

Strategy: Exam Review Strategies

Students worry about exams because they either know or fear they've missed something. Helping students review for exams as a class lets them share their knowledge, see what their peers know, and hear your last-minute advice and suggestions regarding content before an exam.

Origin

Barkley, E., et. al. (2005). *Collaborative learning techniques*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Davis, B. (1993). *Tools for teaching*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Holmes, T. (2008). An exam review exercise that works. Retrieved from
http://cte.uwaterloo.ca/teaching_resources/tips/exam_review_exercise.html.

University of Pittsburg. (2010). Details on game construction for using the Sciences Jeopardy Game and for building your own game. Retrieved from
<http://chemed.chem.pitt.edu/Jeopardy/instruct/starthere.htm>.

Application

Idea Salad

Have students brainstorm important concepts, keywords, texts, ideas, theories, etc., that they may be tested on from the course. Have students submit a list of these ideas online or in class. Develop a container (jug, hat, etc.) of individual ideas (on slips of paper, etc.). Divide students into groups and have each group draw three ideas from the container. Instruct the groups to make and record connections between the ideas. After 3-5 minutes, have groups choose 3 other ideas. Continue this activity for 3-5 rounds. Follow-up with a group debrief regarding connections among the ideas and student ideas for further preparation for the exam (what did this help students understand that they need to know more about?).

Jeopardy

Popular game shows like Jeopardy can be engaging ways to review content for an exam. Consider giving groups of students the categories and having them prepare the questions for that category. This ensures review of the material on the part of individual students.

Send a Question

Each student or group of students is responsible for developing one or more questions that may be on the exam. Students pass these questions around on cards, paper, folders, etc. Students read the questions and propose an answer without looking at other answers. When the questions and answers return to their originators, they are evaluated to determine which answers are correct. You may want to consider using a small number of these questions on the exam as an incentive for students to participate.

Exam Review Committee

Designate a group of students in charge of a student-led review session. Offer to meet with the students for a set time (one hour) in advance of the session to help them prepare.

Group exam/review

Distribute practice questions/problems to prepare students for the exam. Have students answer the questions individually and then discuss their answers in a group. Another option for doing this is to have students use different color ink for their answers. Have students first take the exam in black ink to identify what they know on their own. Then, have students take the exam in blue ink with a group to identify what they need to know more about. (To take this another step, have students use red ink to take the exam with course materials-notes, readings, etc., to identify what they need to know more about).

Alternatively, have groups take the practice exam together.

Wheel of _____

Modeled after the game show Wheel of Fortune, students can “spin” the wheel of course topics and answer practice exam questions. This can be done in teams or as individuals. Questions can be multiple choice, short answer, etc., or, like the game show, be fill-in-the-blank.

Reflection

- What is something about this idea that confirms a current practice in your course?
- What is something about this idea that you would adapt for your course?
- What is something new from this idea that you would like to remember?