INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES



My Favorite Mistake

This formative assessment strategy enables teachers to evaluate student misconceptions while also helping them overcome the fear of failure. By celebrating the strengths within "wrong answers" and working out the correct answer as a group, teachers can strategically target students' understanding and build their confidence. The anonymity of the activity shelters students from public embarrassment and allows students to discover that their peers make the same mistakes.

LEARN.K20CENTER.OU.EDU/STRATEGIES

MY FAVORITE MISTAKE

Summary

Given a practice problem or review question, students submit responses on index cards. The teacher selects their favorite wrong answer and shares it with the class, keeping the submitter anonymous. After highlighting the strengths and correct elements of the answer, the class works out the problem together. This strategy normalizes mistakes and enables students to overcome the fear of failure.

Procedure

1. Provide students with a practice problem to solve or a review question to answer.
2. Pass out index cards and ask students to submit their answers on these cards. These answers can be anonymous or, if you choose, can include students' names for assessment purposes.
3. Collect the index cards and separate correct answers from incorrect answers.
4. Find an incorrect answer to share. This answer may be very interesting, very common, or may encourage productive struggle. If names are included on index cards, keep the submitter anonymous.
5. Share this answer with the class. Identify, or ask students to identify, correct elements in this answer. Celebrate these strengths.
6. As a class, discuss and work through the solution together.