

GENERAL STUDY SKILLS INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

TEST-TAKING SKILLS AND STRATEGIES

By discussing the following strategies, parents can support their children in improving their test-taking skills.

Before the Test

- Study.**
 - Make flash cards or summary sheets.
 - Review class notes.
 - Use or invent mnemonic devices to memorize lists or steps.
 - Survey the readings.
 - Pay special attention to general concepts, important principles, previously confusing information, and older material.
- Analyze mistakes.**

Review your previous tests and quizzes and ask yourself the following:

 - Why did I miss the question?
 - Did I misread the question?
 - Did I understand the information?
 - Did I make a careless mistake?
- Get a good night's sleep.**
- Have a positive attitude.**

During the Test

- Listen to or read all directions.**
- Set a pace that will allow time to complete the test.**
 - Survey the test to sense the length of the test and types of questions.
 - Answer the easier questions first. Statements within the test may refresh your memory.
 - Use your time wisely when answering difficult questions.
- Carefully read test items.**
- Record your best answer to each question.**
 - Follow directions when marking the answer sheet. Check to be sure that the item number and response on the answer sheet match.
 - Answer all of the questions. Make informed guesses rather than omitting items or leaving sections blank.
 - If time permits, go back and check your answers.

Hints for Specific Types of Questions

True-False

- Beware of extreme words like *always*, *never*, *best*, etc. Statements containing these words are usually false because few concepts meet these requirements.
- Beware of statements with two clauses. If the statement contains *and*, both clauses have to be true for the statement to be true. If the statement contains *or*, only one clause has to be true for the statement to be true.
- As you read, look for any factor that will make a statement false. Students often read the question, see some truth, and assume that the entire statement is true.
- Watch out for negative words, such as *not* and *no one*, and how they may affect the statement.

Matching

- Examine both lists to determine the types of items and their relationship.
- Read all of the items before making any matches.
- To organize your thinking, use one list as a starting point and go through the second list to find a match.
- Cross off items on the second list when you are certain that you have a match.
- Do not guess until all absolute matches have been made.

Multiple Choice / Selected Response

- Read each question with the intention of answering it *without* the answer choices.
- Read all of the answer choices before selecting your answer.
- Use the process of elimination if you are unsure of the correct answer.
- Do not look for patterns. Rely on your knowledge.

Essay / Brief Constructed Response / Extended Constructed Response

- Be sure to read the whole question before attempting to answer.
- Often essay-type questions have multiple parts. Numbering, lettering, or bulleting may indicate these parts. Answer each part of the question.
- Identify and highlight or underline the verbs that give you direction. These are the words that describe the task that you are expected to complete.
- Plan your response before you write.
- Answer the question, citing evidence to support your answer and using supporting details to elaborate your response.
- If there is a narrative passage that accompanies the question, read it carefully and highlight or underline key information that you can use as support when you write your answer.
- Use standard English composition principles as you compose and write your answer.
- In problems requiring mathematics or calculations, show your work.
- **Always proofread** your answer.