

Better learning by better testing

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Testing is often almost exclusively used only for purposes of assessment or to assign students grades. Yet tests can serve other purposes in educational settings that greatly improve performance: Research in cognitive psychology has shown that a powerful way of improving one's memory for material is to be tested on that material. Tests enhance later retention more than additional study of the material, even when tests are given without feedback.

On the course *analytical mechanics* in theoretical physics, we have recently attempted to enhance learning by testing the students on the course material every second week during a seven-week course. In addition a final exam was arranged. In this talk we will briefly discuss the outcome of this experiment both from the instructor's viewpoint and on the basis of the student feedback.