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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

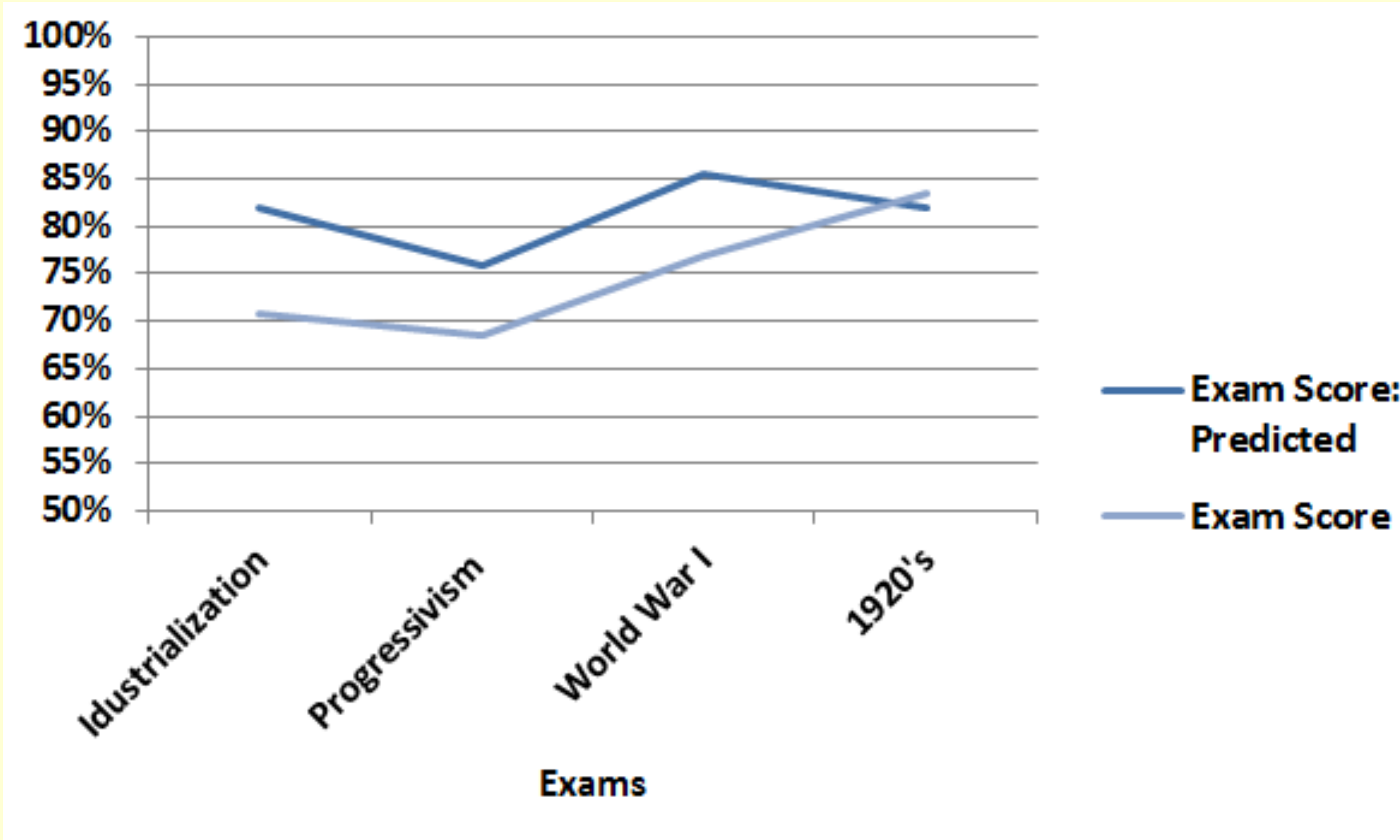


Figure 1. Compares average expected score and class average exam score. Students improved self-reflection skills by being more honest and thoughtful. Students were able to predict that scores would be lower on the Progressivism Exam and felt confident about the 1920s Exam.

