



Audio

FULL DETAILS AND TRANSCRIPT

## Quizzing with Clickers

Columbia Middle School, Illinois • April 2008

Topic: How to Organize Your Teaching

Practice: Spacing Learning Over Time

### Highlights

- “Clickers” (remote control devices) can be used to give short, ungraded quizzes and provide a useful technology for recalling key course material.
- Clickers provide immediate, correct answer feedback, which is motivating to students, helps them identify gaps in their knowledge, and provides useful information to teachers about their students’ understanding.
- Frequent quizzing with clickers can lead to significant learning gains for students over time.

### About the Site

Columbia Middle School

Columbia, IL

### Demographics

98% White

- 1% Black
- 1% Hispanic
- 1% Multiracial
- 7% Free or Reduced-price Lunch

Sixth grade social studies teacher, Patrice Bain, uses SMART Board™ and remote control clickers to give her students pre- and post-lesson quizzes, as well as review quizzes. This practice has led to remarkable gains in learning on chapter and unit tests. These short, multiple-choice quizzes with clickers:

- Give multiple opportunities for active recall of key course material
- Improve retention of key course material
- Provide immediate feedback to students on correct or incorrect answers
- Are motivating and engaging to students
- Provide useful data to the teacher on how well her class and individual students are mastering the material.

## Full Transcript

I am Patrice Bain. I am a 6th grade social studies teacher at Colombia Middle School in Colombia, Illinois. I started using quizzing in my classroom several years ago, not so much that the quizzing would go into the grade book but as a means of actively engaging them with them getting feedback.

I now pretty much use quizzing almost everyday in my classroom. I use pre-tests, post-tests, usually the same day. I will begin a new chapter, a new lesson, with a pre-test which allows me to see what the students already know. I give a post-test at the end of class to see how much the students have learned, and then I will give a chapter test at the end which may cover several lessons.

What I use in my classroom is what we call clickers. I know there are several companies out there that sell different brands. What we use looks like a remote control, and each student is assigned a number—each remote has a number. I will have a multiple choice question in the front of the room. I will read the question out loud, and the students will have a chance to press on the remote. When I see that everyone has voted, I end voting, and the students will get to see what the correct answer is. Most of my questions are in multiple choice format. I have a SMART Board™ and I am able to have these questions appear on the SMART Board™. Now if say there is 24 students in my class and 22 of them clicked on B and two clicked on C, the students who answered C would be able to see that they had answered incorrectly.

Feedback is an essential part of this process. So often in the past when teachers taught, you would give a test and students wouldn't get feedback for a day, several days, a week. But being able to get that instant feedback reinforces that they know the information. Students are so motivated when they get the

feedback. Say for example on a game where they have to keep answering correctly to continue the game—that is in essence another type of quizzing. Or, with using the clickers, students want to succeed, and being able to get the instant feedback that they have met success is really a vital part of this process.

I have also found that a very important benefit of the feedback is not only to the students but also to me. There may have been times where I thought I covered a lesson very well, and then I would see the students answer through clickers, and I would have many students possibly miss something, and I had not taught it well. So that gives me the instant feedback along with the students of what I need to go over again—perhaps rephrasing, perhaps teaching it a different way. It is a just a wonderful process that aides all of us into being a team so that we know everybody is on the same page in getting the right information. What I have found in keeping some statistics is that often as I start with my classes the pre-test scores are usually in the 30th percentile—somewhere in the 30s—and my post-tests after I have taught the lesson are usually over 90 percent.

When I am not using the quizzing where the students get the active engagement with feedback, the average scores are closer to 79 to 80 percent. With the testing and the frequent quizzing we have seen that it works across all levels, particularly the students that it tends to work even more for are those students who tend to score lower in the standardized tests, and also with the Special Ed students, it has been phenomenal.

Some other benefits that I think really help with this frequent quizzing is that it also tends to reduce test anxiety. When students are able to use a remote and click in and they get the instant feedback, there is no judgment. It's not that there is a smiley face or a sticker; they just simply see the answer.

Teachers are so creative. You can develop your own kinds of Jeopardy games in your classroom. Any type of activity where you are able to get your students actively engage with that immediate feedback, you can do it without it costing a penny. It is the idea of the active engagement with the feedback, this type of frequent quizzing, which is going to allow your students to maximize their learning.