

# Test Taking Strategies

## Multiple Choice

Modified from ([www.anxietybc.com](http://www.anxietybc.com))

- Read a question in its entirety before glancing over the answer options.
- After reading a question, answer it in your mind before reviewing the answer options. This will help you prevent yourself from talking yourself out of the correct answer.
- Eliminate answer options which you're 100 percent sure are incorrect before selecting the answer you believe is right.
- Read every answer option prior to choosing a final answer.
- Make an educated guess if you do not know the answer if it will not count against your score.
- It is best to stick with the answer you first chose after reading the question. It can be counterproductive to constantly alter answers.
- When you encounter "All of the above" and "None of the above" answer choices, do not select "All of the above" if you are pretty sure an answer is incorrect. The same applies for "None of the above" if you are pretty sure an answer is true.
- When two answers are correct in multiple choice questions with an "All of the above" option, then it's probably correct.
- In most circumstances, a positive option is probably true if there is also a negative one.
- In many cases, the correct answer usually contains more information than the other options. This is good to know if you must guess.

## **Long Answer/ Essay**

- Read a question in its entirety and highlight key words.
- If there are sources to interpret, write notes on what the source is telling/ showing you.
- If there are various parts to the question, ensure you address (and check off) each of the points.
- Make a first draft by rewriting your notes.
- Re-read the question and make sure you have answered the entire question.
- Re-read your answer to ensure you have addressed all the points.
- When taking essay tests, think before you write. Create a brief outline for your essay by jotting down a few words to indicate ideas you want to discuss.
- When taking essay test, get right to the point. State your main point in the first sentence. Use your first paragraph to provide an overview of your essay. Use the rest of your essay to discuss these points in more detail.

# Study Strategies

Modified from ([www.anxietybc.com](http://www.anxietybc.com))

## Preparing to study

- Find a "good study" space you can study in.
  - ◆ Use proper lighting.
  - ◆ In terms of temperature, it is better to be cool than warm. Warm rooms tend to make people sleepy
  - ◆ Have plenty of room to work; don't be cramped. Your study time will go better if you take a few minutes at the start to straighten things up and organize your materials.
  - ◆ A desk and straight-backed chair is usually best. Don't get too comfortable ~ a bed is a place to sleep, not study.
- Gather all the materials you need before starting (textbook, notes, pencils, highlighters , water, coffee, etc.) so that you don't have to leave your space once you start.
- Minimize distracting noise. Some people need some sound while some prefer silence, find what works for you.
- IF you listen to music, make a 'study playlist' so that it is helpful and not a distraction.
- Turn your phone on Airplane mode and put it to the side or in another room to charge. Consider a "do not disturb sign" on your door.
- Studying requires the correct attitude. Be calm and patient with yourself as you review the material. Try to open your mind as much as possible by putting other things aside and letting go of frustration.

## **Reviewing the Material**

- Review little and often rather than cramming before tests.
- Try using speech to text to read and listen to your notes.
- If your teacher gives a review sheet, start there (Print off 2 blank copies).
- Answer all the questions on the review sheet (then take it to class and have your teacher look over it to make sure you are on the right track).
- Find a study strategy that is effective for you, some examples:
  - Highlighting notes
  - Recording yourself reading notes and listening back to them
  - Rewriting notes
  - 
  - Study for 20 minutes without distraction (no Snapchat, FB, etc.), then take a short break to recharge.
- Focus on the areas that need the most attention. Many students feel that any time studying counts as real studying, but studying is less effective if you do not target the areas that need study.
- Improving your knowledge instead of just reinforcing what you know.
- Taking good in class notes familiarizes you with the material; further review and study solidifies it up.
- Use your class materials when studying. If your teacher has given you worksheets, data booklets, quizzes, etc. during class, use those to help you study.
- Effective studying uses all the resources you have, not just an open text book.
- Once you have reviewed your notes and studied then take the 2nd blank review sheet and go through and answer questions that you know.
- You can use a scale 1-10 for each question 10 I know this material, 5 kinda know it and 1 have no idea!

## **GENERAL TEST TAKING TIPS:**

- Come prepared; arrive early for tests.
- Stay relaxed and confident. Don't let yourself become anxious. Don't talk to other students before a test; anxiety is contagious. Instead, remind yourself that you are well-prepared and are going to do well.
- Be comfortable but alert. Choose a good spot to take the test. Make sure you have enough room to work. Maintain an upright posture in your seat.
- Bring all your supplies! Bring at least two pens/pencils with good erasers, calculator with enough batteries and any other resources that your instructor allows you to.
- Bring a watch to the test with you so that you can better pace yourself.
- Keep a positive attitude throughout the whole test and try to stay relaxed. If you start to feel nervous take a few deep breaths to relax.
- Keep your eyes on your own paper. You don't want to appear to be cheating and cause unnecessary trouble for yourself.
- When you first receive your test, do a quick survey of the entire test so that you know how to efficiently budget your time.
- Read the directions. (Can more than one answer be correct? Are you penalized for guessing? etc.) Never assume that you know what the directions say.
- Answer the easy questions first. This will give you the confidence and momentum to get through the rest of the test. You are sure these answers are correct. Try not to spend too much time on one question.
- Do the problems that have the greatest point values first.
- Don't rush but pace yourself, read the entire question and look for keywords.
- Ask the instructor to explain any items that are not clear.

- Write legibly, if the grader can't read what you wrote they'll most likely mark it wrong.
- Always read the whole question carefully. Don't make assumptions about what the question might be.
- Go back to the difficult questions. While looking over the test and doing the easy questions, your subconscious mind will have been working on the answers to the hardest ones. Also, later items on the test might give you useful or needed information for earlier items.
- Don't worry if others finish before you; focus on the test in front of you.
- Answer all questions (unless you are penalized for wrong answers).
- Try to answer the questions from the instructor's point of view. Try to remember what the instructor emphasized and felt was important.
- Use the margin to help you figure out if the question does not seem clear or if the answer seems ambiguous.
- Circle key words in difficult questions. This will force you to focus on the central point.
- Express difficult questions in your own words. Rephrasing can make it clear to you, but be sure you don't change the meaning of the question.
- Use all of the time allotted for the test. If you have extra time, cover up your answers and actually rework the question.
- Reserve 10% of your test time for review. Review the test; resist the urge to leave as soon as you have completed all the items. Make sure you have answered all the questions. Proofread your writing for spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
- Double check to make sure that you put your first and last name on the test.