

A Better Flashcard

Why Flashcards

- Great tool for memorization
- Involves manipulating an object
- Reinforces the vocabulary taught in class
- Students can study them at almost any time

Problems with Flashcards

- Students find them B-O-R-I-N-G
- Words with words don't engage the brain
- Only the highly motivated use them
- Students lose them or they don't hold up

A Better Flashcard

- Students draw their own - personalizing them
- They are attached on a ring
- Classroom activities include the use of flashcards
- Students learn how to "study" them

Flashcard Construction

1. Teacher types up the words to learn using the template
2. Students draw a heavy colored line down the center. Use a different color for each unit/section
3. Students draw a picture to represent the German word/phrase
4. Students cut on the dotted
5. Students apply glue and fold the card in half. The glue and fold gives the flashcards stability
6. Students punch a hole in the card and place on the ring

So the flashcards are made. Now what?

Students practice the method with the A-B-C pile method

A. Word side up, students go through the flashcards and put them into 3 piles

1. Pile A = words they know very well
2. Pile B = words that they know but not quickly
3. Pile C = words they don't know

B. Student picks up Pile C and continues working the cards into 3 piles.

C. When all the cards are in Pile A, the student picks up that pile, turns the cards over and continues doing the A-B-C pile method looking at the pictures.

Making the cards and doing the A-B-C piles are not enough.

You need to use the flashcards in different activities.

Flashcard Activities

Pick-up (Picture Side Up) = Teacher tells a story or individual sentences and the students pick up the corresponding vocabulary word. This is not a game. Everyone works at finding the matching vocabulary picture.

Categories = Teacher gives a category and students point to or pick up all the words that match that category, i.e. Fruit, Sports, Action Verbs, Things that are yellow. Think of categories from the old Pyramid TV show to challenge the kids.

Pick 3 - Form a sentence = Students randomly pick 3 cards and they need to form a sentence, short story, or dialog using all 3 of those words.

Story add-on = Teacher starts the class with a very basic story line, i.e. There is a girl who likes white elephants. Partners each draw a vocab card and try to work their vocab card into the

story line before their partner does. You can alter this activity by having partners take turns adding sentences to the story.

Clue = Teacher describes a vocab item without using. Students try to find it in their stack or on their ring. Example: It is long. It is a fruit. It is yellow.

Flashcard Games

Tic Tac Toe = Partners put words 9 words in Tic-Tac-Toe formation. Students have to say the German and the English meaning to have it count as right. Playing with picture side up is harder than word side up.

Partner Races = Partners race against each other to see who can go through their pile faster.

Partner Race Complete = same as above, but if a student doesn't know a word, he puts it at the bottom of the pile and must go through his entire stack of cards again.

Beat the Clock = All the students go through their flashcards at the same time and try to say all the vocab words within a certain time period.

4 Corners = 4 students put their card with word side up so the other players can read the word. A deck of cards is shuffled and passed out. Students turn over a card at the same time. If two or three of the cards are the same, i.e. 2 Jacks, the students with the same cards race to call out the other person's vocabulary word with meaning. Winner gets a point.

War = Students hold their own cards in their hands with the picture side up. At the same time, the students flip their cards over so that the word side is facing up on the table. Students race to call out the other person's vocabulary word with meaning first. Winner gets a point. If the same vocab word appears, another word is thrown down and students race again to see who can say that vocab word with its meaning first. Winner gets 2 points, one for each card on the table.

Bingo = Students put a certain number of vocab words down on their desks, i.e. 10 words with the word facing up. Teacher calls out the words as in a regular bingo game. If the student has that word he turns it over to the picture side up. Winner is the person who has all 10 words called. If you have enough vocab cards, you can also have the students arrange their cards into a normal looking bingo board with 25 squares (5x5) or 16 (4x4) and play regular bingo.

Quiz Me Race = Partner B holds Partner A's cards with the words facing up. Partner A says the meaning as Partner B moves through the stack. You can have this be a race against the clock. Whichever partner takes less time to go through the stack wins. Or it could be a race against a different partner group. Both partners have to go through the stack faster than the other partner group.

Guess the words in the story = Students pick out 10 vocab words that they think they will hear in a story or a dialog. They lay those cards on their desks. The teacher tells the story and each time one of those words is used in the story, the student gets a point. If you have pictures or transparencies of your stories, it helps to have the students look at the pictures before they pick their words.

