

Buddy Test Prep



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Buddy Test Prep



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Overview

Standardized testing is a fact of life in almost all schools. However, preparing students for tests doesn't have to involve drill and kill. In fact, having students complete endless worksheets individually is probably not the most effective way to review. Buddy Test Prep is a cooperative learning strategy that is more engaging and more effective than traditional approaches.

In this activity, students move through a sequence of individual work, partner work, and class discussion. This method takes a little longer, but it uses less paper and results in more active engagement and greater retention of concepts. If you need to assign a grade at the end of this activity, remember that students are working together and a percentage grade might not be fair. Instead, consider grading students on their participation and level of engagement in addition to the number of correct responses.

Materials for Each Student

- Multiple choice test practice worksheet
- Regular pencil with an eraser
- Four crayons or colored pencils: blue, purple, red, and green
- Directions (Best if displayed on whiteboard or overhead projector)
- Buddy Test Prep Record (optional)



Advanced Preparation

1. Duplicate one copy of a standardized test prep worksheet for each student. Make sure the format is as close as possible to the type of test students will have to take in the future. Students will also need highlighters or other materials as permitted by your testing guidelines.
2. Pair students with a Test Prep Buddy. If you are reviewing more than one subject area, assign students a different buddy for each area. When pairing students, it's most effective to assign a high-performing student to work with an average student and an average student to work with a low-performing student. When you pair your top students with your lowest-performing students, their differences are so great that they have trouble relating to each other. If you have an odd number of students, you may form a group of three or allow a particularly strong student to work alone.
3. Each student will need four crayons or markers. The entire class must use the same four

colors during each part of the activity. Blue show individual work, and purple shows buddy work. The green and red crayons are used to check the answers as a class. (Note: You might want to do a materials check the day before because these items are essential.)

4. Decide you how you will display the directions on pages 5 - 7. The best way to show them is on a whiteboard or with an overhead projector so that students can follow along as you guide them through the steps. Showing the directions in color is particularly helpful since students will be color-coding their responses. If you prefer, you can duplicate the single-page summary of all steps on page 8.
5. Before beginning, review any test prep strategies you have previously taught. These may include highlighting key words in the question, eliminating obvious wrong answers, and so on.
6. Since this activity takes place in stages and may take more than one day, be sure students have some type of activity to complete after they complete each of the first two stages. Reading a book, completing seatwork assignments, or working in centers are possible options.
7. If you plan to do this activity on a regular basis over several weeks, you may want students to record their test practice scores on the half-sheet Buddy Test Prep Record, page 9. You might want them to store their worksheets and this chart in a folder for easy reference.



Name _____ Subject _____

Buddy Test Prep Record

Date	Title	On My Own (Blue)	With Help (Purple)	Incorrect (Red)



Buddy Test Prep Teacher Directions

On the next two pages, you'll find a set of teacher directions with some helpful tips for administering each step.

Individual Work (Blue - Refer to page 5)

1. Students begin by reading the assessment independently and taking the test completely on their own using a regular pencil. In some cases, you may want to allow students to read the test with their buddy, but they must answer the questions on their own immediately after reading the passage.
2. After everyone is finished, ask them to go back and circle their answers with a blue crayon or marker. (Crayons and markers are preferred over colored pencils because some colored pencils can be erased.)

Buddy Work (Purple - Refer to page 6)

1. Next, students meet with their Buddy Test Prep partner to discuss each question and answer, one at a time. If they don't agree on the answer, they must refer to the text or use other strategies to justify their answers.
2. If students want to change their answers, they may do so. However, each answer

that is changed must be circled using a purple crayon. Only answers that are changed are coded purple; original answers remain in blue.

3. Students who decide to change an answer must mark out their original answer using the purple crayon. Remind them that even if their original answer turns out to be correct, they will have to count it wrong if they change it at this point.
4. If students engage in heated discussions or arguments, remind them that they do not have to come to consensus on any answer. When they have discussed the question and chosen their answers, they need to move on. You may need to set a time limit to prevent students from getting bogged down on any one question.



