs up) or disagree (thumbs down) with the response.

## 17. CliffsNotes, Jr.

Have kids create a cheat sheet of information that would be useful for a quiz on the day's topic. (Source (PDF): Ann Sipe, "[40 Ways to Leave a Lesson](#)")

## 18. Students I Learned From the Most

Kids write notes to peers describing what they learned from them during class discussions.

## 19. Elevator Pitch

Ask students to summarize the main idea in under 60 seconds to another student acting as a well-known personality who works in your discipline. After summarizing, students should identify why the famous person might find the idea significant.

## 20. Simile Me

Have students complete the following sentence: "The [concept, skill, word] is like \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_."

## 21. Exit Ticket Folder

Ask students to write their name, what they learned, and any lingering questions on a blank card or "ticket." Before they leave class, direct them to deposit their exit tickets in a folder or bin labeled either "Got It," "More Practice, Please," or "I Need Some Help!" -- whichever label best represents their relationship to the day's content. (Source: [Erika Savage](#))

## 22. Out-the-Door Activity

After writing down the learning outcome, ask students to take a card, circle one of the following options, and return the card to you before they leave:

- Stop (I'm totally confused.)
- Go (I'm ready to move on.)
- Proceed with caution (I could use some clarification on . . .)

Download the [PDF cards](#) for this exercise. (Source: [Eduscapes](#))

These 22 strategies can be effectively altered or blended. And they are great opportunities to correct, clarify, and celebrate.

Do you use a closure activity that's not on this list? Please share it in the comments.