

# TEN WAYS TO INTEGRATE FLASH CARDS INTO YOUR CLASSROOM FOR TEST-PREPARATION

Successful teachers are determined to tailor their instruction to meet the individual needs of students. Many are turning to differentiated learning techniques that help students learn in various ways, particularly now that students are required to pass their state's standardized tests.

Show What You Know® Publishing's line of test-preparation flash cards have been used to help students pass state-mandated tests for many years. These flash cards are specifically aligned to your state's standards and are located at the top left of each card, so teachers and students can determine what each question covers. Flash cards include 80 or more subject-specific questions that are completely different than the company's test-preparation workbooks. Through the years, teachers have developed numerous methods to integrate the Show What You Know® flash cards into their daily curriculum. Here are examples for flash card use:

## 1. Bell Work

At the beginning of each class period, before the bell rings, write a flash card question on the board for students. When the bell rings, wipe the question off the board and give the students a few minutes to turn in their answers for extra credit.

## 2. Question of the Day

A teacher can post a question on the board related to the standards that he or she is highlighting that day. Students submit their responses on paper. The teacher reviews their incorrect and correct responses. All correct responses go in a fish bowl or other fun container for a small prize drawing at the end of the week.

## 3. Tutoring Lessons

Use flash cards for tutoring. They are ideal because they can easily be laminated, written on, and erased to work through problems.

## 4. Games

The class is divided into teams. The teacher is the question reader and each team requests and answer questions. The winning team receives a small prize or bonus points. There are many variations to this game.

## 5. Peer Work

Peer work is very effective with flash cards, particularly when working with reading and writing standards. This allows students to go back and forth or work on a passage together.

## 6. Learning Center Activities

When planning learning center activities involving specific-subject standards, teachers choose related flash cards and put them in an envelope or plastic bag in the center of the study area. Students select one or more problems, putting their work and answers on index cards. A partner or teacher checks the answers using the analysis side of the flash card.

## 7. Scavenger Hunt

Hide flash cards all over the room. Cover the answers with index cards. Tell students that everyone must quickly find a card and return to their seat. Students write the answer on the index card and turn it in to the teacher. The winner is based on time completed and accuracy.

## 8. Hot Potato

With music playing, all students sit in a circle and pass an item (typically a potato) from student to student. When the music stops, whomever is holding the item must answer a flash card question. If the student gets the question correct, he/she stays in the circle. If the student gets the question incorrect, he/she becomes the next question reader.

## 9. Self-Study

Flash cards can also have an extensive advantage outside of the classroom. Since the cards can be conveniently carried, students can review more frequently, which is more effective than long sessions of cramming. The accessibility also adapts to students' busy lifestyles. Using this self-study practice method, students can put the cards into piles "they know," "think they know," and "don't know," and then go back to the ones they need more practice as a way of review.

## 10. Reader of the Day

Have one student pick out a flash card question and read it to the entire class. Whoever gets the question correct is the next question reader.

Flash cards can be used in multiple ways to promote different forms of learning. This is only a sampling of techniques that teachers have implemented using the Show What You Know® flash cards. Whatever method is chosen, or if new ways are developed, the use of flash cards combined with the Show What You Know® test-preparation workbooks is sure to bring test success.