Testing for Learning

Tests . . .

- Motivate
- Challenge
- Extend
- Provide Feedback

Ideas for learner-centered tests . . .

- Stop the mystery: Utilize pre-tests, give practice tests, conduct review sessions, and link tests explicitly to unit learning outcomes.

- Give second chances: Consider re-administering tests if performance is less than desired. Minimally, provide students with incentives to learn after the test is over.

- Promote deep learning: Avoid memory-based test items and instead write items that require multi-step problem-solving and application to novel situations. Allow the use of a "cheat sheet."

- Demand more: Make tests harder and require more complex thinking. Consider giving "take-home" exams, but couple them with in-class "verification-of-learning" activities.

- Make tests relevant and focused on critical outcomes.