# **Test Taking Skills**

Preparing for Tests: -

Study enough for tests. Prepare ahead for Tests.

Problem 1: - Cramming. Waiting to the very last days to prepare for tests. May able to cram for a very short Quiz, but for tests Cramming is very bad.

Solution: - Finish all the readings and Practicing at-least 2/3 days before test. Make a written Schedule for that preparations. After that, before the test day, Review and Relax before the test. Setup a good written schedule for reviews. Time management is very very important. Too high study practice time crammed in one day is also no good. Sleep and rest is also important. Take break 5 to 10 minutes at every hour.

Problem 2: - Lack of knowledge. (About what the test will be like).

Solution: - Try to find these information

1. How many Questions will be on the test. (Less questions from more materials will have big questions and main important points. More questions from less materials will bring in more detail demanding questions.) Ask the instructor.
2. How much time will be available for the test. How long will be the test. Don’t rush too much during the test. Now calculate the time available for each question and prepare accordingly. Answer the test questions according to the time available. Ask the instructor.
3. Text VS Lecture: - Will the test questions and answers be from Text book and Lecture. Give importance on the correct material. Ask the instructor.

Problem 3: - Too Much. Study the forgetting curve. Average person ends up forgetting 50% of studied material within half hour/ 30 minutes. 60% is forgotten within 1 hour, completely forgotten in 2/3 hours without immediate review.

Solution: - Reviews will improve the memorization. 7 is the important numbers. 7 things can be studied or learned in one sitting in small time. Divide the study materials and study time into 30-minute chunks with 5/10 minutes breaks with 7 topics or 7 items. Study, read, write, take self-test.

Problem 4: - Pride. (Not getting help from others/ tutors/ friends/ study group).

Solution: - Form and participate in a study group. Take help from instructors / tutors / Friends.

How to predict Test Questions: -

Asking questions of chapter headings. After reading the heading, stop for 2/3 minutes. Brainstorm for a minute. This helps to concentrate better. Then gather those in formation on -

Active Textbook Studying: Asking Questions of Chapter Headings, etc.

Two of the best study habits you can develop are to actively read your textbooks and to learn to test yourself before your teacher tests you. One very easy and effective method you can use in order to achieve *both* goals is to learn how to ask questions of the chapter headings, words in bold print and italics, etc.

1. The simplest way to do this is to approach your textbook chapters in a “survey” manner. So before starting to actually do the “heavy” reading in the chapter, try this: take a few blank pieces of paper or several 5x8 index cards and set them up so they look like the example below:

Textbook/Subject:

Chapter:

Page Number:

Heading:

WHY?

HOW?

WHAT?

WHO?

WHERE?

WHEN?

Then begin surveying the assigned chapter. Start with the first heading (headline) and record information on the page or index card you have prepared, asking yourself the six questions listed. Please see the example at the top of the next page.

Then start reading the text books or notes. This helps to concentrate better and provide a study tool. Make a flash card with that info. Make a mind map. Use images everywhere. Then take self-test.

As you can see, eight potentially useful questions have been asked about this one concept(heading). Sometimes you’ll be able to think of two or more questions for one of the six question words, and sometimes you won’t think of any. But just get in the habit of asking a lot of questions. Then when you go back to actually read the material, you’ll be looking for answers (and maybe even more questions to write down!) , and that will help you concentrate more effectively and, as result, get more from your reading. You should fill in the answers to the questions while you read by stopping each time you find an answer and recording it on the back of your notebook paper or index card. By doing this, you’ll be able to use these sheets of cards to study from as the test approaches (like flash cards!).

If you have time to complete a form for each heading or word/phrase in bold print or italics, that would be great. But even if you can only do this for half of them, you’re going to be better off than you are now because you’ll be reading and studying very actively. As a result, you’ll be getting a better grasp of the subject on which you’ll be tested. Try It!!!!

1. Creating own study quizzes: - Create study questions based upon the whole chapter and details on the subject. Create fill in the blank Question and answers. Create True False Questions. May photocopy hand written notes and pages of books then white out several words per paragraph in different paper copies then copy them again, then take self-test.
2. Prepare and Take Model Tests, take or prepare and solve the quiz questions at the end of every chapter.
3. Studying with a partner or in a study group. Different people prepare quizzes for different chapters. Then take the quiz together. Then go to correction and explanations.

