



"Make & Take" Quizzes: Effective Study Habits, Higher Marks

What is this Research About?

Cognitive psychologists agree that cramming, highlighting, and rereading are not effective study strategies, especially for long-term retention and understanding of material. Research supports the effectiveness of spaced practice, retrieval practice, and elaboration. Spaced practice involves reviewing material on many different occasions. Retrieval practice involves deliberately trying to recall requisite information to increase long-term retention. Elaboration involves students explaining material in their own words and/or forming connections between new material and prior knowledge. This research examined the effectiveness of "Make & Take quizzes," which combine all three study methods.

What did the Researchers Do?

Make & Take quizzes involve students reviewing class notes and developing two quiz questions (including correct responses) (Make) that they submit to their instructor at the end of each class session. The following week, students answer 5 of the submitted questions (chosen by the instructor) (Take). The researcher tested the effectiveness of the Make & Take quizzes on improving student performance in Psychology courses. Separate sections of the same course were randomly assigned to complete the Make & Take quizzes, or not. The sections were identical in instructor, syllabus, textbook, and lecture material. The researchers then compared students' final exam performance and compared self-reported study strategies.

What did the Researchers Find?

Final exam grades were almost a full letter grade higher for the Make & Take quiz group than for the students who did not complete the Make & Take quizzes. The findings showed that students in the Make and Take quiz section used better study strategies as the semester progressed. Specifically, students in the Make & Take section reported having less trouble identifying the main idea when studying, and they were more likely to put ideas into their own words.

SoTL

Snapshot

A synopsis of a scholarship of teaching
and learning journal article

➔ How to Implement this Research in Your Classroom

Encouraging students to practice retrieving information from memory has been shown to improve learning. Make & Take quizzes, which involve students reviewing class notes and developing quiz questions and subsequently respond to a subset of student-generated questions, are an effective tool for encouraging retrieval practice. Instructors seeking to implement Make & Take quizzes in their own courses could consider the basic format outlined in this Snapshot. Possible variations to account for class size and/or material could include asking students to submit questions through the Learning Management System and grading their quality, then selecting the most common appropriate questions for quiz usage. Simply describing or demonstrating effective study strategies is ineffective at increasing student use of those study strategies. Instead, instructors could implement Make & Take quizzes, which require students to purposefully engage in effective study strategies.

➔ Citation

Gallagher, K. M. (2020). Using "Make & take quizzes" to improve exam performance and engage students in effective study strategies. *Teaching of Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0098628320957991>

➔ Keywords

Quizzes
Study Strategies

Exam Performance
Evidence-based
Learning

