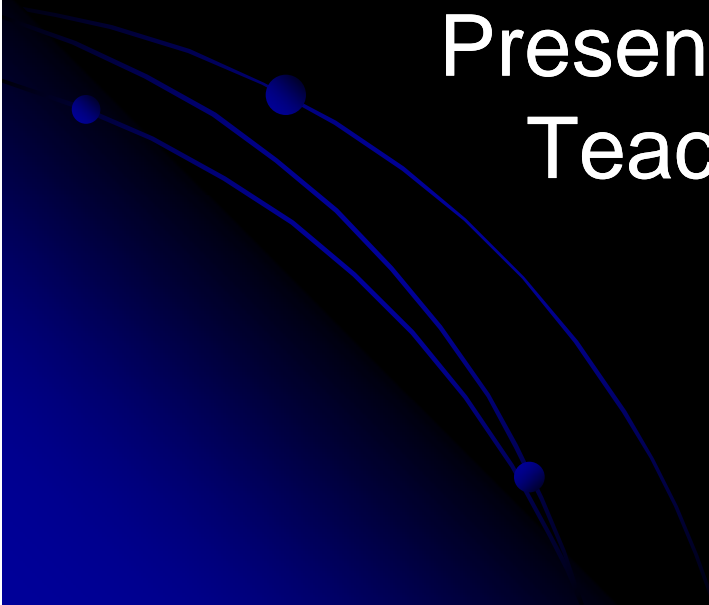


# Test Taking Strategies

Presented by the Center for  
Teaching and Learning



# Test Taking Involves:

Tests

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graph TD; Tests --> OngoingPreparation; Tests --> EfficientStudying; Tests --> Execution;
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Ongoing Preparation

Efficient Studying

Execution

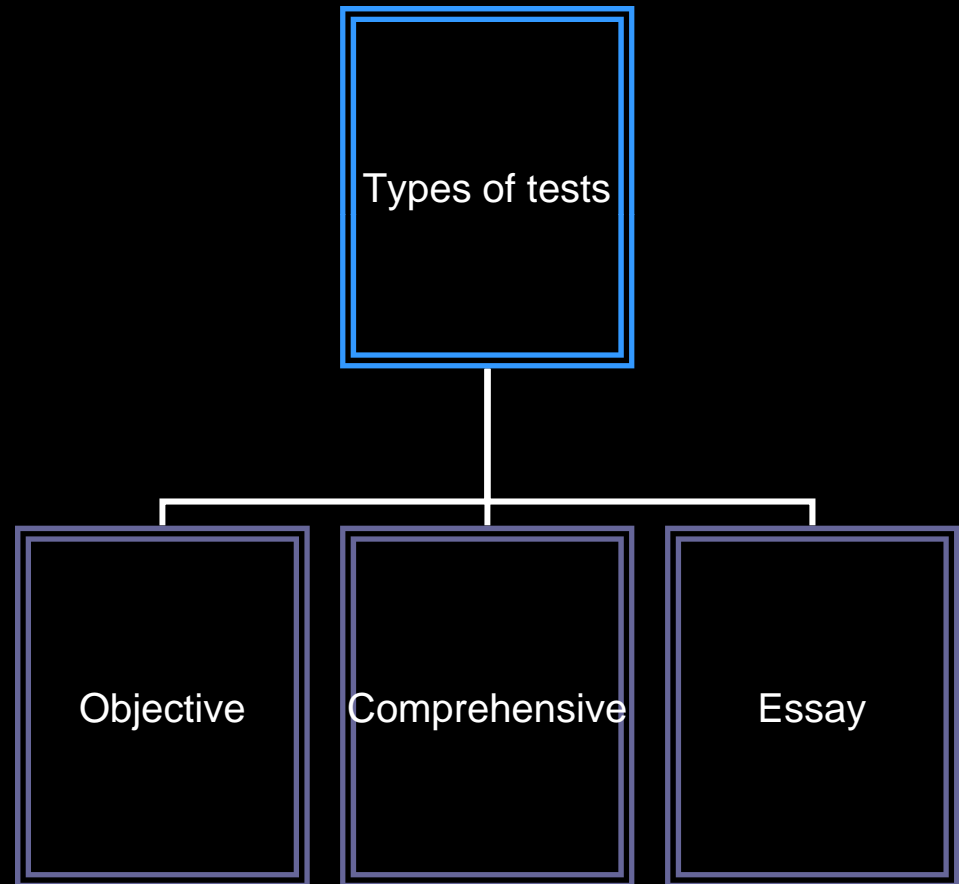
# Ongoing Preparation



- 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.

# Ongoing Preparation continued

- 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



# Objective Tests

- Objective test = What is it?
- Include multiple choice, matching and true/false items.
- Designed to test your memory and understanding.
- Requires attention, vocabulary, and differentiation skills.

T/F

Matching

Multiple Choice

# Example

- 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.
  - T/F: George Washington, Jimmy Carter, and Thomas Edison were all presidents of the United States.
  - T/F: Children today get lower grades because they watch too much television.

