

Test Taking Tips Handout

Freshman Seminar, Ellet High School

When you take a test:

You are demonstrating your ability to understand course material or perform certain tasks. Successful test taking avoids carelessness.

Examples of objective tests are true-false, multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank.

Examples of subjective texts are short answer, essay, or oral exams

Study Habits

- Know what to study and how long or how many (chapters, pages, problems, etc.). Find out what the exam will or won't cover.
- Find out what kind of exam it will be: objective, short essay, long essay, or a combination
- Set and stick to deadlines.
- Do difficult tasks first. No procrastination. Start off with an easy, interesting aspect of the project.
- Study 20 minutes, and then take a 10 minute break. Stretch, relax, have an energy snack.
- If you get tired or bored, switch task/activity, subject, or environment.
- Do rote memory tasks and review, especially details, just before you fall asleep.
- Study with a friend. Quiz each other, compare notes and predicted test questions.
- Prepare summary sheets for large amounts of lecture and textbook notes.
- Several nights before an exam make a final review of notes.
- Consider the following when studying:
 - Points emphasized in class or in the text;
 - Areas the teacher has advised for study;
 - Questions in study guides, past quizzes, and reviews at the end of textbook chapters.

Prepare in advance for taking a test:

- **Analyze your past test results**
Each test can further prepare you for the next test.
Use your tests to review when studying for final exams
- **Arrive early for tests**
Bring all the materials you will need such as pencils and pens, a calculator, a dictionary, and a watch.
This helps you focus on the task at hand
- **Be comfortable but alert**
Choose a good spot and make sure you have enough room to work, maintain comfortable posture but don't "slouch"
- **Stay relaxed and confident**
Remind yourself that you are well-prepared and are going to do well. If you find yourself anxious, take several slow, deep breaths to relax
Don't talk about the test to other students just before it; anxiety is contagious

Test Taking:

- **Read the directions carefully**
- **Answer questions in a strategic order:**

1. **First easy questions**
 2. **Then difficult questions** or those with the most point value
With objective tests, first eliminate those answers you know to be wrong, or are likely to be wrong, don't seem to fit, or where two options are so similar as to be both incorrect
With essay/subjective questions, broadly outline your answer and sequence the order of your points
- **Review:**
Resist the urge to quit as you have completed all the items
Review your test to make sure that you have answered all questions, not mis-marked the answer sheet, or made some other simple mistake
Proofread your writing for spelling, grammar, punctuation, decimal points, etc.

Works Cited

Counseling and Psychological Service. *Improve Your Studying Skills*.
<http://caps.unc.edu/TenTraps.html>

Joe Landsberger. *Tips for Better Test Taking*. <http://www.studygs.net/tsttak1.htm>