

# Using Response Cards to Improve Student Performance

Response cards are used to provide students with opportunities for active responses in the practice stage of information acquisition. A question is posed and students hold up a card with their response on it.

## **Response cards are used to:**

- Elicit active responses from all students simultaneously.
- Demonstrate student understanding of the information taught.
- Make informed instructional decisions based on students' responses.

## **How to use response cards:**

- Model several question/response trials to give students practice using the cards.
- Keep the pace lively.
- Provide clear cues when students are to show their response cards.

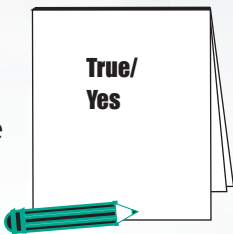
Response cards have been beneficial in improving performance for all students.

Students can benefit from watching their peers' responses. This is not cheating - it is learning in improving performance for all students.

## Two kinds of response cards:

### 1. Preprinted cards

These cards have responses printed on them. Students choose the correct card in response to a question posed.

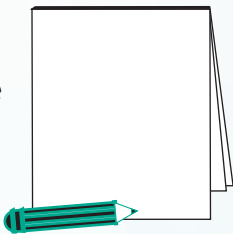


#### Suggestions:

- Make the words large so they are easy to read.
- Make the cards easy to manipulate.
- Have only a few cards. Gradually add cards as students build skills.

### 2. Write-on cards

These cards are blank. Students need to write their response on the card before showing it in response to a question posed.



#### Suggestions:

- Limit responses to one or two words, or one number in math class.
- Have extra markers on hand.
- Remove student concern about making spelling errors.

From: Heward, W. L. (1997). Four validated instructional strategies. In J. Crandall, J. Jacobson, & H. Sloane (eds.), *What Works in Education* (pp. 55-64). Cambridge, MA: Cambridge Center for Behavioral Studies.