



Test Taking Strategies

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Test Taking Involves:

- ♣ Ongoing Preparation
- ♣ Efficient Studying
- ♣ Execution

Ongoing Preparation

- ♣ Become familiar with the teacher's style and testing format
- ♣ Note what your professor says is important for the test
- ♣ Make sure you understand the material before moving on to new material
- ♣ Review the material frequently and apply it as you learn it
- ♣ Know what kind of test your teacher plans to give or the testing format
 - You can know this by the kind of questions on the test

Efficient Studying

Objective Tests

- ♣ Include multiple choice, matching and true/false items
 - T/F questions require that you pay attention to the wording. Always look for the who, what, when, why and how, as well as other words such as sometimes, often and never.
 - On Multiple Choice questions, "All of the above" tends to equal "true" (especially if you judge two of the above options to be true)
 - Options with "sometimes" qualifiers (most, some, usually, sometimes, often) or options that are more complete or more inclusive are more likely to be true as well.
- ♣ Designed to test your memory and understanding
- ♣ Requires attention, vocabulary, and differentiation skills

Comprehensive Tests

- ♣ The material on comprehensive tests will include a wide area of the material you have been studying over a certain period of time.
- ♣ Know key concepts and definitions
- ♣ If there are questions you are *still unable to answer from previous exams*, develop answers for these questions and review them with the instructor.
- ♣ Arrange a study group

Essay Exams

- ♣ In-Class – receive questions ahead of time
 - Make outlines for each possible questions
 - Include terms that will trigger thoughts
 - Select a quote or two for each question
 - Arrange a study group
- ♣ In-Class—do not receive questions ahead of time
 - Look for key concepts and principles.
 - Topics/themes the professor goes over more than once and keeps appearing in the material.
 - Define unfamiliar terms and practice them.
 - Go over questions & examples in the book that are similar to what you've learned, and test yourself on the information.
- ♣ Take Home
 - Read carefully. Most essay questions ask you to do more than one thing.
 - Before writing, organize and outline your answers.
 - Write neatly and use complete sentences.



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- Above all be specific.
- Proofread!

Essay Exams: The Final Word

- ♣ Read carefully. Most essay questions ask you to do more than one thing.
- ♣ Before writing, organize and outline your answers.
- ♣ Write neatly and use complete sentences. Above all be specific.
- ♣ Proofread!

Execution

- ♣ Listen to the teacher's last minute instructions.
- ♣ Don't rush through the test. Read all instructions and questions carefully. Skip over difficult questions and come back to them later.
- ♣ Remember test questions give information.
- ♣ Use the process of elimination for difficult questions
- ♣ Look over your test and make sure it's complete
- ♣ If you need more clarification on a question, ask the professor, not your neighbor

During the Test

- ♣ Set a time schedule.
- ♣ Figure out how much time you have for each question. Bring a watch to keep yourself on track. Consider weighted questions.
- ♣ Select questions and make brief outlines for each. Always think before you write!
- ♣ Proofread what you've written before turning in your test.

How to Reduce Exam Anxiety

- ♣ Sit in the front of the class to reduce distraction
- ♣ Work on easier questions first to build confidence
- ♣ Focus on the process of answering the question, rather than the end result

Other General Tips

- ♣ Qualify when in doubt
 - It is better to say "toward the end of the 19th century" than to say "in 1894" when you can't remember, whether it's 1884 or 1894 .
- ♣ Do an "Information Dump" immediately
- ♣ Use transitions for clarity
- ♣ Remember, you can cross things out but make sure everything can still be read

Common Terms

- ♣ Analyze: Divide an event, idea, or theory into its component parts and examine each one in turn.
- ♣ Compare and/or Contrast: Demonstrate the similarities or differences between two or more events or topics. Be careful that each part of the essay deals with the same points!
- ♣ Define: Identify and state the essential traits or characteristics of something.
- ♣ Describe: Tell about an event, person, or process in detail, creating a clear and vivid image of it.
- ♣ Evaluate: Assess the value or significance of the topic.
- ♣ Explain: Make the topic as clear and understandable as possible by offering reasons, examples, and so on.
- ♣ Summarize: State the major points concisely and comprehensively.