

To prevent cheating, a teacher writes three versions of a test. She stacks the three versions together, first all copies of Version A, then all copies of Version B, then all copies of Version C. As students arrive for the exam, each student takes a test. When grading the test, the teacher finds that students who took Version B scored higher than students who took either Version A or Version C. She concludes from this that Version B is easier, and discards it.

The problem:

The students are cheating on their tests, allegedly

The potential solution:

Creating three different tests will prevent students from cheating off of each other

The method of testing the solution:

Write one test, but mix up the questions randomly, three times. Mark one version A, the next B, the final C. The variable of interest is whether cheating goes down or not. You no longer have to worry about whether one test is harder than the other, as they are all the same. Have the students sit at their desks before handing the tests out. Give out A, then B, then C to each consecutive student. Grade the tests and compare their grades with seating charts. If students sitting near each other with the same test versions had at least 10% of the same answers, those students were cheating.