

# WHAT TO DO DURING THE TEST

## Before you begin

Arrive early and prepared. Give yourself time for a relaxation or breathing exercise. Make sure you pay attention to any verbal directions given as the test is being distributed. Scan the test immediately and read the directions properly. Then, jot down any memory aids including formulas, equations, facts, key words. Now you're ready...

## In General

Answer the easiest, shortest questions first. Next answer the multiple-choice, true-false, and fill-in-the-blank questions. Remember to always pace yourself. Watch the time, if you are stuck, move on! Look for the answers in other questions. In multiple-choice and true-false questions, your first instinct is usually best. Don't change your answer unless you are sure the second answer is correct. If you misread the question, change your answer.

## Multiple Choice

Check the directions, does it call for more than one answer? Answer each question in your head before you look at the choices. Mark the questions you can answer immediately and then come back.

## True-False

Answer these quickly. Don't invest too much time. Look out for those qualifiers (always, never, sometimes, rarely, all) and key words.

## Machine graded

Be sure to mark the correct response when answering. Check the test against the answer sheet. Watch for stray marks.

## Open Book

Write down formulas on a separate sheet. Tape tabs onto important pages. Number your notes and write a short table of contents. Be prepared!



## Short-answer/ Fill in the blank

Usually ask for definitions and short descriptions. Pick your point fast. Concentrate on key words and facts. Be brief. Know the subject!

# TECHNIQUES FOR MATH AND SCIENCE EXAMS

## Translate the problem to English

Putting problems into words will help you understand what is asked.

### Preform opposite operations

If a problem involves multiplication, check your work by dividing; add, then subtract; etc..

## Use time drills

Practice working fast, time yourself. Switch problems with a friend and time each other.

### Analyze before you compute

Set up the problem before you begin to solve it. When a problem is worth a lot of points, read it twice, slowly.

Analyze it carefully and look for shortcuts.

## Make a Picture

Draw a picture or a diagram if you are stuck. Visuals help!

### Estimate first

Estimate to check your work, it'll help you notice errors.

## Check your work; Ask yourself

Did I read this correctly? Use the right formula? Did I follow all the steps? Is the answer in the proper form?

# ESSAY QUESTIONS

## Writing the Exam

Set up a time schedule; know your time limit. Always give yourself time to go back and review it. Read through the question once and be sure you understand it. Write down any key words or bullet points. Make an outline before writing it out. Organize the question to include an introduction and conclusion. Read it again before turning it in. Check your grammar. Make sure you answered all the key points correctly.

## After the Exam

Go over the exam. Take note of what you did right, Note what you missed. It saves you hours of worry. Make yourself aware of weakness and reassure your strengths.

# TEST ANXIETY

## You are not alone

Most students experience test anxiety sometime during college. Being a little nervous is natural and actually increases your adrenaline output to jump start you. However, knowing a few tricks to keep the anxiety at a minimum will make test-taking a more enjoyable experience.

## What does it feel like?

Some students experience mainly physical symptoms, such as headaches, nausea, faintness, feeling too hot or too cold, etc. Others experience more emotional symptoms, such as crying easily, feeling irritable, or getting frustrated quickly. A major problem of test anxiety can be its effect on thinking ability; it can cause a person to blank out or have racing thoughts that are difficult to control.

## DURING THE TEST



Put into practice helpful test taking strategies. Read the directions slowly, circle key words, jot down notes in the margins, and start with the simplest questions.

Engage in "thought stopping" techniques if you find that you are worrying, comparing yourself to your peers, or thinking about your test score. Start in with calming activities and practice them throughout the exam. If you get overwhelmed, turn your paper over and breathe deeply. Stretch your arms and legs in your seat or get up. Use positive "self-talk". You are in control of the test and the test is not in control of you. It is YOU vs. the TEST and you will win the battle! Expect a few "curve balls" on the exam. When faced with unexpected questions, just relax! Don't dwell on a question too long – simply skip it for now and return to it later to make an attempt. Remember that you can miss questions and still get a great grade. Take one step at a time. Break your test taking into small, parts. Focus on the questions you find the easiest to answer – bounce around – that's ok!

# What you can do to control?

## BEFORE THE TEST

Put things in perspective. Remind yourself that your entire future doesn't depend on this exam. Be well prepared for the test to increase your confidence. Participate in tutoring session. Know what areas you need help with before the test. Never cram. Remind yourself of past successes. Tell yourself that if you did well in the past, then you can do well now. Don't overlook physical preparation. The night before the exam, organize everything you will need, and rest. Watch caffeine, alcohol, and sugar intake. Eat protein and drink water. Visualize completing the test successfully. Arrive prepared and positive. Don't come too early or too late. Refrain from flipping through your notes or books – relax instead. Pick a seat that has few distractions. Enter class with a smile. Remind yourself that you studied hard and will do your best – "This test is going to be ok today!"

## AFTER THE TEST



Reward yourself! Take a night off with a good movie or dinner out with friends. At this point, you can't change your test performance so you need to move forward, not punish yourself, and engage in positive activities. Communicate with your instructor. Let them know that you experience test anxiety. Conversations with your instructor also allow them to know your desire and intent to do well in the course. Decide if you need additional academic skills. Think about whether or not you need additional study strategies, memory techniques, time management tips, or learning styles self assessment. Know where you can get these resources. Your test anxiety could stem from lack of information in these preparatory areas. Select and try one or two new techniques for each test. Keep track of what helps lower your anxiety and implement into habits for future tests. Throw out what doesn't work for you.