Three easy methods to assess and improve your library instruction

Observation
No preparation – Just awareness

While you lecture or demonstrate:
Are students engaged?
Are they listening, bored, or sleeping?
Only one student, or most of the class?
Do students ask pertinent questions?

While students work on their projects:
Lents you “get into” their thought processes.
Do they choose the right tools?
Do they find good information?
What questions do they ask?

Surveys
Requires preparation and thought – What do you want to find out?

Pre-instruction –
What did the student already know?

Post-instruction –
Did they think the class was useful?
What comments and suggestions do the students have?
What did the students learn and understand?

End of class –
Use in combination with a pre-instruction survey, or by itself
Were students able to apply the class to their projects?
Requires cooperation from the course professor

End of semester –
Use in combination with a pre-instruction survey

Options: Electronic (Survey Monkey, etc.) or Print

Subjective questions about usefulness and recommendations
Example: Evaluate the library instruction class:
very useful / useful / not very useful / not useful at all

Objective questions about teaching points
Example: Which would you choose for finding journal articles?
One File / Library Catalog / Google / Web of Knowledge / Wikipedia

Compile data across classes

Apply your findings
When necessary, change your teaching:
To keep students’ interest
To clarify points that are consistently not getting across
To accommodate students’ wishes / views / needs
To improve your class and keep students happy!

Exercises
Requires most preparation and thought

Use in combination with observation

Use throughout the class to emphasize and practice teaching points

Must be pertinent to each course
Subject matter
Library research assignments

Example:
Find a book related to the Order of your chosen Species and get it from the library stacks.