



## Regular Check-Ins

When students seem to drift off, pause and ask them to write for three minutes about what's been happening in the discussion. While some students will inevitably write, "Sorry, I wasn't paying attention," using this technique regularly can remind students to stay engaged.

### Assess Focus

If much of the class drifts off frequently, consider altering the method of content delivery to be more engaging or interactive, but if students seem only occasionally distracted, a pause and brief written check-in can refocus their attention. For those with daily excuses or apologies, a private conversation can help you offer those students advice for focusing.

### Canvass The Class

Check-ins often highlight teachers' mistaken assumptions: I have learned that students who seemed attentive were lost and that those who seemed disengaged were following closely. Of course, I can always call on a student who's chatting or on his phone, but that can embarrass one individual without demonstrating whether everyone is fully present or almost no one is. Written check-ins enable you to canvass the class more comprehensively without public embarrassment.