

Test Taking Skills



Tips on how to be a successful test taker.

TEST ANXIETY INDICATOR

Check the response that seems to best describe you this term.

		Never	Sometimes	Always
1.	I procrastinate so much that I am always behind in my assignments.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.	I found it necessary to cram for the last test I took.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.	I read the textbook, but do not highlight or take other kinds of textbook notes.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4.	I have trouble sleeping the night before a test.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5.	I fear consequences of failing the test.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6.	I can't help but remember what happened on the last test: I really blew it.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7.	My negative voice is quick to tell me what I can't do.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8.	I can feel a lot of tension in my shoulders, arms or face on the day of the test.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9.	My heart beats fast during the test.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10.	I feel hot, clammy or downright sick during a test.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11.	I am much more hesitant to enter the classroom.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12.	I try and find excuses not to go to school on the day of the test.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13.	I am irritable, snappy, impatient and sometimes even rude right before a test.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14.	I make careless mistakes in the test. Sometimes I can't believe the answers that I marked.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15.	As soon as I leave the classroom after taking a test, I remember answers that I didn't know during the test.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16.	My mind goes blank, but I know the answers.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17.	I get distracted and annoyed by the littlest things others do in class during a test.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

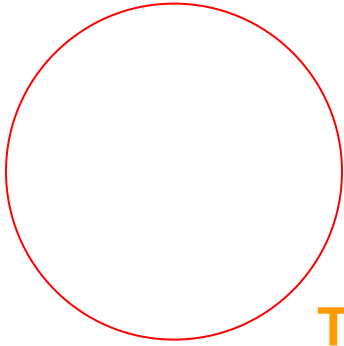
		Never	Sometimes	Always
18.	I always worry about not having enough time to complete tests.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
19.	Without knowing why, I panic and start changing answers right before I turn the test in.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20.	I get stuck on one question and become stubborn. I don't want to move on until I remember the answer.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
21.	I hurry to get out of the room and out of the test as quickly as possible.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
22.	Enough is enough. I don't even want to think about going back to check my answers or proofread.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
23.	I turn in tests that are incomplete even when I have more time.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
24.	I find myself blaming the teacher, my family or my friends because I am not prepared for this test.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
25.	I did not find time to make summary notes or review effectively.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Answers in the NEVER column = No problem; no indicators of test anxiety.

Answers in the SOMETIMES column = Possible indicators; seek ways to alter your behavior.

Answers in the ALWAYS column = Sources of test anxiety; seek strategies to reduce these.

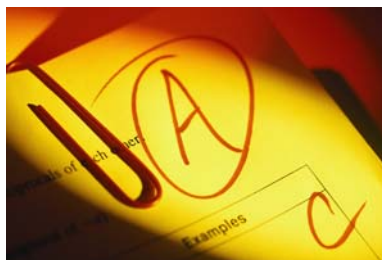




Test Procedures

This is a timed test. You must complete it in four minutes.

1. Carefully read all of the instructions below.
 2. Write your name in the upper right-hand corner.
 3. Write your address in the lower left-hand corner
 4. If you have carefully followed directions to this point, shout in a clear voice, "YES".
 5. Using the tip of your pencil, punch a hole under the "four" in the instructions above.
 6. Repeat loud your first name, middle initial and last name.
 7. On the back of this sheet, draw a heart with an arrow through it.
 8. In the upper left-hand corner, draw a picture of your mother-in-law. If you don't have a mother-in-law, draw a picture of the teacher.
 9. If you have followed all instructions, walk to the board and write, "I am perfect" and sign your name underneath.
 10. Now that you have finished reading all of the instructions as directed in number one, ignore steps three through nine.
-



“The Fribbled What?”

Take the following multiple-choice test. Remember to examine the questions carefully because they contain clues to the correct answer!

1. Trassig normally occurs when the
 - a. dissels frull
 - b. lups chasses the vom.
 - c. Belgo lisks easily
 - d. Viskal flans, if the viskal is zortil

2. The fribbled breg will snicker best with an
 - a. Mors
 - b. Ignu
 - c. Derst
 - d. Sortat

3. What probable causes are indicated when trisl doss occurs in a compots?
 - a. The sabs foped and the doths tinzed.
 - b. The kredges roted with the rots.
 - c. Rakogs were not accepted in the sluth
 - d. Polats were thonced in the sluth.

4. The primary purpose of the cluss in frumpaling is to
 - a. remove cluss-prangs
 - b. patch tremalls
 - c. lossen cloughs
 - d. repair plumots

5. Why does the sigla frequently overfest the trelsum?
 - a. All siglas are mellious
 - b. Siglas are always votial
 - c. The trelsum is usually tariuous
 - d. No trelsa are directly fesbable

6. The snickering function of the ignu is most effectively performed in connection with which one of the following snicker snacks?
 - a. Arazma tol
 - b. Fribbled breg
 - c. Groshed stantol
 - d. Fralled stantol

The Fribbled What? – Chapter 6 (Here & Now, March 1993)

1. Trassig normally occurs when the

- a. dissels frull
- b. lups chasses the vom.
- c. Belgo lisks easily
- d. Viskal flans, if the viskal is zortil

Answer D. The question uses the word “normally”, and this is the only answer containing a qualifying phrase.

