
TRY THIS



The following are tips for writing effective tests:

- Begin with the end in mind. Know what you will test before you start teaching. In other words, be clear on your objectives for every lesson you teach. Know exactly what you want students to know or be able to do following the lesson or the unit.
- Tell the students at the beginning of each lesson exactly what they will be learning and how they will be tested. As you teach, you should be assessing their understanding informally through your observations, through their work samples, and through your questioning. When you teach this way, you will know when students are or are not ready to be tested.
- Be careful when constructing tests about test items that are confusing. The results from multiple-choice questions usually tell you very little about what a student knows or can do. They're easy to write and even easier to grade, but they can be very confusing to students. If you do

include multiple-choice items, avoid choices such as “all of the above” and “none of the above,” because these can lead to “confusion for all.”

- Construct your test items so that students have to explain or demonstrate what they have learned. But make sure they have had practice doing this *before* they are formally tested on it.
- Remember that much test anxiety is alleviated when students are clear on what they are learning, how well they are performing, and how they will be tested on their knowledge or skills.
- Do not add surprise items on tests. And be careful to grade only what you are testing. For instance, a student should not receive a poor grade on a science test because of poor grammar or spelling. It’s not that grammar and spelling are unimportant, but this was not a grammar or spelling test. Feel free to correct grammar and spelling, but don’t base the grade on it.