

# TEST TAKING

MADE COMFORTABLE



CN Guidance Department



# Before the Test

1. Be sure to find out ahead of time:
  - a. What material the test will cover.
  - b. What type of test it will be (multiple choice, true/false, short answer, essay)
  - c. How the test will be graded.
  - d. How much the test will count toward the final grade.
2. Study in a place that is free of distractions. Have ready all the things you will need, such as paper, pens, or a calculator.
3. Study at a time when you are alert and not hungry or sleepy.
4. Don't wait until the last minute to study! Short daily sessions are better than one long session the night before the test.
5. Set a goal for each study period. If you are being tested on three chapters, set up four study sessions, one for each chapter and one for a review of the main ideas in all three chapters.
6. Repetition is the key! Read and reread your class notes and the relevant chapters in the textbook.
7. While you are reviewing your notes, cover them up periodically and summarize them out loud. Pretend that you are explaining the materials to someone else.
8. Create your own study aids.
  - a. Make an outline from your notes of just the main ideas.
  - b. Make flash/memory cards for studying vocabulary or events and important dates.
  - c. Make your own quiz or test based on your notes and have a friend, parent or sibling test you.
9. Do any practice tests or study sheets provided by the teacher. These will help you focus and give you confidence.
10. Get help from the teacher if you do not understand something.

# During the Test

- Bring at least two pens/pencils with good erasers, calculator with enough batteries and any other resources that your instructor allows you to.
- Bring a watch to the test with you so that you can better pace yourself.
- Keep a positive attitude throughout the whole test and try to stay relaxed, if you start to feel nervous take a few deep breaths to relax.
- Keep your eyes on your own paper, you don't want to appear to be cheating and cause unnecessary trouble for yourself.
- When you first receive your test, do a quick survey of the entire test so that you know how to efficiently budget your time.
- Do the easiest problems first; don't stay on a problem that you are stuck on especially when time is a factor.
- Do the problems that have the greatest point values first.
- Read the entire question and look for keywords.
- Ask the instructor for clarification if you don't understand what they are asking for on the test.
- Write legibly, if the grader can't read what you wrote they'll most likely mark it wrong.
- Always read the whole question carefully, don't make assumptions about what the question might be.
- If you don't know an answer skip it, go on with the rest of the test and come back to it later, maybe on another part of the test there'll be something that will help you out with that question.
- Don't worry if others finish before you; focus on the test in front of you.
- When you are finished, if you have time left look over your test, make sure that you have answered all the questions, only change an answer if you misread or misinterpreted the question because the first answer that you put is usually the correct one. Watch out for careless mistakes and proofread your essay and/or short answer questions.
- Double check to make sure that you put your first and last name on the test.

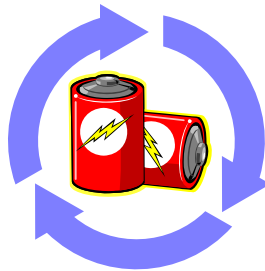
- Address and answer all parts of the question. Re-read the question periodically while you are answering it to make sure you have covered all of its parts. Try listing all of the points you need to address and checking them off as you go.
- Interpret action words. If the question asks you to *define, describe, compare, contrast, explain, or summarize*; make sure that what it asks for is what you are doing.
- Get down to business. Don't waste a lot of time deliberating about the question. Try to get started by outlining, then just start writing. Often, once you get started the ideas start flowing. If you are really stuck, write what you do know and try for partial credit.
- Don't write long introductions and conclusions. The bulk of your time should be spent on answering the question(s) asked).
- If you make a mistake, simply draw a line through it, it is much neater and quicker than erasing or using "White Out".



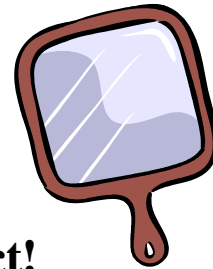
# After The Test

- When you get your test back look it over and make sure that there are no grading mistakes.
- Look over the test and make sure that you understand your mistakes, if you don't know the answer to a question, either look it up, ask a classmate or ask the teacher.
- If the teacher reviews the test in class, be sure to take notes on what the teacher wanted for an answer on the questions/problems that you got wrong..
- If you aren't satisfied with your grade, go to your instructor and see if there's a make-up exam or any extra credit you can do.
- Save the test to study for future cumulative tests.

**Re-energize!**



**Reflect!**



**Re-focus!**



**There's only room for future improvement.**

**Worrying now won't produce better results.**

# Knowing the Test Type

## Tips for taking Multiple Choice Tests:

- Think of an answer in your head before you look at the choices. This can make the choices less confusing.
- Read all of the options. Eliminate incorrect answers to narrow your choices.
- Try each option with the original question and decide if it makes a true or a false statement. This method is especially helpful on tests where there can be more than one answer.
- Whenever you see "all of the above" as an option, double check to see if there might be more than one correct response.
- Watch for negative words in the question such as "except" or "not."
- Be aware that you might find information that will help you answer one question within other questions on the test.

## Tips for Taking True/False Tests:

- Carefully read all of the qualifying words such as *all*, *most*, *some*, *never*, *always*, *usually*, *more*, and *less*. Be especially cautious of 100% words like *all*, *best*, *only*, *always*, and *never*.
- There are usually more true answers than false answers on most tests.
- If any part of a question is false, then the entire statement is false, but just because part of a statement is true doesn't necessarily make the entire statement true.