Test Taking Skills: -

Every test is different. So, use various study tools.

If did not or could not study well before the test date then get as much study time as possible. But try to prepare for test well ahead of test date.

Three General test taking strategies: -

1. On the morning or very close time of the test – “Don’t study very very hard just before the test”. Because that may cause some problem while trying to remember materials, may lose confidence. If did not or could not study well before the test date then get as much study time as possible. But try to prepare for test well ahead of test date.
2. Arrive early at the test center. But not too early. And don’t study while at the test center. Just relax and take deep and rhythmic breath and more rhythmic breath. And prepare for test.
3. Sit Alone to avoid Confusion & Distraction. Don’t get busy with other people or other people’s preparation or new ideas on the test hall.
4. Preview the Test Questions, the whole test Questions, Numbers of Questions and Type of Questions.
5. Calculate and write down which questions and how many questions should be answered by the half time of the test. If that is slow or fast then correct, slow down or speed up answering.
6. Answer the good / easy and short questions at first. Start off fast and confident. Be organized and take 10 rhythmic deep breath and relaxed at start. Don’t be stressed spatially at the start.
7. Any time the question is hard then leave space for answer and start the next easy one. Never Panic, take 10 rhythmic deep breath and relax and the previous unfinished answer might or shall come back to mind later.

Test Questions type/ Objective: -

1. True / False: - Never panic if cannot remember answer to the questions. They will come back later.
2. Slowly read and read twice. Even one word or part of word make the sentence different. Like 100% indicator/Qualifiers are mostly False - “Everyone” or “No-one”, “Always”, “Every”, “Never”, “All”. ETC.
3. In between Qualifiers are mostly True - “Frequently” or “Most”, “Some”, “Few “, “Mostly”. ETC.
4. Double Negatives Questions – Cross out both the negatives, then take the meaning, this will solve most of the time.

Essays Question & Answers/ Subjective: -

1. Read the question slowly and deeply 2/3 times and then try to understand first. Read the question carefully and look out for instruction words. Think before you speak and write. Fix answer idea outlines first. Never panic if cannot remember answer to the questions. They will come back later.
2. If possible, ask the teacher what he wanted in that Essays Q/A.
3. Incorporate the question sentence or words into the first sentence or paragraph in the answer, then write the answer. Develop the point/idea of answer and give details on the information.
4. Writing mechanically, grammatically and stylishly correct. Only use words which can be spelled correctly. Write in a way that others can read them.
5. Always try to leave some space after finishing an essay type answer, maybe to add something more later, when unsure about the ending of the answer.
6. Review and revise and try to correct the answers before the test ends.
7. Try to answer the easy or common answers with most numbers first, then other answers.
8. Try to write all the answers with equal value of numbers equally and try to answer all the questions then writing or being stuck on one question or one type of test paper.

Multiple Choices Q/A: -

1. Multiple Choice Method: - This is only for Multiple choice test Q/A. First cover all the answers and read the question properly. Then try to remember the answer. Only after that see the choices for answers.

A) Easy- First cover (with hand) all the answers and read the question properly. Then try to remember the answer. Only after that see the choices for answers. This will stop the test taker from being confused by ¾ good looking answers and get tricked easily into a wrong answer. The answer will be there for the easy ones. Then find the right answer. Get all the easy questions of the test Answered.

B) No Match /cannot match or Not there ones - If the answer is not there, them don’t panic, relax, take 3 rhythmic deep breath, SKIP it, come back later. These will give worm-up for brain.

C) Challenging: - After reading the question if the answer cannot be remembered correctly but had heard or read about that before, then try to read the question again understand and try to remember again before looking to answer. If cannot remember the answer, then SKIP them too. Don’t look the answers. Don’t keep pushing and don’t get stuck. These will give stress and tension free Exam. Never panic if cannot remember answer to the questions. They will come back later.

D) No Idea / Have not read: - If after reading the question, nothing of that matter can be remembered, No Idea. SKIP these too. If cannot remember the answer, then SKIP them too. Don’t look the answers. Don’t keep pushing and don’t get stuck. These will give stress and tension free Exam. Never panic if cannot remember answer to the questions. They will come back later.

