



Apr 8th, 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM

## Differentiation and its Effects on the Development of Student Study Skills

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# Differentiation and the Development of Study Skills

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## Research Question

- How does differentiation affect the development of student study skills in the high school history classroom?

## Literature Review

- Differentiation helps develop student awareness and creates a *real learner*: a learner who consciously understands his or her learning process (Tomlinson, 2005).
- Differentiating based on student learning preferences promotes self-reflection (Dunn and Darlington, 2016).
- Students who demonstrate *active learning* are more likely to retain information (Moon, 2005).
- Metacognitive study skills help students understand their strengths and weakness through constant self-reflection (Gettinger and Seibert, 2002).

## Methodology

- Study included 126 American History Students.
- Implemented different "review day" assignments to provide students with study options.
- Data sources included Student Survey, Review Day Exit Slips, Student Work, Field Notes.
- Utilized Ryan and Bernard's (2003) theme techniques to analyze data and create a conceptual framework. Themes used included repetition, missing data, and linguistic connectors.

## Student Self-Reflection

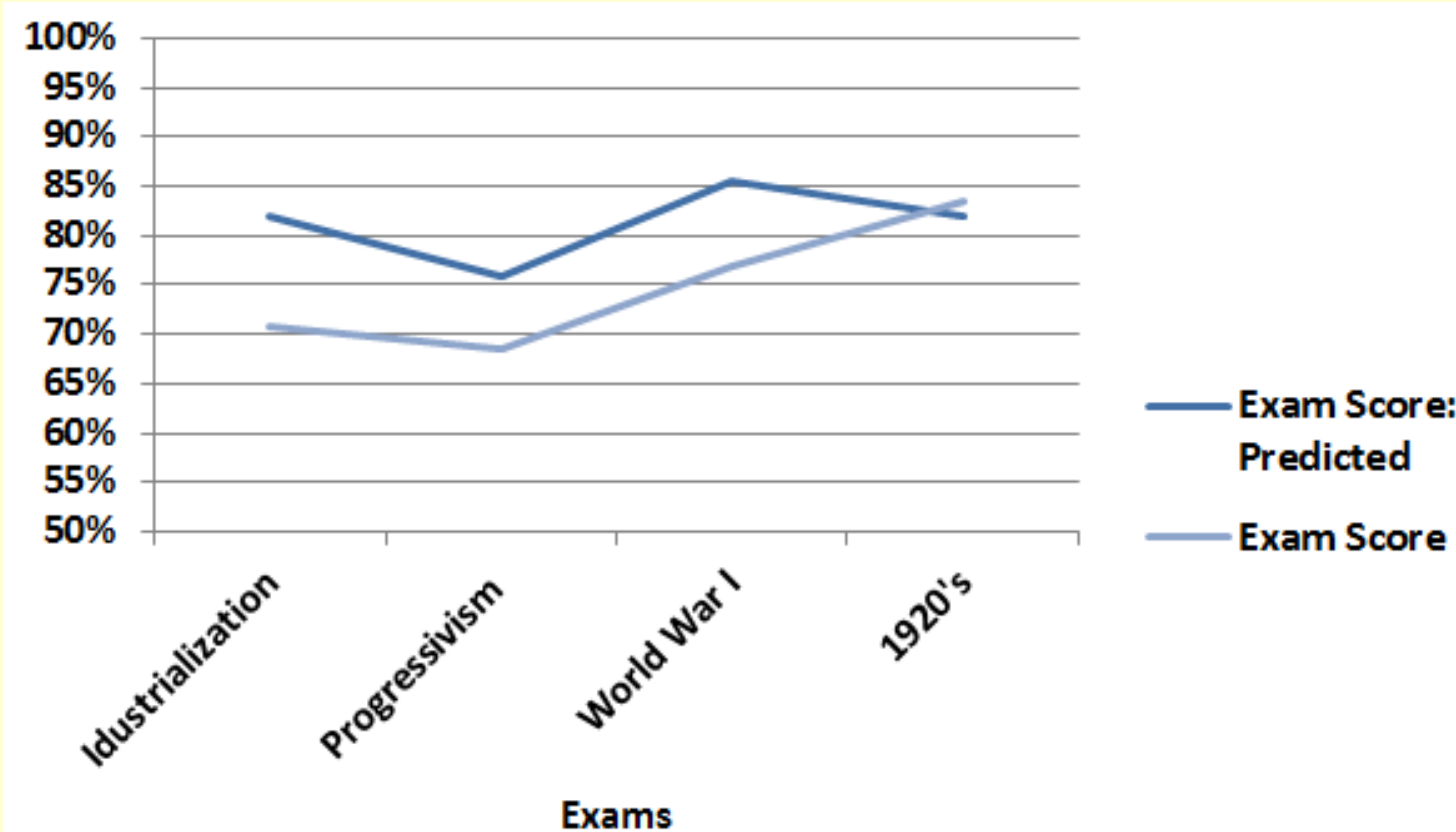


Figure 1. Compares average expected score and class average exam score. Students improved self-reflection skills by being more honest and thoughtful. Students were able to predict that scores would be lower on the Progressivism Exam and felt confident about the 1920s Exam.

