



## Ideas to Go

Testing is part of the kindergarten curriculum, so teachers must address the unique behaviors five-year-olds exhibit in response to test phobias, much as they would to calm their young students' fear of spiders. To ease kindergarteners into the concept of testing, I plant the words *test*, *assessment*, and *quiz* early in the school year, using it as many times as possible. For example, I might say, "Let's have a little test. Who can line up without making a sound?" or "Quiz time! Can you name the three colors on our flag?"

As the year progresses, students see that testing is time to show what they can do; something they can feel good about after the test. I talk about why showing what they have learned is important. I communicate this idea to them through an action, such as rubbing my hands together and saying "Oh, boy, I've got an opportunity to show someone how smart I am!" I've had wonderful success with this simple plan.

*Frances A. Leo, MS Ed., CAS, Grade Level Leader, Ivan L. Green Primary School  
Rochester, NY*

To ease test-taking apprehension for primary students, I give fun practice tests, filled with funny drawings and words. For example, after lessons on U.S. symbols, I give an assessment with questions like this one: Which bird is a symbol of freedom in the U.S.? The picture answers were a duck, an eagle, and a chicken. The funny drawings made the children laugh, and they looked forward to taking the next test. Reviewing the answers, I emphasized the humor and said that tests can be a fun way to see how much they learned. Now when my students hear that there's a test, they have much less anxiety.

*Loreta Andersen, 22-year teacher, New York City, NY*

Teach backward to ensure that you cover all the basics, especially in unit and semester tests. In other words, before beginning a unit, create the test, thinking about what you need to assess and how students can show they understand major concepts. Outline those major points during lessons. Working from the assessment tool to instruction ensures that both my students and I cover concepts and standards.

*Grace E. Yohannan, Instructional Manager, College Success Institute, Central Florida  
Community College, Ocala, FL*

## Test Time

**Ending the school year: What unique ideas do you use with your students?  
E-mail your tips and suggestions to [NewsEditor@kdp.org](mailto:NewsEditor@kdp.org).**