



TEST TAKING STRATEGIES

Advisement Lesson



PURPOSE OF GOOD STUDY SKILLS

Good study skills can increase your self-esteem, competence, and confidence. Having good study skills can also reduce your worry about taking a test and their deadlines.

By developing effective study skills, you may be able to reduce the number of hours you spend studying, allowing you more time to do other things that need to get done.



STUDY STRATEGIES:

- ❑ Find out ahead of time what material the test covers, what type of test it will be, how the test will be graded, and how much the test will count towards your final grade.
- ❑ Study in a place that is free of distractions and have all your materials ready to use.
- ❑ Study at a time when you are alert and not hungry or sleepy.
- ❑ Don't wait until the last minute to study! Short **daily** study sessions are better than one long session the night before the test.
- ❑ 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.
- ❑ Repetition is key! Read and reread your class notes and the relevant chapters in the textbook.

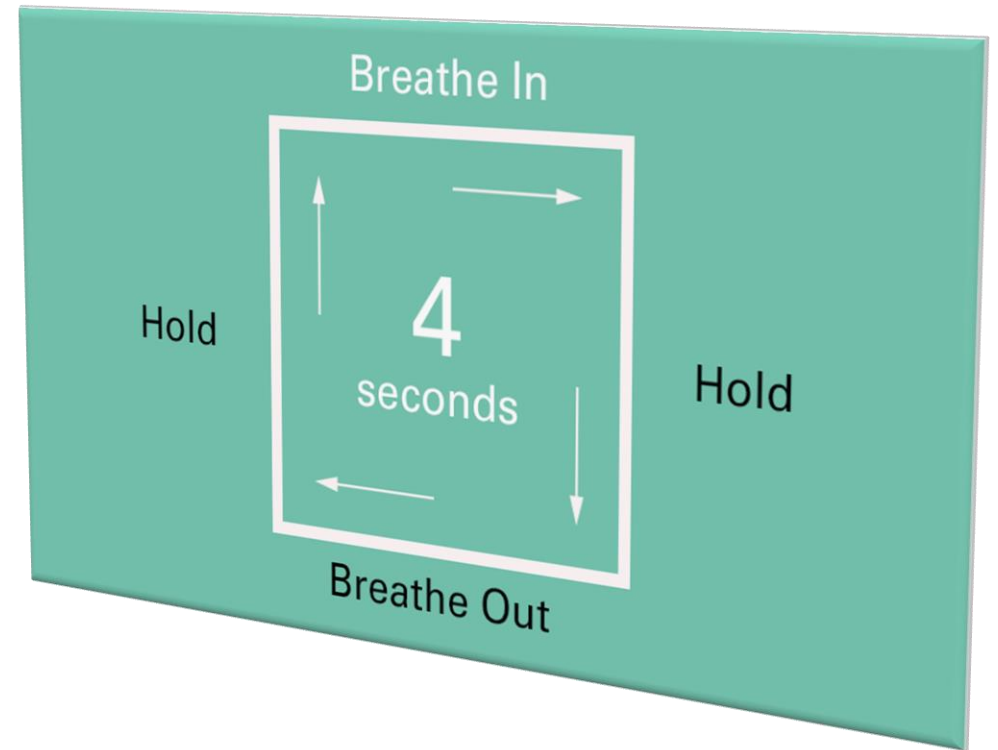
STUDY STRATEGIES:

- ❑ Take good notes!
- ❑ Organize your notes according to what will be on the test.
- ❑ While you are reviewing your notes, cover them up periodically and summarize them out loud. Pretend that you are explaining the material to someone else.
- ❑ Create your own study aids
 - Make an outline from your notes of just the main ideas.
 - Make a timeline of important dates or the order of events.
 - Make flashcards for studying vocabulary or events and important dates.
 - Make up your own quiz or test based on your notes and have a friend, parent or sibling test you.
- ❑ Do you receive any practice exams or study sheets provided from the teacher? These will help you focus your study session and give you confidence.
- ❑ Get help from the teacher if you do not understand something.
- ❑ Finish studying the day before the exam.



STUDY STRATEGIES:

- Get a good night's sleep.
- Eat breakfast.
- Be on time to school.
- Avoid stressful situations prior to the test.





STUDYING IN GROUPS:



It often works best to have just three to five people in a study group. That way, each person gets the time to talk and make sure they understand the material.



Schedule a few study sessions. Whether studying alone or in a group, a few short sessions are much more useful than one long “cram” session.



Having one person act as the leader can help a group to run smoothly. The main goal of the leader is to keep everyone focused on studying so that things don't become too social.



Be prepared! A study group is a place to share your understanding of a subject. The other people in the group aren't there to teach you facts you should already know. The more you can offer the group, the more you'll get out of it.

