

Test Taking Skills



Tips on how to be a successful test taker.

Consider these questions:

What are your first thoughts and feelings when you hear there is going to be a test?

Have you ever considered what bad testing experiences you may have had in the past that still reflect on your attitude towards taking tests in the present?

Do you study over time for a test, or a week or less before the test?

Do you consider a test to be a good way to measure your effort, knowledge and ability?

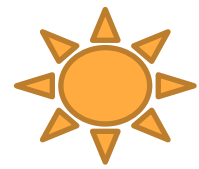
Can you imagine looking forward to taking a test? How would that look to you?

If you had to describe the function of testing to a child, would you put it in a positive or negative light? What would you say?

Effort and Attitude

“There are two things in life of which we have complete control . . . effort and attitude.”

-Chuck Wilson

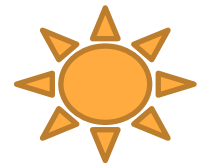


TEST ANXIETY INDICATOR

Check the response that seems to best describe you this term
or click here for the pdf: <https://bit.ly/308D2NZ>

Never Sometimes Always

1. I procrastinate so much that I am always behind in my assignments.
2. I found it necessary to cram for the last test I took.
3. I read the textbook, but do not highlight or take other kinds of textbook notes.
4. I have trouble sleeping the night before a test.
5. I fear consequences of failing the test.
6. I can't help but remember what happened on the last test: I really blew it.
7. My negative voice is quick to tell me what I can't do.
8. I can feel a lot of tension in my shoulders, arms or face on the day of the test.
9. My heart beats fast during the test.
10. I feel hot, clammy or downright sick during a test.
11. I am much more hesitant to enter the classroom.
12. I try and find excuses not to go to school on the day of the test.
13. I am irritable, snappy, impatient and sometimes even rude right before a test.
14. I make careless mistakes on the test. Sometimes I can't believe the answers that I marked.
15. As soon as I leave the classroom, I remember answers that I didn't know during the test.
16. My mind goes blank, but I know the answers.



TEST ANXIETY INDICATOR

Check the response that seems to best describe you

Never Sometimes Always

17. I get distracted and annoyed by the littlest things others do in class during a test.
18. I always worry about not having enough time to complete tests.
19. I often panic and start changing answers right before I turn the test in.
20. I get stuck on one question and don't want to move on until I remember the answer.
21. I hurry to get out of the room away from the test as quickly as possible.
22. Enough is enough. I don't want to go back to check my answers or proofread.
23. I turn in tests that are incomplete even when I have more time.
24. I often blame other's when I am not prepared for a test.
25. I did not find time to make summary notes or review effectively.

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.

“The Fribbled What?”

Chapter 6 (Here & Now, March 1993)

Take the following multiple-choice test. Remember to examine the questions carefully because they contain clues to the correct answer! Look for the “key word” that helps you find the 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.

“The Fribbled What?”

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 feskable

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



Stop here.

The Fribbled What? – explained

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 tristl 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.

The Fribbled What? – explained

4. The primary purpose of the cluss in frumpaling is to
- remove cluss-prangs
 - patch tremalls
 - lossen cloughs
 - 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?
- All siglas are mellious
 - Siglas are always votial
 - The trelsum is usually tariuous
 - No trelsa are directly feskable

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?
- Arazma tol
 - Fribbled breg
 - Groshed stantol
 - Fralled stantol

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

Q- When do I begin to study for a test?

A- You study and review all semester!

Preparing For Exams

When to Review:

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

Taking the Test

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

Go slow, be methodical, remember this is your time to show what you have learned.



Multiple Choice Questions

Relax yourself and approach the test thoughtfully:

Don't expect trick questions

Eliminate answers that are definitely wrong

Make an educated guess among plausible answers

1. 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.**

Test Taking Tips

Tools You Will Need:

Stock up on Blue Books and Scantrons

Black pens and #2 pencils

A calculator and scratch paper



Taking the Test:

- Remove all items from your desk including your phone
- Put answer mark in proper space. Make mark dark enough.
- Avoid all extraneous marks; make careful erasures.
- Check question number with answer frequently.
- Mark questions where unsure of answer. Move on and return to the question(s) as soon as finished
- 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 your mind.

RELAXATION: An Incompatible Response to Anxiety and 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

- Sit up straight in your chair, feet flat on the floor, hands resting in your lap, face up with your eyes closed. Let the noise in the room pass through your mind but don't focus on it. Let it become background noise. 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 with air slowly and then slowly let the air out. You are calming yourself down.
- Start with your feet, clench both of your feet as tight as you can, count to 6 and let go. Breathe in and breathe out. Move to your calves, tighten for the count of 6, and then let go, 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 the count of 6 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.
- After you have tightened each of your muscles, sit quietly for 3 minutes more breathing gently, letting thoughts pass. Eventually try not to think about anything at all, try to clear your mind of thoughts and just breathe.
- After 3 minutes slowly bring yourself back into the room and feel the quiet calm throughout your body.
- It is time to take your test!

Test performance will improve if you are relaxed



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 and/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
- Study with friends

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 to ten minute break every hour or so to relax and let the material sink in.

Keep a positive attitude.

Get adequate sleep before the test!

Avoid sugar and caffeine which makes you alert for awhile but can lead to an energy crash near exam time. Also, don't overeat to avoid sluggishness.



To improve on your study skills, attend one of our Early Alert workshops!

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.

Words to watch for within test questions

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.

Test Taking Tips

Take a deep breath and relax

Read all of the directions carefully

Read the questions carefully

Make sure you understand
what is being asked

Look at all of the choices
before you answer

Paraphrase the question

Eliminate the answers you
know are wrong

Stop and think carefully

Check your work for accuracy

And always do your best.