

KWL as an alternative assignment for Biology class during disease outbreak

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Challenges in the course Biodiversity and Ecology / Academic Year 2020

- One credit course (2 hours per week)
- Course syllabus and teaching plan were prepared during April – May 2020 which was during the COVID-19 outbreak in Thailand
- How to cover all the contents in limited teaching time?
- How to design assignment and collect marks for formative assessment in the online teaching situation?

What is KWL?

KWL is known as Know-Want-Learn that was design for active learning strategy for reading assignment (Ogle, 1986)

In KWL, students are asked to write:

K = What do you already know?

W= What do you want to know?

L= What did you learn?



Application of KWL...

- Development of student learning skills, obtaining reflections from students and informal assessment (McAlister, 1994; Mok *et al.*, 2006)
- Student self assessment (Valentina, 2019)

Why chose KWL?: Benefits of K



When students write K to you, you can have the big picture of what do they already know?



You can save your teaching time because you to cover much of the basic knowledge (but not essential) when most of the student already know.



You can find out their misconception and correct it.

Why chose KWL?: Benefits of W



W from students allow you to plan your teaching more relevant to the students' desire.



Under the time constrain, your teaching plan can be more effective.



Allow students to think of questions before class, and if some of their questions did not cover in the class, they can always ask during the Q/A session.

Why chose KWL?: Benefits of L



L from students allow you to see how each student understand and summarize their knowledge



You can also find their misconception and correct it



You can grade L and use the marks effectively as a part in the formative assessment

How to assign KWL to students?

- Assignments are given to students via online platform (MS teams)
- KWLs were assigned weekly to students
- First week was only K1W1 (student can relate the topic number with the topic name on the course syllabus)
- Later weeks students were assigned with KnWnLn-1 (K2W2L1)
- By Sunday midnight they need to submit KWL for the next week

Observation from classroom and assignment submission

- KWL was counted as 20% of the grade (substitute the quizzes).
- Most students (more than 80%) turned in by the deadline.
- When L is required, students pay attention to note taking during class.
- Students with informative L writing got good marks on the exam as well.
- Plagiarism was not obviously observed.

Student feedback

- They think that L is very useful (give them time to summarize the big concept by themselves and prepare for their exam)
- Less stress than quizzes in class, make summary notes and get marks out of that.
- Some of them did not like K and W (don't know what to write or to ask).
- Lots of work they need to do weekly.

Conclusion and suggestion

Overall KWL is a satisfied strategy to promote learning and use as an alternative assignment to collect marks from online teaching.

K and W may be changed from individual work to group work in order to reduce amount of work and promote group thinking.

L may be kept as individual work.

Promote students to write L using concept map might help them to finish their assignment faster and still be informative.