2. The fribbled breg will snicker best with an

- a. Mors
- b. Ignu
- c. Derst
- d. Sortat

Answer B. This is the only answer beginning with a vowel. The word “an” at the end of the query phrase is the tip-off.

3. What probable causes are indicated when trisl doss occurs in a compots?

- a. The sabs foped and the doths tinzed.
- b. The kredges roted with the rots.
- c. Rakogs were not accepted in the sluth
- d. Polats were thonced in the sluth.

Answer A. The questions asked for more than one cause.

4. The primary purpose of the cluss in frumpaling is to

- a. remove cluss-prangs
- b. patch tremalls
- c. lossen cloughs
- d. repair plumots

Answer A. This answer contains the word “cluss” which was used in the question.

5. Why does the sigla frequently overfest the trelsum?

- a. All siglas are mellious
- b. Siglas are always votial
- c. The trelsum is usually tariusous
- d. No trelsa are directly fesbable

Answer C. The other answers are all absolutes.

6. The snickering function of the ignu is most effectively performed in connection with which one of the following snicker snacks?

- a. Arazma tol
- b. Fribbled breg
- c. Groshed stantol
- d. Fralled stantol

Answer B. Fribbled breg was linked with ignu in Question 2.

PREPARING FOR A TEST



MANAGE REVIEW TIME

Daily assignments
Weekly reviews
Monthly overviews

CREATE REVIEW TOOLS

Study Checklist
Condense notes
Summary Sheets
Flash Cards

PLAN A TEST STRATEGY

Make up a test
Form a [Study Group](#)

Ask the Instructor
what to expect...

Examinations Lecture

I. Preparing For and Taking Exams

A. When to Review

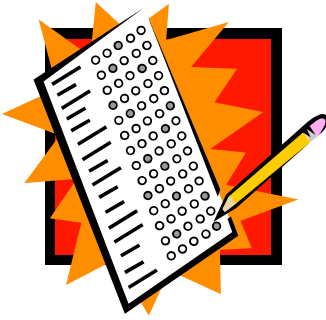
1. **Frequently** during the semester; try to review subjects daily and weekly for more effective learning.
2. Schedule several final review sessions; not one long period.
3. The night before – Briefly review main points and go to bed reasonably early. An appropriate amount of sleep is essential.
 - a. Cramming is undesirable, but better than nothing if study has been neglected during the semester.
 - b. Do not study just before test times (anxiety and memory losses may develop.)

B. Taking Examinations **BREATHE! RELAX...**

4. Procedure or Plan of Action
 - a. Start immediately.
 - b. Read directions carefully.
 - c. Scan exam quickly to determine kinds of questions, how many points for each and whether you have a choice of questions to answer.
 - d. Adopt a time budget for each type of question, allowing time for checking.
 - e. Answer the easiest questions first, usually.
 - f. Try to base your answers on textbook and lectures first, not your own experience.
 - g. Check essay questions for grammar, spelling, smoothness, and clarity.
 - h. Check questions where you are unsure of the answer.
 - i. Check all questions if time is available.
 - j. Try to be the last to leave, not the first. Use your extra time for checking.

Multiple Choice Questions

- A. Don't expect trick questions.
- B. Always guess if no penalty for wrong answers.
 - 1. Eliminate answers definitely wrong.
 - 2. Make an educated guess among plausible answers.
 - 3. Use exam cues (unintentional mistakes of the test-maker):
 - a. Qualified answer more likely correct than absolute.
 - b. Unduly long answer more likely right.
 - c. Avoid choosing either of two synonyms.
 - d. If opposites used, one is probably correct.
 - e. Avoid bizarre or completely unfamiliar distracters.
 - f. Watch for consistent grammatical structure between stem and answer.
 - g. Clues to some answers may be found in other questions.
 - h. ***Use the above suggestions only when guessing. They are no help with a sophisticated test and no substitute for thorough preparation.***
 - 4. Follow directions meticulously if special answer sheet is used.
 - a. Is a special pencil required?
 - b. Put answer mark in proper space. Make mark just dark enough.
 - c. Avoid all extraneous marks; make careful erasures.
 - d. Check question number with answer frequently.
 - 5. Mark questions where unsure of answer. Go on and return to these questions as soon as finished.
 - 6. Trust your instincts. On multiple choice questions, usually your first choice is the correct choice. Only change your answer if you are sure of the correction or other clues in the test prompt you to change.