Creating and sticking to an agenda is important!

- First, compare your notes and review old homework. If there is something you have had trouble understanding, write down your questions about it before meeting with your study group.
- Next, drill each other on facts you need to memorize.
- Lastly, take the time to discuss “why” questions. One way to handle “why” questions is to make a list of important ones you will want to review. Then divide the questions among the group. At your next meeting, have each person present a lesson about their questions.





TEST TAKING TIPS

- ❖ Read the instructions carefully. Never assume you will know what they will say. Ask the teacher if you are unsure about anything.
- ❖ Read the entire test through before starting. Notice the point value of each section. This will help you to pace yourself.
- ❖ Answer the easiest questions first, then the ones with the highest point value. You don't want to spend 20 minutes trying to figure out a low point problem.
- ❖ Keep busy! If you get stuck on a question, come back to it later. The answer might come to you while you are working on another part of the test.
- ❖ If you aren't sure how to answer a question fully, try to answer at least part of it. You might get partial credit.

TEST TAKING TIPS

- ❖ Need to guess on a multiple-choice test? First, eliminate the answers that you know are wrong. Then take a guess. Because your first guess is most likely to be correct, you shouldn't go back and change an answer later unless you are certain you were wrong. If you are unsure or have no idea choose the longest answer.
- ❖ On an essay test, take a moment to plan your writing. First, jot down the important points you want to make. Then number these points in the order you will cover them.
- ❖ Keep it neat. If your teacher can't read your writing, you might lose points.
- ❖ Don't waste time doing things for which you will not receive credit, such as rewriting questions.
- ❖ Leave time at the end to look over your work. Did you answer every question? Did you proofread for errors? It is easy to make careless mistakes while taking a test.





CONCENTRATION AND MEMORY SKILLS

Making an Effort to Remember

- ❖ Interest - The brain prioritizes by meaning, value and relevance. To have meaning, you must understand what you are learning. In order to remember something thoroughly, you must be interested in it and think that it has value and relevance in your life.
- ❖ Intent to Remember - Your attitude has much to do with whether you remember something or not. A key factor to remembering is having a positive attitude that you get it right the first time. Attention is not the same as learning, but little learning takes place without attention.
- ❖ Basic Background - Your understanding of new materials depends on what you already know that you can connect it to. The more you increase your basic knowledge, the easier it is to build new knowledge on this background.

Controlling the Amount and Form

- ❖ Selectivity - You must determine what is most important and select those parts to begin the process of studying and learning.
- ❖ Meaningful Organization - You can learn and remember better if you can group ideas into some sort of meaningful categories or groups.

CONCENTRATION AND MEMORY SKILLS

Strengthening Neural Connections

- ❖ **Recitation** - Saying ideas aloud in your own words strengthens synaptic connections and gives you immediate feedback. The more feedback you get, the faster and more accurate your learning.
- ❖ **Visualization** - The brain's quickest and probably the longest-lasting response is to images. By making a mental picture, you use an entirely different part of the brain than you did by reading or listening.
- ❖ **Association** - Memory is increased when facts to be learned are consciously associated with something familiar to you. Memory is essentially formed by making neural connections. Begin by asking, "What is this like that I already know and understand?"

Allowing Time to Solidify Pathways

- ❖ **Consolidation** - Your brain must have time for new information to establish and solidify a neuronal pathway. When you make a list or review your notes right after class, you are using the principle of consolidation.
- ❖ **Distributed Practice** - A series of shorter study sessions distributed over several days is preferable to fewer but longer study sessions.





Listen to and read instructions carefully -- make sure you understand them.



If you have a question, ask it.



Answer questions completely and with detail.



Check and be sure you have not skipped anything and proofread your answers.



Do not let other test takers distract you -- it makes no difference who finishes first or last.



If you finish early, go back and proof your answers again. But don't change anything unless you are sure. Studies show that the first answer you choose is usually the right one.

DURING THE TEST:



STUDY SMARTER NOT HARDER!

- ❖ Understand each teacher's grading system: what counts - how much does homework count, daily quizzes, projects, tests, etc.
- ❖ Keep all assignments, handouts, tests, etc.
- ❖ Always use study time given in class!
- ❖ Study at the same time and the same place daily.
- ❖ Ask for help as soon as you realize you don't understand.
- ❖ Process information each day - don't wait until right before the test.
- ❖ Make flash cards of thing you think will be on the test as soon as you come to them in class or homework.
- ❖ Form a study group.
- ❖ Take notes and keep them organized and labeled.
- ❖ Do your best on every assignment.
- ❖ Think positive!





AFTER THE TEST...



When the test is returned, read the teacher's comments carefully and try **to learn from your mistakes.**



Save tests for later review for end-of-term tests.