More Test-Taking Tips

It cannot be emphasized enough...the single best way to perform well on tests is to study notes and information for a few minutes everyday, keep up with your homework, and read assigned text book pages. (At the very least, read the pictures!) When you do each of these things, you are guaranteed a solid performance on tests. However, there are some other tips to consider:

**A** Have a watch or clock available when taking a test. Proper pacing is important when taking a test. Before you even see the test, ask your teacher how much time you will have and how many questions will be on the test. (This is a good question to ask the day before the test.)

**A** Before you do anything else, do an overview of the entire test by quickly reading each question. There are two benefits to this:

1. You will have a picture of the whole test and will be better able to judge how much time to spend on each question or section.

2. Many times, clues for some answers are included in other questions. By reviewing the test before you start, you may find a few answers.

**A** If you get to a question that you don’t know, don’t waste your time and energy; mark the question, skip it, and move on. Otherwise, you are likely to waste a lot of time and build up anxiety that could cause you to lose focus on the rest of the test. Don’t forget, however, to go back to that question after you complete the rest of the test.

**A** When you first receive a test, immediately write down any information you needed to memorize, such as formulas, specific dates, names, etc. Write this information down right away to keep from getting anxious or flustered and forgetting important information.

Multiple Choice Questions

**A** After reading the question, try to think of the correct answer BEFORE you read your options.

**A** Read all answers first. Sometimes, item “A” will sound correct, but item “C” may end up being more appropriate.
SOAR STUDY SKILLS

- Cross out items that you know are wrong and then choose your answer from the remaining options.

- Answers with phrases like “all of the above” and “both a & b” are likely to be the correct choices, but only use this clue if you are stuck.

- The longest answers are also likely to be the correct choices, but again, only use this clue if you do not have any other ideas.

**Fill-in-the-Blank Questions**

- Look for grammar clues that may give hints, such as the word “an” that will indicate that the answer begins with a vowel, or something that indicates a plural word, past tense verb, etc.

- Sometimes the length and/or number of blanks may be a hint.

- After you have filled in the blank, reread the statement with your answer to make sure that your answer makes sense in the sentence.

**Essay Questions**

- In the margin, write a brief outline of the major points you want to include in your answer. This will help you write an organized, logical, and concise answer. Teachers do not want to read lengthy responses. They prefer short and to-the-point answers. In fact, many teachers may only read your outline when grading your paper. An outline may also help you get partial credit if you run out of time.

- Begin your answer by restating the question. Remember, get to the point quickly.

- Write neatly. It is definitely NOT to your advantage to frustrate your teacher!

**Conclusion**

This chapter includes several tips for improving performance on tests. However, the single best way to prepare for tests is to read your textbooks, regularly review notes, and learn from your homework assignments and quizzes. Following these steps will ensure that you have a solid grasp of the information and will have no problems acing any test!