

Test Taking Strategies

READING

1. Read the title/subtitles. Predict what the passage is about.
2. Carefully study any charts, graphs, and/or diagrams.
3. Number the paragraphs.
4. Read the questions carefully circling the key words. **MAKE SURE YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT THE QUESTION IS ASKING!**
5. Beginning with the title, read the passage thoroughly at least two times. Make a mental picture of what is being read.
6. Read the first question and answer choices getting an idea of what the answer may be. Do not bubble in your answer choice.
7. Return to the passage and identify the answer or clues that support the possible answer.
8. Return to the question and eliminate the wrong answers.
9. Bubble in the correct answer and find the paragraph's number the answer/clues were located in. Remember, you have to prove your answer is correct!
10. Repeat steps six through nine for the remainder of the questions.
11. Check to make sure all questions are answered reasonably.

MATH

1. Read the problem at least three times. Make a mental picture of what is being read.
2. Locate key words in the question. **MAKE SURE YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT THE QUESTION IS ASKING!**
3. Identify key numbers and labels.
4. Eliminate unneeded data.
5. Thoroughly study any graphs, charts, or diagrams.
6. Determine the operations/strategies needed to solve the problem.
7. Solve. **SHOW YOUR WORK!**
(On scrap paper, draw a picture, label charts & graphs according to the key, fill in place value chart, draw a number line, etc.)
8. Evaluate the solution. **DOES THE SOLUTION ANSWER THE QUESTION? DOES THE SOLUTION MAKE SENSE?**
9. Check your solution with the choices. If your answer is not found, repeat steps one through eight.
10. Eliminate wrong answers.
11. Bubble in the correct answer.

Test Taking Strategies

Test-Taking Tips for Elementary Students

Tests are important because they help the teacher evaluate a student's needs and progress, the student gauge his or her own level of mastery, and the parent monitor his or her child's progress.

Tips to give your child about taking tests:

- Relax. Just do the best you can.
- Your first choice is usually correct. Don't change an answer unless you have a good reason to do so.
- Be aware of key words such as "all," "now," "always," "never," "only," "exactly."
- In multiple-choice questions, don't skip the longest answer. It should be considered, since test writers want to be sure the correct answer is accurate—they may add lots of details to insure accuracy.
- Watch for negative words like "not," "no," "never."
- Look for information in some of the questions. This information may help you answer other questions.

You can assist your child prepare for testing by doing the following:

- Make sure your child gets a good night's sleep before a test, and make sure your child eats properly the day of a test.
- Maintain a pleasant home environment and avoid unnecessary conflicts. Try to make the morning of the test a pleasant one. Do not add to your child's stress.
- Make sure your child has taken any needed medication.
- Ensure that your child is present during testing (children generally perform better when taking tests in their groups rather than at a make-up time).
- Get your child to school on time the day of the test.
- Wish your child good luck each morning of the test. Tell your child that he/she is special and that you believe in him/her!
- Remind your child the test is important. Encourage him/her to do his/her best.
- If your child is too ill to attend, please call the school office.
- If the test is on a subject for which you can review (such as a spelling test), help your child go over the material.
- Remind your child to listen carefully to the instructions from the teacher and to read the directions and each question carefully.
- Explain to your child the importance of using time wisely. If your child gets stuck on a question, encourage him or her to make the best guess and move on.
- Tell your child to attempt to answer all of the questions and not to leave any blank.
- Encourage your child to stay focused on the test, even if other students finish early.
- If your child is disappointed after taking a test, reassure him or her that there will be plenty of opportunities to improve and succeed.

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Top Ten Test-Taking Tips for Students

Here are the top ten tips to success!

1. Have a Positive Attitude

Approach the big test as you'd approach a giant jigsaw puzzle. It might be tough, but you can do it! A positive attitude goes a long way toward success.

2. Make a Plan

The week before the test, ask your teacher what the test is going to cover. Is it from the textbook only? Class notes? Can you use your calculator? If you've been absent, talk to friends about material you may have missed. Make a list of the most important topics to be covered and use that as a guide when you study. Circle items that you know will require extra time. Be sure to plan extra time to study the most challenging topics.

3. The Night Before

Cramming doesn't work. If you've followed a study plan, the night before the test you should do a quick review and get to bed early. Remember, your brain and body need sleep to function well, so don't stay up late!

4. The Morning of the Test

Did you know that you think better when you have a full stomach? So don't skip breakfast the morning of the test. Get to school early and do a ten-minute power study right before the test, so your brain is turned on and tuned up.

5. Test Time

Before the test begins, make sure you have everything you'll need - scratch paper, extra pencils, your calculator (if you're allowed to use it). Understand how the test is scored: Do you lose points for incorrect answers? Or is it better to make guesses when you're not sure of the answer? Read the instructions! You want to make sure you are marking answers correctly.

6. Manage Your Time

Scan through the test quickly before starting. Answering the easy questions first can be a time saver and a confidence builder. Plus, it saves more time in the end for you to focus on the hard stuff.

7. I'm Stuck!

Those tricky problems can knock you off balance. Don't get worried or frustrated. Reread the question to make sure you understand it, and then try to solve it the best way you know how. If you're still stuck, circle it and move on. You can come back to it later. What if you have no idea about the answer? Review your options and make the best guess you can, but only if you don't lose points for wrong answers.

8. Multiple-Choice Questions

The process of elimination can help you choose the correct answer in a multiple-choice question. Start by crossing off the answers that couldn't be right. Then spend your time focusing on the possible correct choices before selecting your answer.

9. Neatness Counts

If your 4s look like 9s, it could be a problem. Be sure that your writing is legible and that you erase your mistakes. For machine-scored tests, fill in the spaces carefully.

10. I'm Done!

Not so fast - when you complete the last item on the test, remember that you're not done yet. First, check the clock and go back to review your answers, making sure that you didn't make any careless mistakes (such as putting the right answer in the wrong place or skipping a question). Spend the last remaining minutes going over the hardest problems before you turn in your test.

Follow these test tips, and you'll know you did your best - congratulations!