Response Cards

A Multi-Benefit Strategy

- Increase opportunities for student response
- Improve student performance on assessments
- Reduce off-task behavior

What are Response Cards?

Response cards provide an alternative to traditional hand-raising responses to Q & A sessions in class. Students are given response cards, which can take the form of pre-printed answers like true/false, yes/no, or A, B, C, D to correspond with multiple choice answer options. Teachers may also provide students with personal dry erase boards on which to write answers.

During a question and answer period of a lesson, the teacher will ask a question and give students a cue to use their response cards to show their answers. All students in the class then hold up their response cards to indicate their answer.

Example:

After introducing vocabulary words and definitions, a teacher moves into a Q & A session for review. She tells students to write the vocabulary word that best fills the blank in a sentence she reads aloud and projects on the board. After appropriate wait time, the teacher says “boards up,” and students hold up their dry erase boards with their answers written in.

Who do they help?

Studies have shown that response cards benefit a wide range of students, including:

- Students with mild intellectual disabilities
- Students with speech and language disorders
- Students with behavioral and emotional disorders
- General student population
Why Use Response Cards?

- The response card method allows teachers to quickly assess whether students understand the material and are ready to move on or if additional explanation is necessary. If the response cards show that a group of students need additional assistance, the teacher can have part of the class move on to independent practice and focus attention on those needing additional explanation and assistance. This focused instruction leads to better student performance on future assessments.

- Response cards allow students who may be reluctant to speak out in class (because of speech/language disorders, mild intellectual disability, learning English as a second language, etc.) the opportunity to participate without needed to verbally express their answer to the class. Studies show that students with learning disabilities participate more frequently with the response card strategy.

- Studies show a direct link between opportunities for student response and decreased behavior problems, making response cards an appropriate strategy for students with emotional/behavioral disorders. See side bar for additional information.

Sources:


