Summative vs. Formative Assessment

There are generally two types of assessments:

- Summative assessment or assessment of learning is assessment administered at the end of a period of learning to determine whether students have achieved their learning objectives and to measure their learning progress. The MA approved standardized assessments are all examples of assessment of learning. Other examples of summative assessment include: quizzes, tests, demonstrations, presentations, scoring based on rubrics, progress reports. Programs should share summative assessment results with their students. For more information and suggestions on how to do this, see Analyzing and Interpreting Test Results: What’s Appropriate, and What’s Not Appropriate and Suggestions for Talking with Students about Assessment Results at http://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/assessment/

- Formative assessment or assessment for learning is classroom-based assessment administered on an ongoing basis in order to check on student learning and inform instructional decisions. This type of assessment allows instructors to provide students with immediate feedback and guide their learning. Examples of formative assessment include: observations (anecdotal records, conferences, checklists), exit tickets, portfolio checks, questioning, debriefing. Programs are encouraged to use formative assessment regularly.