

TEACHING HOW TO BE A GOOD TEST TAKER

During WWII, Winston Churchill said, “He who fails to plan is planning to fail.” If teachers and students do not plan to be successful in preparing for annual state tests, they are planning to fail.

Plan 100 Days to Mastery from Labor Day to Spring Break.

Map your curriculum or follow the Alpha Plus Pacing Calendar from August through March to teach objectives in the *Oklahoma Academic Standards (OAS)* that will be tested by the state in April. Content should be taught and assessed according to Oklahoma’s latest *Test Blueprint and Item Specifications*.

- Schedule the fall summative assessment (Alpha Plus A1) within the first two weeks of school for the baseline benchmark.
- Schedule the midyear summative (Alpha Plus B) the week before Thanksgiving or the week before Winter Break for best results to evaluate growth and adjust pacing when needed.
- Schedule the spring benchmark (Alpha Plus A2) to allow a month before the state test to coordinate remediation of non-mastered objectives. The fall and spring tests have the same questions providing a true growth model: same teacher, same students, same simulated state test.

Teach students to be test wise.

Use the *Alpha Plus Test Procedures - Best Answer Worksheets for Reading and Math* in this packet and in Alpha Plus Teacher PD Resources binders. These worksheets will help students analyze each answer choice on any multiple-choice assessments they ever take.

- Students will eliminate obvious, wrong answers then determine probable answers and finally select the correct answer.
- Students should never answer blindly; they need to prove their answer is the BEST. The fact that a question is being answered online does not mean students should not be required to show their work on paper.
- Taking notes about reading passage content and working out math problems can be on scratch paper for the state test but use the worksheets during Alpha Plus assessments to teach students how to assess. Once students learn the process for using the worksheet, they should then be required to do so on a blank piece of paper.

Use Alpha Plus common formative quizzes to teach testing procedures and strategies.

Finally, grade students on procedures used for summative assessments at midyear and in spring since these simulate the state test. Students will then assume they may be graded on procedures anytime they test. Following is one way to prepare; additional strategies can be found in Alpha Plus Teacher PD Resources binders.

- From the Pacing Calendar or your **Objective Accountability Graph (OAG)** online, identify OAS objectives taught prior to midyear or spring benchmarks.
- Use Alpha Plus Summative “Objective List” ([download from here](#)) to identify questions on B or A2 that were taught and on which students will receive a grade.
- When administering the midyear or spring tests, have students list each identified question on their scratch paper or highlight/circle on worksheet.
 - Inform students that these questions will count as a grade.
 - Inform students they will receive extra credit if they answer the other questions correctly.

A blank answer is a wrong answer. Teach the students to go back and make certain they have answered all questions. In Alpha Plus Online student portal, the questions are in numbered boxes at the top of the window that turn gray as questions are answered. Students can also bookmark questions for review before submitting test. When students click to submit, they are notified if there are unanswered questions.

Questions? Please contact your Alpha Plus Facilitator or call (405) 842-8408.