Class Check (Red and Green - Refer to page 7)

1. For the Class Check step, you can collect the papers and grade them yourself, or you simply check and discuss them as a class. A class discussion may result in more learning, but sometimes you'll feel the need to check the responses on your own before the class discussion. 
2. To begin, ask students to locate their green and red crayons. Tell them that as you discuss each answer, they should place a green check mark next to their correct answers and a red X next to incorrect answers. Remind them that if they changed an answer with a purple crayon, they may not count their original answer as correct even if it turns out to be the right answer. 
3. Display a copy of the test as you work through the answers. For each item, ask students to show you their answers before you reveal the correct answer. You can have them hold up fingers (1 for A, 2 fingers for B, etc.) or have them write the letter of the answer on a dry erase board. You might want to prepare a set of response cards from index cards. This will help you assess the amount of discussion needed for each item.
4. As you discuss each item and reveal the answer, be sure students are using the red and green crayons to mark their answers. When finished, have them tally the number they got correct on their own, the number correct when working with their partner, and the number incorrect. Ask them to record those three numbers in the appropriate colors at the top of their test paper before turning it in. You might also want them to record their answers on the Test Prep Record. Remember that if you assign a grade to their paper, a subjective grade that includes participation is preferable to a raw score.

Name _____		Subject _____		
				
Buddy Test Prep Record				
Date	Title	On My Own (Blue)	With Help (Purple)	Incorrect (Red)

Buddy Test Prep - Step 1

Individual Work (Blue)

1. Complete the test on your own using a regular pencil. Remember to use all your best test prep strategies!
2. When you're finished, use a blue crayon or colored pencil to circle the letter of each answer.
3. When finished, turn your paper face down to show you are ready.



Buddy Test Prep - Step 2

Buddy Work (Purple)

1. Meet with your partner to discuss each question. If you don't agree on an answer, refer to the text or use other strategies to justify your thinking.
2. If you want to change an answer, you may do so. Just use your purple crayon to circle your new answer and cross out the old one.
3. If you don't want to change your answer, don't touch the purple crayon! Blue answers show your own work.
4. Be absolutely sure you want to change your answer before you do so. If your original answer turns out to be correct, you will have to count it incorrect if it has been crossed out.
5. You don't have to agree on any answer. Just discuss each item for a few minutes, choose your answer, and move on.



Buddy Test Prep - Step 3

Class Check (Red and Green)

1. As your class discusses each item, place green checkmarks next to your correct answers and a red X next to each incorrect answer.
2. If you changed an answer when working with your buddy and that answer is wrong, you may not count your original answer as correct.
3. After your class finishes discussing the test, add up your correct and incorrect responses.
4. Record your scores at the top of your paper using the color codes shown below. Next time try to increase the blue number which shows your own correct answers.



On My Own	With Help	Incorrect
8	3	2

Buddy Test Prep



Individual Work (Blue)

1. Complete the test on your own using a regular pencil. Remember to use all your best test prep strategies!
2. When you're finished, use a blue crayon or marker to circle the letter of each answer you chose on your own.



Buddy Work (Purple)

1. Now meet with your partner to discuss each question and answer, one at a time. If you don't agree on the answer, refer to the text or use other strategies to explain why you think your answer is correct.
2. If you want to change an answer, you may do so. To show that you are changing your answer, circle your new answer in purple and cross out the old one.
3. If you don't want to change your answer, don't use the purple crayon. Blue answers show your own work.
4. Be absolutely sure you want to change your answer before you do so. If your original answer turns out to be correct, you will have to count it incorrect if it has been crossed out.
5. You don't have to agree on any answer. Just discuss each item for a few minutes, choose your answer, and move on.



