

TEACHING ELEMENTS MEMORY MATRIX

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OVERVIEW:

This is a technique to assess student comprehension and recall. Students fill in cells of a two-dimensional diagram for which the professor has provided labels. The professor analyzes correct and incorrect answer patterns to determine where remediation may be helpful.

PROCESS:

1. Prepare a matrix, based on course lecture or reading content that requires students to recall and/or classify key concepts.
 - For example, in a science course, you might review scientific classification with the following matrix

Term	Description	Ranking in Hierarchy (1-9)
Class		
Phylum		
Species		
Life		
Domain		
Order		
Family		
Genus		
Kingdom		

2. Share the matrix with the class, stressing that you will use their input to shape the focus of the class lecture/discussion. Point out that it can be frustrating for them if you spend time covering material they are already comfortable with and this technique allows you to spend time on the content they are having the most difficulty with.
3. Students fill in the matrix to demonstrate their ability to remember key concepts. Stress that students do not have to put their names on their responses.
4. Tally the numbers of correct and incorrect responses in each cell. Analyze differences both between and among the cells. Look for patterns among the incorrect responses and decide what might be the cause(s).
5. Adjust the course lecture/content to cover the areas the most students were struggling with.