

How to create choices for formative assignments in canvas using the Quiz function

I have long wanted to make canvas do the same things I can do in in-person classes in terms of formative assessments related to readings. In-person, I would often give students a chance to “show what you know” in a variety of formats.

In canvas, this is relatively easy if you use the Assignments tab. You can make a list of choices for students and make everything worth the same number of points or meet the same requirements on a rubric.

This gets harder if one choice you want to offer is a “quiz” or if you are using the Quiz tab. The Quiz tab offers you several types of quiz questions, but they are all part of the same Quiz. Offering a quiz OR a written assignment or a quiz OR a visual way of showing what you know inserts some difficulties in the student experience where they will often see “missing” or a zero if you give choice through different quiz modalities presented as different quizzes.

Below are a few ideas, but each has its own drawback.

1. Create an assignment group with 3 choices. You make one a quiz, one an upload, and one a fill in space. Then you tell canvas to drop the lowest 2 grades (those will have zeros since the student only did one of the assignments.)
Drawback – students will see the words “missing” and/or “0” in the gradebook.
2. Create an assignment where students can upload a document, fill in a text entry, and the instructor uploads a quiz with a word document to be completed. Students choose between them.
Drawback – instructor must hand grade the quiz portion. Word doc quizzes are often hard for students to use as they have to download your version, complete it, and upload their completed version.
3. Use the quiz function for all of it. This is explained in more detail below. On the “Details” page in the quiz, explain what the “quiz” is going to look like.

Here is an example:

Please select one of three ways to show what you know about the following readings - you must scroll down to either take quiz style questions, write a solid paragraph, or upload a document that shows what you know - these will be hand-graded after so please know the score you initially see will probably not be the final score.

Then on the “questions” page, create the quiz with multiple choice, true/false, short answer etc, questions and give point values to those. Let’s say the quiz questions equal 10 points, one point, per question.

Following that you can have a second type of “quiz question” that says something like: “In this space answer the question, "What did you learn about this article/ video etc that you want to share with me?" Please complete this question for each article/ video etc due

today. Between 200-500 words please - share enough that i know you read. What you write is worth 10 points, just like the quiz questions would be.

Put in zero for how many points it is worth so you do not change the overall weight of the “quiz”. When you grade it, you will override the zero with up to 10 points for the value of that question.

Following that option you can have a third type of “quiz question” that says something like: “This is an opportunity to show what you know by uploading a document. Are you someone who takes notes all over a document? Take pictures and show me. Are you someone who takes notes handwritten in a notebook? Take pictures and show me. Are you someone who makes graphic organizers to show how the readings fit together? Upload that and show me. You can come up with your own way to show what you know and upload it here too. The document is worth 10 points, just like the quiz questions would be.

Put in zero for how many points it is worth so you do not change the overall weight of the “quiz”. When you grade it, you will override the zero with up to 10 points for the value of that question.

Although clunky, this is a way to offer students 2 or more ways to show what they know in one grade book column.