(5) Ways to Protect the Integrity of Online Tests

Online testing is here to stay. The appeal is obvious: tests are graded automatically, the feedback is immediate, and it allows for better analytics at the school and district levels. It also better prepares K-12 students for high-stakes online assessment environments, such as state and district level testing and, in some cases, college entrance exams.

But a common concern of teachers is how to protect the integrity of online tests. Students are one click away from searching the internet for answers. And they often sit shoulder-to-shoulder with other students, making wandering eyes a problem. The following tips will help remove the temptation to cheat during online tests in classrooms or other proctored settings...

1 **Offer more frequent, short quizzes** so students keep up on their classwork. This also reduces the incentive to cheat because the value of each quiz is lower than a major, comprehensive exam.

2 **Randomize the order of test questions and answer choices**. Or, have questions randomly selected from a larger pool of questions. These are basic features of most assessment systems, and their implementation will deter students from looking at someone else's screen.

3 **If your school has an honor code, present it to students prior to each test.** Establish a culture of honesty early on - if the instructor has openly explained that cheating is unacceptable and has created an environment where cheating is difficult, students are much less likely to attempt it.

4 **Apply a password to the online test** and provide students the password just prior to the start. This prevents someone from accessing the test outside of the presence of the teacher or proctor.

5 **Require students to use LockDown Browser for online tests.** LockDown Browser is a custom browser that locks down the testing environment within a learning management system like Canvas, Schoology, and Moodle. It prevents Internet searches, accessing notes or other applications on the computer, or copying the test questions themselves, among other things. LockDown Browser is used at over 2,400 school districts and colleges, protecting hundreds of millions of exams annually.

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