

## Assessment Information for Students and Parents



- How can teachers best prepare students to take tests?



- How test-wise are students in alternative settings?

- Test wiseness is...
  - the ability to use the design (multiple choice, essay, etc.) and characteristics (how it was put together) of a test to get a better grade regardless of one's knowledge of the test's actual content. Test-wiseness can be developed by teaching students skills to do **before, during, and after** a test.


What kind of actions can be taught to students for them to do **before** taking a test?


- Teach students to...
  - A. Be prepared by studying completely
  - B. Recall in-class, homework, and other assignments that are related to the upcoming test.
  - C. Make a study schedule and follow it.
    - Review, review, review..... (daily, weekly, before a test)
    - Smaller chunks of information is easier to remember
    - Study in groups...but don't make it a social event.


- H. Get a good night's rest.
- I. Eat a good breakfast the day of the test.
- J. Connect the content to their lives.
  - The more connects, the better they will remember and recall the information
- K. Teach the information to someone else.
  - When you teach something, you learn it.


- What kind of actions can be taught to students to use **during** a test?


- Teach students to...
  - A. READ all the directions very carefully.
  - B. READ all options before selecting an answer.
  - C. READ the entire question.
  - D. Not READ more into the question than given in it.


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- E. Eliminate obviously wrong answers.
    - Use the process of elimination
  - F. Not spend too much time on individual items.
  - G. Mark questions that are not answered to come back to later.
  - H. Follow the directions closely.
    - Have students work in pairs and paraphrase the meaning of the directions

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- I. Use reasoning instead of guessing wildly.
  - J. Take one question at a time but preview the entire test if time permits to help budget your time
    - Leave the most difficult questions to the end
  - K. Keep a positive attitude by thinking positively.
    - Rehearse saying to themselves that they will do well.

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- L. Come prepared to tests with
    - Pencil
    - Scan sheets
    - Calculators
    - A watch
    - Dictionary
    - Etc.
  - M. Underline important parts of the question.
    - Highlight important keywords.

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- N. Only change their first answer if they really know the answer.
    - Reread questions that they are unsure about.
  - O. Erase incorrect answers completely.

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- What kind of actions can be taught to students to use **after** a test?
    - Teach students to...
      - A. Provide themselves with positive reinforcement if they did their best.
      - B. Share the information with parents.

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- C. Evaluate what might be causing lower grades than expected. Have them ask themselves which of the following might be the problem(s)
    - Was the low grade due to...
      - 1. An information gap? (The information was not covered in what was studied.)
      - 2. A retention gap? (The information was studied, but not remembered.)
      - 3. Misinterpretation of information? (The information was not clearly understood.)

- D. Talk to their parents about the upcoming test.
- E. Know exactly when the test is given.
- F. Practice with the type of test
  - Have students work in pairs and paraphrase the question.
  - Have students practice bubbling in answers
- G. Talk to their teacher about the upcoming test.

- 4. A synthesis gap? (The information was not processed with the proper connections.)
- 5. A general information gap? (General terms were not meaningful.)
- 6. Course specific vocabulary gap? (Specific terms were not meaningful.)
- 7. An inability to decipher? (The grammatical structure of the question or response was problematic.)

- 8. Jumping to the wrong conclusions? (All potential responses were not considered prior to answering.)
- 9. Rushed responding? (Did not take the time or have the time to respond well.)
- 10. Over/under generalized? (Eliminated too little or too much.)
- 11. Misreading? (Did not decode errors well.)

- 12. Miskeyed? (Knew the answers but put them in the wrong place.)
- 13. Poor memory strategy usage? (Did not use or implement effective strategies.)
- 14. Test answers not checked? (Did not use the time to recheck answers.)
- ([www.southwestern.edu/academic/acser-skills-teststr.html](http://www.southwestern.edu/academic/acser-skills-teststr.html))

■ What are some specific strategies students can learn to prepare for multiple choice tests?

- Teach students to...
  - A. Only guess if not penalized for wrong answers.
  - B. Make an educated guess if...
    - Choosing between two answers where they are similar, except for 1 or 2 words
    - By picking a middle number if there is a wide range of numbers (3, 60, 88, 110, 700)

- C. Not belabor any single question
- D. Take their time in filling in bubble sheets.
- E. Eliminate grammatically incorrect answers.
- F. Be aware of absolutes terms such as...
  - Always
  - Never
  - Invariably
  - None
  - All
  - Every
  - Must
    - Absolutes are often not the correct answer.

- G. Eliminate options that are the same, for example:
  - Question: Which activity is most important to taking tests?
    - A. Transferring
    - B. Studying
    - C. Relocating
    - D. Cheating
  - In this case, both A & C could be eliminated because they mean the same thing.

- H. Try to answer the question first in their minds without looking at the options.
- I. Avoid questions that are totally unfamiliar
  - If the student has attended to class, these simply may be distractors that are unrelated to the test.
- J. Select "all of the above" when in doubt since this option is usually correct though not always
- K. Avoid skipping around by answering questions in order.