Class Check (Red and Green)

1. Locate your green and red crayons or markers. As your class discusses each item, place a green check mark next to your correct answers and a red X next to your incorrect answers.
2. If you changed an answer when working with your buddy, you may not count your original answer as correct even if it turns out you were right.
3. After your discusses the test, add up your correct and incorrect responses. Record those numbers at the top using the color codes shown below. Next time try to increase the blue number which shows your own correct answers.



On My Own

8

With Help

3

Incorrect

2

Name _____

Subject _____



Buddy Test Prep Record



Date	Title	On My Own (Blue)	With Help (Purple)	Incorrect (Red)

Name _____

Subject _____

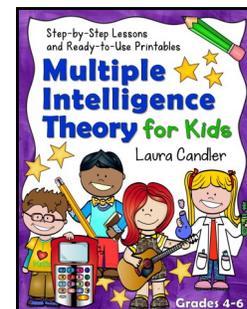
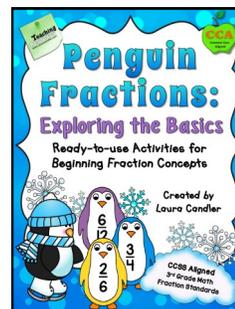
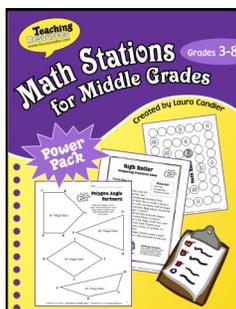
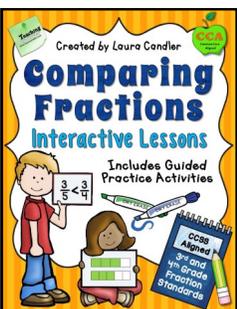
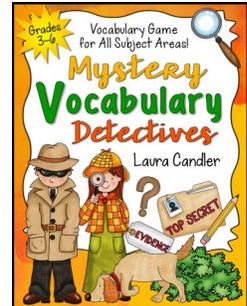
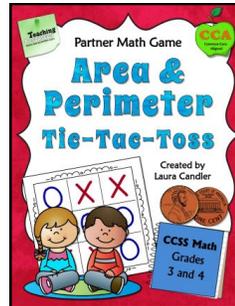
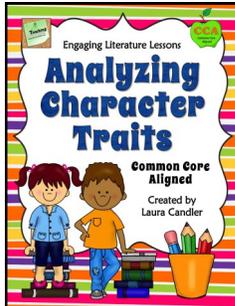
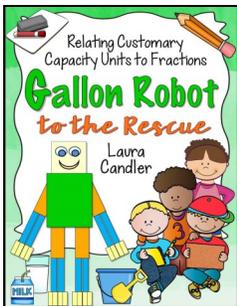
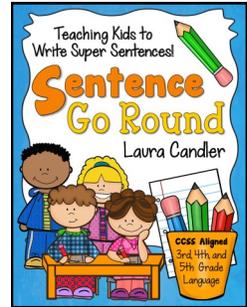
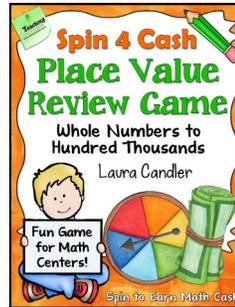
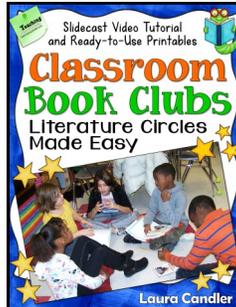
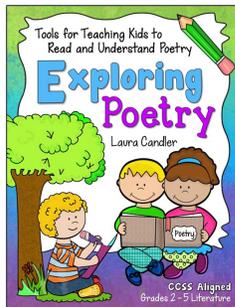
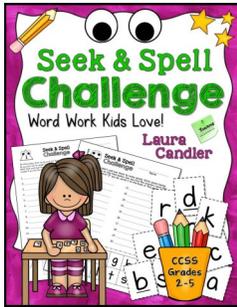


Buddy Test Prep Record



Date	Title	On My Own (Blue)	With Help (Purple)	Incorrect (Red)

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