TEST DAY!!

AS YOU BEGIN:

- ✓ Arrive Early
- ✓ Have Test Supplies on your Desktop
- ✓ Bring an extra Scantron or Blue Book
- ✓ Put All of Your Belongings Away
- ✓ Turn **Off** Your Phone
- ✓ Pay Attention to Verbal Directions
- ✓ Read **ALL** of the Test Directions
- ✓ Budget Your Time

DURING THE TEST:

- ✓ Answer the Easiest Questions First
- ✓ Use Memory Techniques/write down your cues
- ✓ Pace Yourself, Stay Relaxed and Focused
- ✓ Trust Your Instincts, Don't Change Answers
- ✓ Look For Answers in Other Questions
- ✓ RELAX and get into the test



RELAXATION

An Incompatible Response to Anxiety & Tension

The Relaxation Process Includes Four Stages:

1. Deep Breathing
2. Cognitive Muscle Relaxation
3. Visualization or Imagery
4. Awakening State

A simple relaxation exercise at your desk

1. Sit straight up in your chair, feet flat on the floor, hands resting in your lap face up and with your eyes closed.
Let the noise in the room pass through your mind but don't focus on it. Let it go.
Take slow deep breathes, in through the nose out through your mouth, feel the air enter and exit slowly. Do this 6 times. Fill your lungs slowly and slowly let the air out. You are slowing down.
2. Starting with your feet, tighten both of your feet, as tight as you can, count to 6 and let go.
Breathe in and breathe out.
Move to your calves, then your thighs, your bottom, your stomach, your chest, then your arms and hands. Hold each area tight for 6 counts, then let go. Feel the tingling and relax into it.

Pull your shoulders up to your ears and hold for 6 counts and then let go. Scrunch your face up and tighten the top of your head, count to 6, then let go.

Feel the tension leave your body. Relax. Breathe easy.

3. After you have tightened each of your muscles, continue to sit for 3 minutes more breathing gently, letting thoughts pass through and out of your head. Eventually try not to think about anything at all, try to clear your mind of thoughts and just breathe.
4. After 3 minutes slowly bring yourself back into the room and feel the quiet calm throughout your body.



Words to watch for within test questions

- Analyze:** Break into separate parts and discuss, examine, or interpret each part.
- Compare:** Examine two or more things. Identify similarities and differences.
- Contrast:** Show differences. Set in opposition.
- Criticize:** Make judgments. Evaluate comparative worth. Criticism often involves analysis.
- Define:** Give the meaning; usually a meaning specific to the course or subject. Explain the exact meaning. Definitions are usually short.
- Describe:** Give a detailed account. Make a picture with words. List characteristics, qualities, and parts.
- Discuss:** Consider and debate or argue the pros and cons of an issue. Write about any conflict. Compare and contrast.
- Enumerate:** List several ideas, aspects, events, things, qualities, reasons, etc.
- Evaluate:** Give your opinion or cite the opinion of an expert. Include evidence to support the evaluation.
- Explain:** Make an idea clear. Show logically how a concept is developed. Give the reasons for an event.
- Illustrate:** Give concrete examples. Explain clearly by using comparisons or examples.
- Interpret:** Comment upon, give examples, describe relationships. Explain the meaning. Describe, then evaluate.
- Outline:** Describe main ideas, characteristics, or events. (Does not necessarily mean "write a Roman numeral/letter outline.")
- Prove:** Support with facts (especially facts presented in class or in the text).
- Relate:** Show the connections between ideas or events. Provide a larger context.
- State:** Explain precisely.
- Summarize:** Give a brief, condensed account. Include conclusions. Avoid unnecessary details.
- Trace:** Show the order of events or progress of a subject or event.

Tips to Avoid Cramming

Begin by early review:

- Be prepared for your next class by glancing through previous notes
- Skim the chapter(s) to be covered or read chapter summaries

After class:

- Review notes and add thoughts and ideas that come to mind from class
- Use highlighters or draw stars or arrows to emphasize key concepts
- Incorporate recent material with previous material

Continuous review will help commit material to long term memory

When reviewing for the final

- Outline or organize material from memory
- Recite by speaking out loud or by writing

Remember: Take breaks!!

Tips for Cramming (when you can't avoid it!)

Focus on main concepts and ideas

- Read chapter summaries or skim the chapter
- Highlight vital concepts in textbook and notes
- Write key ideas/formulas down and review from that

Review past tests, homework and/or review guides

Take a five minute break every hour or so to relax and let the material sink in

Avoid sugar or caffeine which may make you alert for the moment but can lead to a heavy crash near exam time. Also, don't overeat to avoid sluggishness

Keep a positive attitude

Get adequate sleep before the test!

For more on Study Skills, attend one of our Study Skills Workshops!