

## Qwizdom ReadySet Improved the Passing Rate by 20% on TAKS Exams

**As an eighth grade science teacher** in Texas I am always aware that at the end of the year my students will be expected to pass our state test the TAKS (Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills) as part of the 'No Child Left Behind' Law. This test measures three years (grades 6, 7, and 8) of content in Earth, Life and Physical Science as outlined in our state curriculum, the TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills). More importantly it measures the application of that knowledge in these content areas. In my opinion this test is the hardest of all 8th grade TAKS tests since it addresses higher order thinking skills.

I have used the Qwizdom Student Response System in my classroom to introduce and reinforce curriculum for the past few years. Qwizdom not only provides questions in the three areas of science but these questions can be put into different game formats or altered to meet the needs of a particular teacher. My students in years past enjoyed two such games – Fast Track (a car racing game) and Baseball. The students answer questions to win a game. Amazingly without them knowing, they are learning and having a great time in the process. These remotes also allow the teacher to see how well students in the class are grasping content by presenting the responses in form of a bar graph. This is a great feature because it helped me identify which content had to be readdressed.

This year I was lucky enough to participate in a study of ReadySet, Qwizdom's state standardized curriculum. ReadySet covers all the TEKS students are responsible to know for the TAKS test. For this study I chose one class of 25 students as the Qwizdom Group. They used the remotes with the ReadySet program as a review tool every day for 4 weeks before the TAKS test in May.

The students in the Qwizdom Group really enjoyed using the Student Response System this year. The ReadySet program provides state specific questions that the students answer using the remotes. Each question has a correct answer slide even though the remotes instantly tell the students whether they are correct or not. The answer slide is then followed by at least one and sometimes two explanation slides which further reinforces understanding.

The day of the TAKS came and all 8th grade science students in Texas were tested. I was pleased to see that the Qwizdom Group had a passing rate of 80%. This was excellent! I chose my other class of 25 students as the Control Group. Both classes were similar in ability, male/female ratio and size. The Control Group never used the Student Response System or the ReadySet program and we reviewed for the TAKS test in a traditional way that is done with all students in the 8th grade. The Control Group average was 60%. This was a significant difference from the Qwizdom Group! I teach in an inner city school that is 97% Hispanic. It is a Title I school and all of our students have free breakfast and lunch. Our district passing rate was a disappointing 55.5% in 8th grade science. The state average passing rate for all students taking the science test was 68%. This was 2% lower than last year's results. **Yet, my students who used the ReadySet program not only surpassed the district average but also the state average. Imagine what the passing rate would've been if the entire district had used Qwizdom!**

These results have convinced me that next year I will use the ReadySet program with all my students. The Qwizdom Student Response System coupled with the ReadySet curriculum is an excellent tool that helps all students prepare for their state test in a fun way that they enjoy.

**- Adah Stock**

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