## Students Evaluate Preferences Overtime

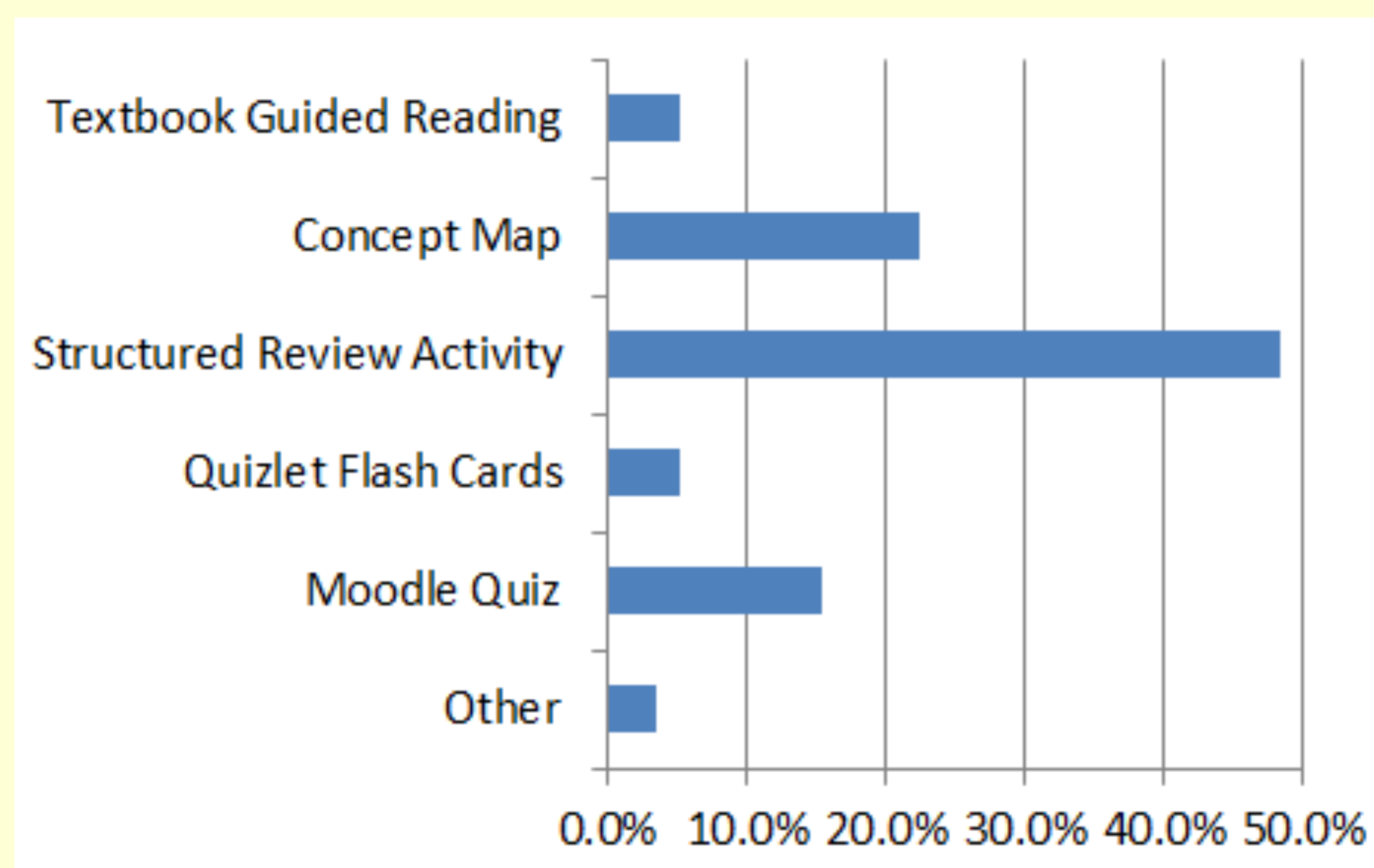


Figure 3. Students express their preferences by reflecting on which review activity proved most effective. Most students started the semester studying the Quizlet Flash Cards (75%), but once they proved ineffective, students chose other review activities.

## Results and Data Analysis

- Students learned how to evaluate their understanding of material and use self-reflection while studying (Figure 1).
- Differentiating throughout lessons and review activities raised student self-awareness. Students learned their preferences and applied those on review day (Figure 2).
- Students chose review activities that were helpful and chose different activities when their studying was not worthwhile (Figure 2).
- Students began to differentiate for themselves, creating individualized ways to review. Overall, students felt that their study skills improved over the course of the semester.

## Conclusion

- Differentiation helped students develop study skills by encouraging active learning and self-reflection. Students improved their study skills which in turn helped raise test scores.
- Data was not collected regarding student studying outside of class-time; future research could include the continuation of skills in an unmonitored setting.
- Including students in conversation regarding differentiation allows students to learn about their strengths, weaknesses and preferences. Teachers should be open with students about the benefits of differentiation.