E) After finishing all the easy ones and skipping others, then go from the start again and find those skipped the first time and start trying to answer them like the first time, only with hand cover all the answers and read the question properly. Then try to remember the answer. Only after that see the choices for answers. Then find the right answer. Mostly this time, the Challenging questions will be answered. Never panic if cannot remember answer to the questions. They will come back later.

F) Be careful while SKIPPING. Make sure that all the answers are given in the correct order to the correct numbers. Point one finger on the question number and point pen on the Answer number before giving Answer.

**Study Skill Workshop #8: Test-Taking Skills**

**True-False Questions**

\*Place a “T”- (True) or “F”- (False) in the blank to the left of each of the following statements.

Questions 1-5 relate to the board and card games.

\_\_\_\_\_ 1. Everyone loves to play **Sorry.**

\_\_\_\_\_ 2. No one plays **Chinese Checkers** anymore.

\_\_\_\_\_ 3. **Old Maid** is frequently played by children.

\_\_\_\_ 4. **Monopoly** is not an unsuitable game for children aged six and under.

\_\_\_\_ 5. **Bridge** is mostly played by adults.

Questions 6-11 relate to general study skills.

\_\_\_\_ 6. You should always answer every question on every test.

\_\_\_\_ 7. Some tests are too lengthy to complete in the allotted time.

\_\_\_\_ 8. All exams are comprehensive.

\_\_\_\_ 9. A test may not be without poorly worded questions.

\_\_\_\_ 10. Never study with a partner.

\_\_\_\_ 11. Following directions is not unimportant.

#1-5 Adapted from *College Study Skills; Becoming a Strategic Learner* by Dianna L. Van Blerkom (Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1997).

#6-11 taken from *College Learning and Study Skills*, 2nd Edition by Debbie Guice Longman and Rhonda Holt Atkinson (West Publishing Company, 1991).

**Succeeding on Essay Exams**

\*For more help with your writing or any other English skill, please visit the Writing & Reading Success Center (at LAC in the “E” Building Lower Level or at PCC Multidisciplinary Center LL-206).

The most crucial task you have when preparing for and then taking an essay exam is to ask your teacher *EXACTLY* what he or she wants you to include in your answer, and how you are suppose to write it. This is extremely important because essay tests are subjective, and each teacher is unique in terms of what he or she wants to see and *does not* want to see on your paper.

In addition to what you find out from your teacher, read the following information, adapt it to your situation, and then put it all into action for greater success.

The following material is adapted from *The Confident Student* by Carol C. Kanar (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Company 1991: 346-347).

**General Guidelines**

1. Read the question carefully. Watch for *instruction words*, and make sure you understand what the question asks you to do. Ask the instructor for an explanation if necessary.

2. Think about what you will write. Plan your answer, and allow yourself enough time to write thoughtfully.

3. Jot down a scratch outline of the major points you will cover so that you don’t forget them.

4. Incorporate the question into your first sentence, and briefly state your answer to the question.

5. In the rest of your essay, develop the points that explain your answer, and provide enough details to show that you know the material well.

6. Save time at the end of the exam to proof-read your essay and correct errors.

**Some Instruction Words Used in Essay Questions**

Instruction Words Meanings

Compare Explain similarities and differences,

highlighting the similaries.

Contrast Explain differences only.

Criticize or evaluate Make a judgment about strengths

and weaknesses, worth or merit,

positive or negative aspects.

Define Give a precise and accurate meaning.

Discuss or explain Give reasons, facts, details that show you understand.

Illustrate Explain by using examples

Interpret Explain in your own words and discuss significance.

Summarize Condense main ideas; state briefly.

The following material is adapted from *Right From the Start – Managing Your Way to College Success* by Robert Holkeboer (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company 1993, p. 7:15).

What Most Teachers are Looking for in an Essay Answer:

1. Did the student understand the question and answer it completely?

2. Is the answer well organized, coherent, and logical?

3. Are general statements and main ideas supported by facts and examples?

4. Is the writing clear and understandable?

5. Is the writing mechanically, grammatically, and stylistically correct?

6. Is the writing at least fairly neat (legible)?