### How can teachers best prepare students to take tests?

- L. Use the PIRATES strategy
  - Prepare to succeed
    - Put your name and PIRATES on the test
    - Allot time and order to sections
    - Say affirmations
    - Start within 2 minutes
  - Inspect the instructions
    - Read instructions carefully
    - Underline what to do and where to respond
    - Notice special requirements

### How can teachers best prepare students to take tests?


- Read, remember, reduce
- Answer or abandon
- Turn back
- Estimate
  - Avoid absolutes
  - Choose the longest or most detailed choice
  - Eliminate similar choices
- Survey
  - Hughes, Schumaker, Deshler, & Mercer (1988)
  - \*All strategies require training. For additional information, contact the Center for Research on Learning at the University of Kansas. [www.ku-crl.org/](http://www.ku-crl.org/)


### How can teachers best prepare students to take tests?


- M. Use SCORER
  - Schedule your time
  - Clue words
  - Omit difficult questions
  - Read carefully
  - Estimate your answers
  - Review your work
- Carmen & Adams (1972)


### tests?


- What are some specific strategies students can learn to prepare for essay tests?
  - Teach students to...
    - A. Understand important terms such as...
      1. Compare: to examine similarities and differences
      2. Contrast: to stress differences, qualities, problems, situations
      3. Criticize: to present your judgment, limitations, strengths, etc.
      4. Define: to provide clear, concise meanings


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- 5. Describe: to be characterize, delineate
  - 6. Discuss: to examine or analyze in detail; pros and cons
  - 7. Enumerate: to list, outline in concise manner
  - 8. Evaluate: to appraise strengths and weaknesses
  - 9. Examine: to look at in detail
  - 10. Explain: to clarify and interpret; answer how or why


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- 11. Illustrate: to explain or clarify in graphic form
  - 12. Interpret: to translate, exemplify, solve or comment
  - 13. List: to itemize in a concise manner
  - 14. Outline: to provide the main idea without minor details
  - 15. Prove: to confirm or verify with data


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- 16. Relate: to establish connections and associations descriptively
  - 17. Review: to critically examine in a sequential manner
  - 18. State: to list and briefly describe the main points
  - 19. Summarize: briefly provide major points
  - 20. Relate: to make connections and associations
    - ([www.history.ohio-state.edu/essayexm.htm](http://www.history.ohio-state.edu/essayexm.htm))


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- B. Make a quick outline prior to starting with brief main ideas and details in mind.
    - This will...
      - Develop a more organized answer
      - Increase the speed of writing
      - Increase the awareness of time and how much more needs to be answered
      - Increase the chances additional points will be given even if the entire question is not completely answered.


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- C. Use the words in the question to start off your answer
  - D. Check answers for grammatical errors, clarity, and legibility.
  - E. Read all the question before answering it.
  - F. Underline key words.


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- G. Use the first paragraph as a means to
    - State the main idea
    - Organize the structure of the rest of the paper
  - H. Allot time to each question
    - If all questions are equal, divide time equally
    - If all questions are weight, spend more time on heavier questions


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- I. Use good writing skills that include...
    - Starting each paragraph with a topic sentence.
    - Using effective transitions between paragraphs.
    - Having an introduction, body, and conclusion.
    - Providing sufficient detail.
    - Answering the question directly.


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- J. Use ANSWER
    - Analyze the situation
      - Read the question carefully
      - Underline key words
      - Gauge the time you need
    - Notice requirements
      - Scan for and mark the parts of the question
      - Ask and say what is required
      - Tell yourself you will write a quality answer


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- Set up an outline
    - Set up main ideas
    - Assess whether they match the question
    - Make changes if necessary
  - Work in details
    - Remember what you learned
    - Add details to the main ideas using abbreviations
    - Indicate order
    - Decide if you are ready to write

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- Engineer your answer
    - Write an introductory paragraph
    - Refer to your outline
    - Include topic sentences
    - Tell about details for each topic sentence
    - Employ examples

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- Review your answer
    - Look to see if you answered all parts of the question
    - Inspect to see if you included all main ideas and details
    - Touch up your answers
      - (Deshler, Ellis, & Lenz, 1996, p. 254)
      - \*All strategies require training. For additional information, contact the Center for Research on Learning at the University of Kansas

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- What are some specific strategies students can learn to prepare for true-false tests?
    - Teach students to...
      - A. Remember that if any part of the answer is false, the answer is "false."
      - B. Look for qualifying words such as "all, most, sometimes, never, rarely."
        - Questions with "all and never" are usually false

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- C. If they must guess, think about how the teacher has arranged questions previously
    - If the teacher uses more “false” answers, go with “false”
  - D. If no option is obvious, go with “true.”
    - Teachers have a tendency to write more true questions
  - E. The longer the answer, the greater chance it is true.

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- What are some specific strategies students can learn to prepare for open book tests?
    - Teach students to...
      - A. Write down formulas on a separate sheet if they will be useful
      - B. Place tabs next to important sections.
      - C. Develop and use a table on contents for notes or other critical information.