

Playing the Game of Test

Human beings have the amazing ability to become better at that which they practice. If students practice not doing algebra problems for example, they become better at not doing algebra problems. If students practice not looking at questions and recalling answers from memory, they become better at not recalling answers from memory when they look at questions. BUT, this is how the “game” of test is played: students look at questions or problems and are expected to be skilled at recalling correct answers or solutions from memory.

Many students have trouble doing well on tests because of a flaw in preparation. To prepare for a test, many students read, reread, highlight, and reread, and reread again. This method is the most time consuming, ineffective, boring way to learn. It is also dangerous because it is not until a test is returned that students discover if they have learned the material or not. Moreover, students are practicing rereading but that is not what they must do to earn a grade when they play the “game” of test.

To get the most out of study time, student should practice the very “game” they have to play when taking a test. If an instructor graded students on the ability to read and reread or highlight and reread, many more students would be on the Dean’s list. A better test preparation technique is to set up notes so that students practice looking at questions and recalling answers from memory or looking at problems and recall solutions from memory. This is the “game” that must be played in order to do well on tests.

One version of the rules for how to play the “game” of test is presented below:

1. **Purchase notecards** - for recording main ideas and details or problems and solutions. The size may be 3 x 5, 4 x 6, or 5 x 8 inches depending on the amount of material to be recorded, handwriting size, and if memory boosters of drawings, pictures, diagrams, charts, or tables are included.
2. **Turn main points from lectures and textbooks into questions using the details as a guide.** Place a question on one side of a notecard and its answer on the other. The nature and format of a question is determined by the kind of details expected to be learned (steps, stages, characteristics, procedures, causes, effects, etc.). With math or chemistry problems, put a problem on one side and the solution, step-by-step, on the other.
3. **Recite questions and answers.** This promotes faster learning and more accurate recall and reveals what has and has not been learned ***before*** an exam is taken when something can still be done about it. The more often notecards are recited and reviewed, the more likely information is to move from short-term memory toward long-term memory. Unless recitation of material to be learned is done repeatedly and regularly, it is ***normal*** to forget material on exams.

How to Set Up Notecards

Question on front

1. *Enamel*

2. *Pulp Cavity*

3. *Dentin*

4. *Peridontal membrane*

5. *Cementum*



Answer on back

pp. 293-294

5 parts of a tooth and draw and label them?

Mnemonic - Ena's Pulp Dented Peri's Cement

Class 10/30

5 kingdoms of living things and 2 examples of each?

- 1. Plantae ex. - ferns, mosses*
- 2. Animalia ex. - humans, birds*
- 3. Protista ex. - diatoms, paramecia*
- 4. Monera ex. - bacteria, algae*
- 5. Fungi ex. - mushrooms, yeast*

Plants (s) Animals (are) Pro Mo Fun

p. 79

3 major arguments of federalists for federalism?

1. Prevent tyranny **PUP arguments**
2. Use states as testing grounds for new policies & programs
3. Provide for increased participation in politics

3 major arguments of federalists for federalism?

Prevent tyranny

Use states as testing grounds for new policies and programs

Provide for increased participation on politics.

How to Recite Notecards Properly

- Step 1.** Read a question aloud from or look at a problem from the notecard.
- Step 2.** Then without looking, recite an answer aloud as if lecturing a class. Those who have discovered that writing answers enhances learning and recall are encouraged to do so. If there are problems and solutions on notecards, write out a solution on scrap paper from memory.
- Step 3.** Turn the notecard over & check for completeness & accuracy of the answer or solution.
- Step 4.** If the answer was complete and accurate, place the notecard in the “I know this” pile and move on to the next notecard.
- Step 5.** If the answer or solution was not complete and accurate, read the answer aloud. Then turn the card over and read the question aloud or view the problem, again. Recite aloud or write the answer or solution again from memory and then turn the card over and check your answer. Keep testing yourself this way until you get the answer correct and then place that notecard in the “I don’t know this, yet” pile. Then, move on to the next notecard.
- Step 6.** Review the “I don’t know this pile” once every 2 to 3 days to promote learning. Review the “I know this” 1 or 2 times per week to prevent forgetting.

As the number of times increases that a student reviews and recites notecards, more and more of the cards will transfer to the “I know this” pipe and progress in learning becomes visible. In this manner, students discover what has been learned and what has not yet been learned before a test is taken when something can still do something about it. Self-testing has students practicing the skills needed to succeed at the “game” of test.

The Big Advantage:

You can discover what you have learned and what you have not learned before you take a test when you can still do something about it.