

Offering Students Choices from Day One



CREATED BY: TeacherVision Staff

Here are some suggestions on specific choices to give your students.

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- Give students one free homework pass each quarter.
- Give five homework options a week. Students choose three they want to complete.
- Give assignments at the beginning of the week that are due at the end of the week. For those who complete their assignments by Friday there is no weekend homework. Others have the weekend to finish.
- Post homework assignments on a bulletin board each week. Rotate "homework experts" each week so students who are absent can receive important information from their peers.
- Choose different ways that you and students present information on a particular topic. During the year, ensure that each student has an opportunity to teach something to the class.
- Ask students what they need to complete a task or assignment successfully.
- Create 120 point tests in which students need to complete items that total 100 points, including some required items.
- Give students the option of creating one 3"x5" study card that they can use while taking a test. You would be surprised how creative students are in organizing information on one little card. By creating the card they have gone a long way toward learning the content.
- Give individual students several options for how they want to be tested on specific content.
- Brainstorm a big list of options that describe how students can demonstrate what they know and what they've learned that include assessments that are not paper and pencil. Then let the class decide what assessment(s) to use for a particular unit of study.
- Review and grade tests in class. Have special pens or colored pencils so students aren't tempted to rewrite original answers rather than correcting or adding new information. Encourage students to make notes and ask questions. Then offer opportunities for students to take the test again.
- Invite students to create questions and problems for tests.
- Have students choose "study buddies" who help each other review and study before a test.
- Have students write a letter to themselves making two predictions about things that they will do in the next three months. Have them give it to you and return it to them in December.
- More [Personalizing the Secondary Classroom](#)

Adapted from *Partners in Learning: From Conflict to Collaboration* by Carol Miller Lieber.



Engaging Schools