Slap / Point = Students lay out a set of vocab words and work against a partner. Teacher says a word. The first partner to slap the word and/or point to it gets a point. Teachers can make this game more challenging by giving a description of the word or burying the word in a sentence.

Find the word on the Ring = Same as Slap, but the students keep all their words on their ring. They have to go through the ring and find the word.

Resources

<https://www.schoolspecialtyonline.net/ordering/?URLID=1007>

Above is the link to order the loose leaf rings that I used for my vocab cards. School Specialty calls them Book Rings. The 1 1/2" size has item number 30036978 and cost for a box of 100 is \$11.25. This company has comparative prices for most items but the website is not easy to navigate. The best deal they have is for a box of 100 clear transparencies (Highland brand) for a laser printer for under \$15.00. Some of their products are low quality but it's still a great place for school supplies on a teacher's budget.

Laurie's Flashcard Ideas

Flashcards are a basic part of our program too. They are one of the tools that teachers with other methods can use; thereby providing a common tool throughout the program. You just vary your use to have a TPRS twist!! They are also something that "memorizers" feel comfortable with and kinesthetic kids love to do. Here are some ideas that I have used pre and post TPRS.

1. Vary how you assign flashcards...students make their own, students make them for each other, you draw the picture they label, put the picture AND the English on front L2 on back...use all words/no pictures....My favorite is to put the picture AND L2 on the front, English on the back...then as they get more comfortable with the vocab, they just fold over the Spanish so it can't be seen.
- 2A. Pick up...Using picture side...Student lays out all cards. Teacher or Partner calls out words from list and Student picks up. This can be done as pairs as a competition first one to find theirs gets the point. You can build to saying a sentence with the word in it...then a sentence with two words in it and they have to pick up two. Example: I wanted a cheeseburger but ate a pickle. This can be very very BEppy!!!!
- 2B. Pick up a story...same as A but create a passive PMS as you go!!
- 3A. Categories...using L2 side Teacher gives categories (sports you play with a ball, sports you wear shorts in) and students divide up the cards. You can write the categories on a sheet of paper and they can pile them up in the right spot.
- 3B. Categories...let them divide up the cards and label the categories!!!!
4. Portable Bingo...lay the cards out in a square...4x4, 5x5 etc....when the card is called...turn it over (my kids love this!!)
- 5A. Quiz me...One person quizzes the other ...put all the ones they know in one pile...all the ones they don't in another pile. Write a story with the ones you don't know for homework.
- 5B. Quiz yourself...Same as above...keep going over the I don't know pile until it is down to 3 items.
6. Sentences...pick out 3 cards randomly...write a sentence with those words...keep going until you have 10 sentences.
7. Clues....lay out flash cards...Teacher reads clues...student tries to identify item (its a building, it has books, there are people in it, its rarely quiet, people run races there, it is.....a school!)
8. Orden....Picture side up....put cards in alphabetical order!!!
9. Busca!...lay out cards..Teacher says...Look for something you can buy at McDonalds...student hold up card...Teacher asks..what did you find....Student says french fries..class picks up french fries...go on to the next student...when that category is exhausted Teacher calls out a new category.
- 10A. Beat the Clock Students work individually. See how many flashcard words you can correctly identify in ___minutes. If it seems too drill and kill then make sure that they use it to communicate a thought, idea, or feeling. I like corn. I always eat bananas, etc. OR provide them with a structure idea, Sponge Bob likes corn. Steve Austin likes bananas. Profe likes strawberries.
- 10B. Beat the Clock. Students work individually. Go through the pile of cards..quiz yourself...time how long it takes to get through the pile. Do this each day for 5 days..watch your time and accuracy improve!!
- 11A. Answer Me!! Pair up and ask questions...put the flashcards between the partners. Partner A picks up card and asks ? of partner using card as a jumping off point (provide question possibilities for lower levels..) The questions cannot be Yes/No answers....ie...What kind of bananas did you buy? I bought the bananas with ants inside!!
- 11B. Crack Me Up!! same as A except....questioner asks question then answerer tries to say an answer that will make the questioner laugh (no faces or sounds allowed!!) Once there is a laugh they switch roles.