

TEST-TAKING STRATEGIES AND HINTS FOR SUCCESS

TIPS FOR PREPARING FOR TESTS

How do **you** prepare for tests? Write a paragraph about how you would prepare for a social studies (Civics, Citizenship, History, Government, Geography, etc.) test.

Read the following tips and answer the questions. (All questions are written in italics.)

TIP: Ask or anticipate what material will be covered on the test and write it down.

How do you know what is important in class? How would you know what might be on the test?

TIP: Find out what kind(s) of questions will be on the test.

Why would you want to know what kind(s) of questions will be on the test?

TIP: Organize your notes and other study aids to correspond with the material you believe will be covered and the type of test to be given.

What are some ways you could organize your notes and other class materials?

TIP: Avoid cramming. Begin reviewing the material three to six days prior to the test:

- First night: skim the material.
- Second night: skim material, read margin notes, recite information.
- Third night: read notes, recite information.
- Fourth night: make up a sample test and answer questions.
- Fifth-Sixth night: quiz yourself again, or have someone quiz you.

Why should you study for more than one night?

TIP: Review material the night before the test. Also review that morning when you wake up.

Look at your first paragraph and compare that to the tips given above. What are four things that you can do to improve the way you prepare for tests?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

RELIEVING TEST ANXIETY

Read the following tips for relieving test anxiety and answer the questions. (All questions are written in italics.)

1. Get enough sleep.
2. Eat a good, nutritious breakfast.
3. Exercise may reduce tension and stimulate thinking.
4. Allow enough time to arrive at the class without hurrying.
5. Develop a positive attitude.
6. Make sure you can see the clock (or read your watch) during the test. Plan your time and pace yourself.
7. Choose your seat carefully; sitting by friends may be distracting.
8. Begin by filling in the answers you know.
9. Don't panic if others are busy writing and you are not. Spending time thinking may be better than writing without planning.
10. Don't panic if you forget an answer. Go on to other questions and the answer may occur to you later.
11. Don't worry if others finish before you do. It is not a race; taking time to check over your answers may improve your score.
12. Don't panic if you run out of time. Ask for more time, outline essay questions for partial credit, and guess on answers you may have left blank.

List the numbers of the above tips you currently use for relieving test anxiety.

Which of the tips do you think is best? Why?

STRATEGIES FOR TAKING TESTS

Read the following strategies for taking tests and answer the questions. (All questions are written in italics.)

1. Arrive early.
2. Bring all materials to class with you.
3. Listen carefully to instructor's directions and comments.
4. Look over the test, reading directions carefully.
5. Budget your time.

If you have twenty multiple-choice questions and sixty minutes, how many minutes can you spend per question?

6. Write down key facts or formulas in the margins.

In what class(es) would this be used?

7. Answer easy questions first.
8. Answer multiple-choice and true/false before short answer and essay questions.
9. If you don't know the answer, make a mark next to that question.

Why should you do #9?

10. Guess at answers you don't know, unless there is a penalty for guessing.

What is the probability that you will get a true/false question correct? _____

What is the probability that you will get a four-answer multiple-choice question correct? _____

11. Change answers only if you are sure they are wrong.
12. Use all the time allotted.

List the numbers of the above strategies you currently use for taking tests.

SPECIFIC STRATEGIES FOR DIFFERENT KINDS OF TESTS

Read the strategies for each kind of test, do the practice sections, then apply the tips that were shared in the section next time you take a test!

TRUE-FALSE TESTS

1. Beware of qualifying words.

Words such as always, all, none, never, and so on usually will make a statement false. Words such as usually, sometimes, generally, and frequently will usually make a statement true.

2. Look at the length of the statement.

In order for a statement to be true, all parts must be true. The longer the statement, the more room there is for it to be false.

3. Be aware of false logic.

Two statements that are true may be linked with a word that makes them false. Watch for the connecting word! For example: "The US space shuttle program is famous because there was a shuttle crash." The word because makes the statement false.

4. Guess if you don't know the right answer.

PRACTICE:

Answer *True* or *False* and indicate which tip number above helped you.

_____ St. Olaf is a good college because it has 3000 students.

TIP# _____

_____ Fall is sometimes warmer than spring.

TIP# _____

_____ Bill Clinton was elected in 1992 because he received the greatest number of electoral votes from all the states with the largest number of electoral votes and won a majority of popular votes in all western states and Canada.

TIP# _____

MULTIPLE-CHOICE TESTS

5. Eliminate the answer that is obviously false.

6. Read the question carefully.

7. Read all the choices even if you think the first one is correct.

8. Pay attention to the "all of the above" questions. The "all of the above" choice is frequently correct.

9. Look for the longest answer; it is frequently the correct one.

PRACTICE:

Choose the correct response and indicate which tip number above helped you.

How old is Ryan (from Upward Bound)?

TIP# _____

- a) 5
- b) 19
- c) 27
- d) 100

COMPLETION (FILL-IN-THE-BLANKS) TESTS

- 10. Reread the question several times. Sometimes the answer may occur to you the more you read it.**
- 11. Look for context clues. Often within a question there are clues to the correct answer.**
- 12. "A" and "an" are context clues. If "an" appears, the word following must be a vowel.**
- 13. Look at the verb in the sentence. If it is singular, the subject or answer must be singular.**
- 14. Mark the statements you cannot complete and return to them.**

PRACTICE:

Circle the correct response and indicate which tip number above helped you.

TRiO programs are cost-effective; Educational Talent Search costs only _____ per student. \$263 \$1500 TIP# _____

NCEOA is an _____ group supporting TRiO programs. educational state-funded TIP# _____

TRiO is comprised of _____ educational opportunity programs. one six TIP# _____

ESSAY TESTS

- 15. Plan your time carefully.**
- 16. Know your facts.**
- 17. Organize and outline your answers.**
- 18. Understand the test terminology.**
- 19. Write using complete sentences.**
- 20. Keep answers simple and concise.**
- 21. Include a conclusion or summary.**

PRACTICE:

Why is it important to outline your answers before you begin writing on an essay test?