

Test Taking Strategies

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Strategy #1

Get ready **BEFORE** the test

- ✓ **Get plenty of rest the night before a test**
 - you need 8-10 hours of sleep, so go to bed by 9pm at the latest
- ✓ **Avoid the morning rush**
 - set out your clothes and pack your bag the night before
- ✓ **Eat a good, nutritious breakfast the morning of a test**
 - avoid eating junk food (chips, candy, soda)

Strategy #2

Listen, Read, Ask

- ✓ **Listen** to the directions given by the teacher
- ✓ **Read** ALL of the directions and ALL answer choices
- ✓ **Ask** any questions that you may have

Strategy #3

Use your time wisely

- ✓ Don't spend too much time on any one question
- ✓ Answer EVERY question, even if you are unsure of the answer
- ✓ Use all of your time (there are no extra points for finishing early!)
- ✓ Save time at the end to review (make sure you did not miss any questions)
- ✓ Answer the easiest questions first (be sure to go back to the questions you skipped!)

Strategy #4

Read carefully

- ✓ Read all questions carefully
 - circle or underline key words
- ✓ Read ALL answer choices carefully before picking an answer

Strategy #5

Eliminate answers

(eliminate means get rid of or cross out)

- ✓ Eliminate obviously wrong answers
- ✓ Eliminate choices that are only partially correct
- ✓ Eliminate items that are correct but don't answer the questions being asked

Strategy #6

Make educated guesses

- ✓ Use everything you know and have learned to attempt to answer the question
 - DO NOT make random guesses
 - A random guess gives you a **25% chance** of getting the right answer
 - An educated guess gives you up to a **75% chance** of getting the right answer

Strategy #6 Continued

Make educated guesses

- ✓ The length of choices can be a clue—the longest answers are generally correct
- ✓ If two choices are similar, choose neither
- ✓ If two choices are opposite, choose one of them

Strategy #7

Look for clues

- ✓ When the answer is not clear, look for clues in the question and answer choices

-context- The context of a word includes all the words and sentences that surround it (synonyms, antonyms, prefixes, suffixes)

-grammar- look for answers that agree grammatically with the stem (ex. verbs of the same tense, nouns and verbs that agree)

Strategy #8

Look for key words

Answers with the following *absolute* words are usually **WRONG/FALSE**

- All
- Must
- Never
- Entirely
- Worst
- Always
- None
- Best
- Only
- Everyone

Answers with the following *qualifier* words are usually **CORRECT/TRUE**

- Some
- Sometimes
- Generally
- Usually
- Frequently
- Probably
- Most
- Many
- Seldom
- Few
- Often

Strategy #8 Continued

Look for key words

Beware of negatives and double negatives!

Negatives

- Makes the sentence the opposite of what it would be without the negative
 - Not
 - None
 - No one
 - Hardly
 - Scarcely
 - Prefixes un-, non-, dis-, in-

Double Negatives

- Simplify the question by getting rid of double negatives:
 - Most people are **not** **un**afraid of snakes →
Most people are afraid of snakes

Strategy #9

Stay organized

- ✓ Put a question mark next to questions you are skipping- helps prevent misbubbling
- ✓ Use scrap paper to create graphic organizers

Strategy #10

Read questions before passage

- ✓ Read all questions before reading a passage or story so you know what information you are looking for as you are reading

Strategy #11

Think Before you Write

- ✓ Start with a direct response to the question
- ✓ Jot down ideas or points you want to include
 - provide specific information
 - determine the order in which you want to write points
 - find evidence you want to add
 - have information for ALL parts of the question

Strategy #12

Use what you have learned

- ✓ Create a graphic organizer
- ✓ Include topic sentences and conclusion sentences
- ✓ Use transition words
 - Review words prior to the test

Strategy #13

Check your work

- ✓ Save some time at the end to go back and check your work
 - make sure you answered all questions
 - try not to change many of your answers
 - make sure you have fully answered essay questions

Strategy #14

Know the 12 Power Words

1. **Trace-** outline, list in steps, or follow the path
2. **Analyze-** break into parts, tell about the parts, study in detail
3. **Infer-** read between the lines, find the hidden meaning, gather clues
4. **Evaluate-** judge it
5. **Formulate-** create, put together
6. **Describe-** tell about, paint a picture with words
7. **Support-** back it up or prove it with details
8. **Explain-** make clear, describe in detail, reveal relevant facts
9. **Summarize-** tell the main idea, tell the beginning, middle, and end
10. **Contrast-** find differences between two items or ideas
11. **Compare-** find similarities between two items or ideas
12. **Predict-** what will happen next?

Strategy #15



**KEEP
CALM**

AND

**DO YOUR BEST
ON THE TEST**