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Unit 1, lesson 4_5

Research proposal

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 question: how do I reduce cheating on unit tests?

Academic dishonesty is occurring amongst my students on tests. Currently when I give a test there is only one version of that test, I believe that students from the morning classes are providing the afternoon students with the answers to certain questions, either by memorizing them, or writing the question number with its multiple choice answer down on scratch paper and passing this information on to students that will be taking the test later on in the day. Also even though I remain vigilant for students copying answers from other students on test days, I'm sure that some students are using this method of cheating also. What I am seeing in the test grades data is that my sixth and seventh period classes consistently score 20 points higher on their unit tests than my first and second period students.

The Potential Solution

To eliminate (or at least reduce the possibility) of cheating, on the next test I will introduce 3 different versions of the same test.

Method of Testing the Solution

- The questions and multiple choice answers on each version of the test will be the same, however the number order for the questions will be different on each test, also the multiple choice answers will be scrambled for each question.
- The students will not know which version of the test they have, nor will I tell them that there are different versions of the test.
- I will pass out the tests (the tests will be shuffled) to each student after they are seated.
- I will know which version of the test was taken by each student by using an identifying mark on each answer sheet that only I will recognize.
- The unit of measurement for this research will be individual test grades and class averages for those test grades.

The Expectation

If I am correct about the cheating, I expect class averages to drop by at least 10 points for my sixth and seventh periods, furthermore, for certain individuals in each class I expect to see their test grades decrease also.