## Tips for Taking Open Book Tests

- Spend an equal or greater amount of time preparing as you would for a normal test; the open book test will most likely be harder than if it were a closed book exam.
- Familiarize yourself with the book and relevant materials.
- If it's allowed, write down all the important formulas and key information on a separate sheet so you don't have to search through your book for it.
- Focus on learning the main ideas and get a feel for where they are located in the book, learn the details later if there's still time.
- Highlight important points, use post-it notes, bookmarks and make notes in your book, if it is allowed.
- Bring all the resources that your professor or teacher allows for.
- Answer the easy questions that you know off the top of your head first, then go back and answer the questions where you need to reference your book.
- Use quotations from the book to support your view, but don't over-quote, be sure to give your own insight and commentary.



## **Tips for Taking Short Answer Tests:**

- Use flashcards, writing the key terms, dates and concepts on the front and the definition, event, and explanations on the back.
- Try to anticipate questions that will be asked on the test and prepare for them. Usually what your instructor emphasizes in class will be on the test.
- Try not to leave an answer blank, show your work/write down your thoughts, even if you don't get the exact answer, partial credit is usually awarded.
- If you don't know the answer, come back to it after you finish the rest of the test and make an educated guess. Other parts of the test may give you clues to what the answer may be.
- If you can think up of more than one answer for a question, ask the instructor what to do.
- Read the question carefully and make sure that you answer everything that it asks for; some short answer questions have multiple parts.

## **Tips for Taking Essay Tests:**

- Read the directions carefully; pay close attention to whether you are suppose to answer all the essays or only a specified amount (i.e. Answer 2 out of 3)
- Write down a brief outline. Jot down your main ideas and supporting points. This will help you organize your thoughts and you may get credit for ideas in your outline if you run out of time on your essay.



## Tips for Taking Tests with Matching:

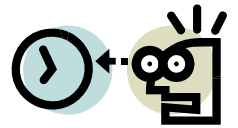
- Preview both lists to be matched to get an idea of all the options of each.
- As you start to match items, look at one list and think of the answer in your head before you search the other list.
- Guess only at the end. If you are unsure and guess incorrectly early, correct answers for later matches will be eliminated.
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## Tips for Taking Problem Solving tests:

- If you get stuck on a problem just start trying different ways to solve it on scratch paper. Use formulas that seem like they might fit. Once you get started you might stumble across the right way to do it.
- Make sure to check your work. Plug answers back into equations and verify that your answers make sense (i.e., an age wouldn't be a negative number).



# Reducing Test Stress



The following are tips on reducing test taking anxiety.

- Being well prepared for the test is the best way to reduce test taking anxiety.
- Try to maintain a positive attitude while preparing for the test and during the test. Develop reasonable expectations.
- Exercising for a few days before the test will help reduce stress.
- Get a good night's sleep before the test.
- Show up to class early so you won't have to worry about being late.
- Stay relaxed, if you begin to get nervous take a few deep breaths slowly to relax yourself and then get back to work.
- Read the directions slowly and carefully.
- If you don't understand the directions on the test, ask the teacher to explain it to you.
- Write down important formulas, facts, definitions and/or keywords in the margin first so you won't worry about forgetting them.
- Do the simple questions first to help build up your confidence for the harder questions.
- Don't worry about how fast other people finish their test; just concentrate on your own test.
- If you don't know a question skip it for the time being (come back to it later if you have time), and remember that you don't have to always get every question right to do well on the test.
- If you still experiencing extreme test anxiety after following these tips, seek help from your school Counsellor.

# Going Blank!

If you “blank out” during a test, it means you cannot remember what you have studied. Your mind is a “blank”. It is usually a result of being too nervous. You must calm yourself down so you can think clearly again.

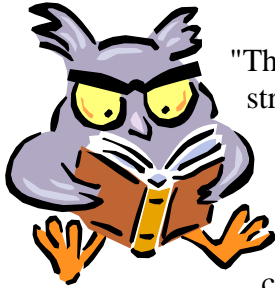
## 1. Use relaxation techniques.

- Take deep breaths without making any noise. Fill your lungs, and hold your breath for a count of five. Let the air out slowly through your nose./
- Shake your arms down by your side-loosen body tension.
- Count slowly to 25 while staring at the floor, desk or wall. This takes your mind off the test.



2. **Change your test taking location.** Discuss your anxiety problem with your teacher.
3. **“Brainstorm”.** In the margin or on the back of the paper, write as many words as you can think of about the topic. Don’t stop to decide if a word is important or spelled correctly. Just keep moving your pen without stopping. Writing words helps to unlock your memory, so you will be able to remember the material you studied.
4. **Move on to the next question** if you don’t know an answer, so you can come back to it later. Don’t get stuck on one question. The answer or clue to one question, may be found elsewhere.
5. **Fold the test paper,** so you can only see the section you are working on. Looking at the entire test can make a person panic.
6. **Visualize.** Close your eyes and think about a place where you feel happy and peaceful. Visualize yourself in this place. Try to “see, feel, smell” how it looks.

# Words of Wisdom



"The difference between a successful person and others is not a lack of strength, not a lack of knowledge, but rather in a lack of will." **Vincent T. Lombardi- noted football coach**

"Desire is the key to motivation, but it's the determination and commitment to an unrelenting pursuit of your goal - a commitment to excellence - that will enable you to attain the success you seek."  
**Mario Andretti- race car driver**

"Unless you're willing to have a go, fail miserably, and have another go, success won't happen."  
**Phillip Adams- broadcaster, writer and film maker**

"Life's real failure is when you do not realize how close you were to success when you gave up."  
**Anonymous**

"One important key to success is self-confidence. An important key to self-confidence is preparation."  
**Arthur Ashe – famous tennis player**

"Failure is success if we learn from it."  
**Malcolm Forbes- newspaper and magazine publisher**

"It is our attitude at the beginning of a difficult task which, more than anything else, will affect its successful outcome."  
**–William James- philosopher and psychologist**

"...the price of success: dedication, hard work, and a devotion to the things you want to see happen."  
**Frank Lloyd Wright-famous architect**