



Test Taking Strategies

Subtitle

Before the Test...

- ✎ Follow your regular sleep pattern the night before.
- ✎ Set two alarms for morning tests
- ✎ Pack the items you need the night before.
- ✎ Avoid caffeinated beverages and energy drinks, try an apple instead
- ✎ Wear loose fitting clothing
- ✎ Stretch; practice deep/slow breathing.



During the Test...

When you first get the test:

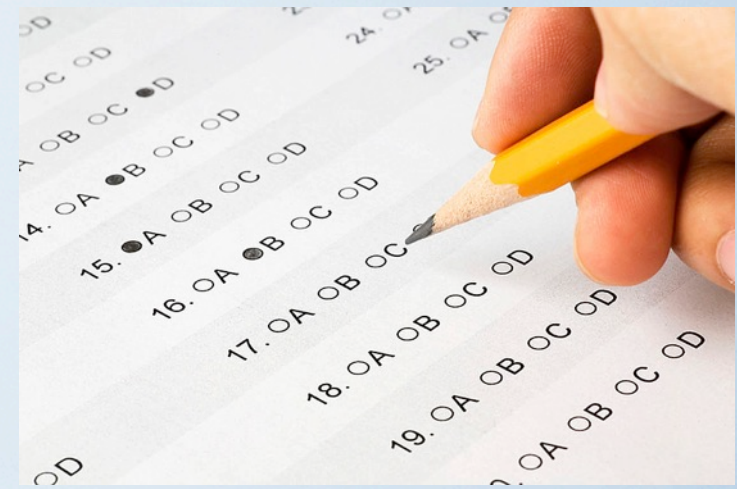
- ✎ Read through the entire exam
- ✎ Pace yourself based on the amount of points questions are worth.
- ✎ 2 minute drill:
 - ✎ Brain dump.
 - ✎ Unload information & equations that's in your head in case you forget it later.



During the Test...

As you're answering questions:

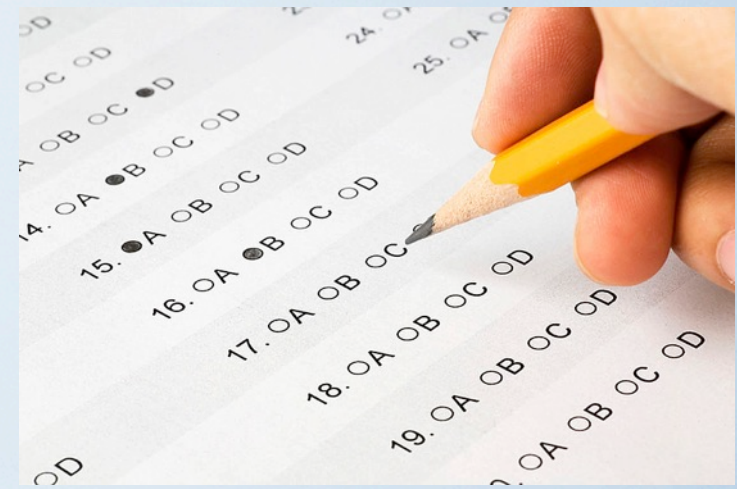
- ✎ Read each question & set of instructions thoroughly
- ✎ Circle key words, absolute words, or rephrase questions to make them into statements.
- ✎ Answer ALL parts of the question.



During the Test...

When you get stuck:

- ✎ Mark that question to come back to and move on to the next question
- ✎ Look for clues in other questions
- ✎ Engage your learning preference (think about visuals, auditory cues, examples, etc)
- ✎ Think about the question from the instructors point of view – what knowledge do they want you to demonstrate here?



Analyzing Direction Words

for Essay Questions



Analyzing Direction Words

Group 1: At the definition level

Direction Word	Meaning
<i>Describe</i>	Write a detailed account or verbal picture in logical sequence.
<i>Discuss</i>	Describe, giving the details and explaining the pros and cons of it.
<i>State</i>	Describe the main points in precise terms. Be formal. Use brief, clear sentences. Omit details and examples
<i>Explain/Define</i>	Give the formal meaning by distinguishing it from related terms. This is often a definition to memorize.
<i>List/Enumerate</i>	Produce a numbered list of words, sentences, or comments
<i>Trace</i>	Follow the progress or history of the subject.

Analyzing Direction Words

Group 2: At a deeper, more interpretive level

Direction Word	Meaning
<i>Compare</i>	Show both the similarities and differences.
<i>Contrast</i>	Compare by showing the differences.
<i>Diagram</i>	Make a graph, chart, or drawing. Be sure to label and add brief explanation if necessary.
<i>Illustrate</i>	Means to explain or make it clear by concrete examples, comparisons, or analogies.
<i>Summarize</i>	Give a brief account of the main ideas. Omit details and examples.
<i>Outline</i>	Give a general summary. It should contain a series of main ideas supported by secondary ideas. Show organization. Omit details.

Analyzing Direction Words

Group 3: At the deepest level, applying and evaluating information

Direction Word	Meaning
<i>Review</i>	Give a survey or summary in which you look at the important parts and criticize where needed.
<i>Prove</i>	Show by argument or logic that it is true. The word “prove” has a special meaning in mathematics and physics.
<i>Interpret</i>	Give the meaning, using examples and personal comments to make the ideas clear.
<i>Evaluate</i>	Give your opinion or some expert’s opinion of the truth or importance of the concept. Tell the advantages and disadvantages.
<i>Justify</i>	Give a statement of why you think it is so. Give reasons for your statement or conclusion.

After the Test...

Test Autopsy

Course: _____ Test: _____ Test Date: _____

[illegible]

Test Reflection – Example #1

After the Test...

Test Reflection – Example #2

Inventory of Test-taking Skills

In PREPARATION for the test, did you...

	Yes	No
...maintain a positive attitude?	___	___
...make a study schedule?	___	___
...know the exam's format (e.g. multiple choice, essay)?	___	___
...use both your notes and text, separately and together?	___	___
...make a study guide?	___	___
...practice recall of information?	___	___
... <u>(if math)</u> practice as many problems as possible and/or take an old test?	___	___
...attend the class period immediately preceding the test?	___	___
...get a good night's rest and eat well-balanced meals?	___	___
...plan a final review the day of the exam?	___	___

DURING for the test period, did you...

	Yes	No
...survey the entire test and start with the easiest questions?	___	___
...read the directions carefully?	___	___
...recall the correct answer after carefully reading the stem of a multiple choice question?	___	___
...outline the answer to an essay question?	___	___
...review the entire test before turning it in?	___	___

AFTER for the test, did you...

	Yes	No
...relax and reward yourself?	___	___
...note the kinds of questions you missed?	___	___

Now analyze your answers to the above questions. To which questions did you respond with "no?" How can you improve your performance in that area?