Class Cards

(Excerpted from Class Cards: How to Put Your Students in the Palm of Your Hand.)

Level 1

When you begin to use a set of Class Cards with your students, it will be important to patiently teach and reinforce the concept of having an answer or opinion ready. You will need to state this expectation quite clearly and then be prepared to encourage and nurture its development.

Your expectations can be stated in many ways.
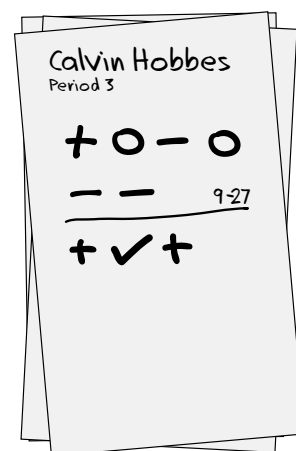
"Have an answer ready, please."
"Don't wait for me to call your name before you begin to think."

Level 2

Once your students have become comfortable with the idea of being called upon randomly—which may require more time than you would have thought—you'll be able to take Class Cards to the next level: recording the quality of their responses on their cards with a pencil. Keeping a record of responses will enable you to hold your students more accountable during lessons and discussions.

Safety: Since responses are now being scored, you might want to allow your students the option of asking for more time. When someone does make this request, merely set the card aside so that you'll remember to get back to him after a couple of other students have been called upon.

Level 3

With the Class Cards app—compatible with an iPhone, iPod Touch, iPad, and Android phones—you'll be able to kick things up a notch.

This app, which can be purchased from the Apple app store or Google Play for $4.99, will do it all.

1. Generates a randomized list of students to call upon.
2. Provides you with a preview of the next four students.
3. Allows you to place a student in the holding area—gray boxes—for more time. A tap on the name sends it the holding area; a second tap returns it to the top.
4. Displays scores in the app or on-line if you've archived them to our secure server. (Archived scores can be viewed, printed, and even downloaded as Excel spreadsheets.)