Students Evaluate Preferences Overtime

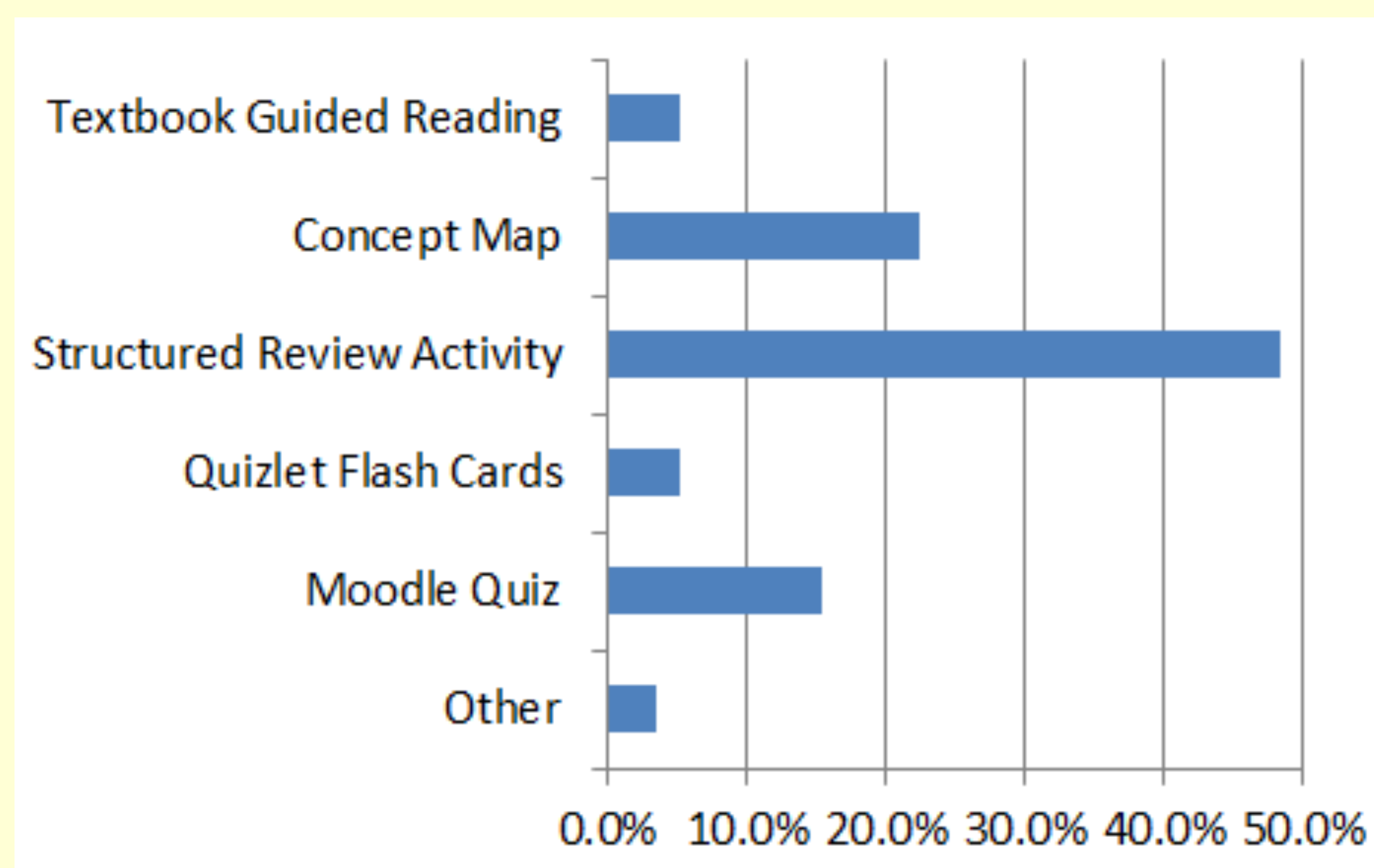


Figure 3. Students express their preferences by reflecting on which review activity proved most effective. Most students started the semester studying the Quizlet Flash Cards (75%), but once they proved ineffective, students chose other review activities.

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.