

Test Taking Tips for Parents & Students

Preparing a student for a Testing Session – For Parents

1. Make sure your child gets an ample, normal amount of sleep the night before the test
2. Mark testing days on your calendar to help remind you and your child when the testing will take place and plan your preparations.
3. The student should eat a nutritious and filling breakfast. Avoid high sugar cereals which can make the student hyper and/or unfocused.
4. Set aside time each night prior to the test for several weeks to review the concepts that will be covered
5. Work with teachers and administrators at your child's school to find materials to work on at home in preparation for the test
6. Make sure the student is on time (if not early) on the day of testing
7. Set a backup alarm to avoid the possibility of oversleeping
8. If you child is sick please contact the school immediately to inform them.

Working with Students who are anxious about testing – For Parents

1. Try not to put too much pressure on the student. Reinforce that as long as they worked hard in preparation and did their absolute best you will be proud of them.
2. Have the child visualize success. Encourage them to rehearse what it will feel like to get a good score on the test.
3. Work with them to focus on breathing. Stress is often caused by insufficient oxygen to the brain. Work with the student to take time before the test begins to take a number of deep, cleansing breaths, exhaling slowly. Focusing on breathing by taking some time when stress levels rise helps to focus the mind during testing.
4. Encourage your child to review the night before the test, but avoid cramming. Cramming is rarely if ever effective. A longer, more systematic schedule of short reviews will prepare the student better.
5. Try to use positive language when talking about expectations of the test. Do not overinflate the student's expectations but also try to avoid negative wording (e.g. replace "you are going to fail this test if you don't study" with "if you don't study you aren't going to pass this test.")
6. Plan for a fun outing or treat for your child after the test has been completed.
7. Keep a positive attitude about testing in general around your child and emphasize their ability to demonstrate what they have learned rather than the consequences of not passing

Test Taking Tips for Students

General

1. Be aware of the test time limits. Keep track of how much time you have remaining and try not to spend too much time on items that you are unsure of, as

you can always come back to them once you have completed the items you do know.

2. Answer the easy questions first and then move on to more difficult items.
3. Answer all questions, even if do not know the answer (**Exception:** Do not utilize this strategy on the SAT which penalizes for incorrect responses).
4. If you are allowed to mark in the test booklet circle key words in the question to keep you focused.
5. Use all of the time allotted to you. If you have extra time cover you answers and try reworking the questions.
6. If the test is bubbled into an answer document make sure the bubble is filled in completely. If the test involves writing make sure you write as neatly as possible.

Math

7. On math problems try estimating the problem before calculating (ex. make 32×21 into 30×20), as this will help you notice if your calculations are far off your estimate.
8. Perform opposite operations. For example if your problem involves multiplication check your work by dividing in reverse.

Multiple Choice

9. Anticipate the answer before looking at your answer options. Physically cover the answer with your hand to see if you can answer it first.
10. Eliminate highly implausible answers (most multiple choice tests will have at least two “distracter” items that are unrelated to the questions).
11. Be aware of words like “always,” “never,” “only,” “must,” and “completely.” Response options containing these words may be correct, but are usually distracters as their will usually be exceptions to extreme words such as these.
12. Be cautious about changing your answer to a multiple choice question without a good reason. Usually, your first “guess” or intuition is more likely to be correct than later ones.
13. Although not always true, as a general rule of thumb the items that contain the most information tend to be correct.
14. If one of the items is an “All of the Above” option and you know that at least one of the other options is incorrect/false then you can eliminate the “All of the Above” option as well.