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Cognitive Load Theory for Constructing Questions

Cognitive load theory (Paas 1993) provides an approach for writing appropriate level questions so that novices will be more likely to answer the intended question. Cognitive load theory focuses on excluding extraneous information and providing only essential information for the learner. Although this approach is generally used to select the fundamental component parts of a topic and then ordering them to scaffold learning the new material, we have also found that better test questions can be constructed using these same principles. Come and experience the difference and learn the principles for writing questions using cognitive load principles.