# Example

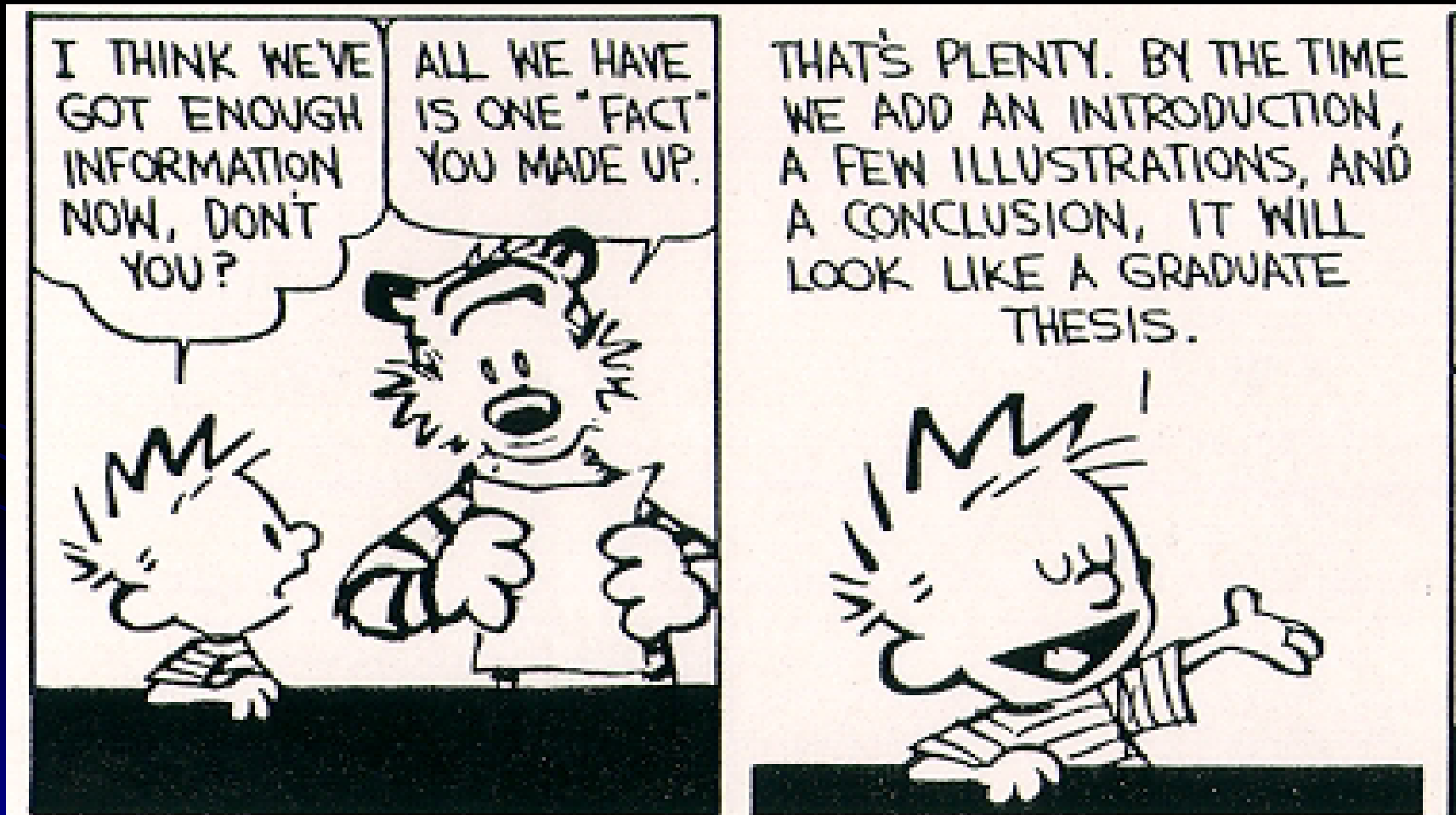
## ● Multiple choice questions

- “All of the above” tends to equal “true” (especially if you judge two of the above options to be true)
  - Physical attractiveness is likely to vary among
    - Europeans
    - Athletes
    - Men over thirty
    - All of the above
- 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.
  - The head of a kettle drum is
    - struck only with wooden mallets
    - always made of sheepskin
    - often made of calfskin
    - tightened once a day ( Pauk 340)

# Comprehensive Tests

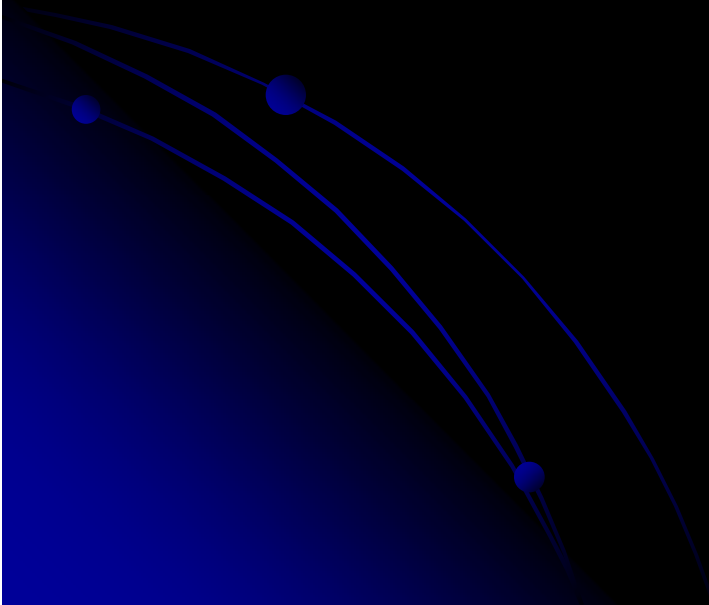
- The material on comprehensive tests will include a wide area of the material you have been studying over a certain period of time.
  - Know key concepts and definitions
  - If there are questions you are *still unable to answer from previous exams*, develop answers for these questions and review them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

# The Essay Exam

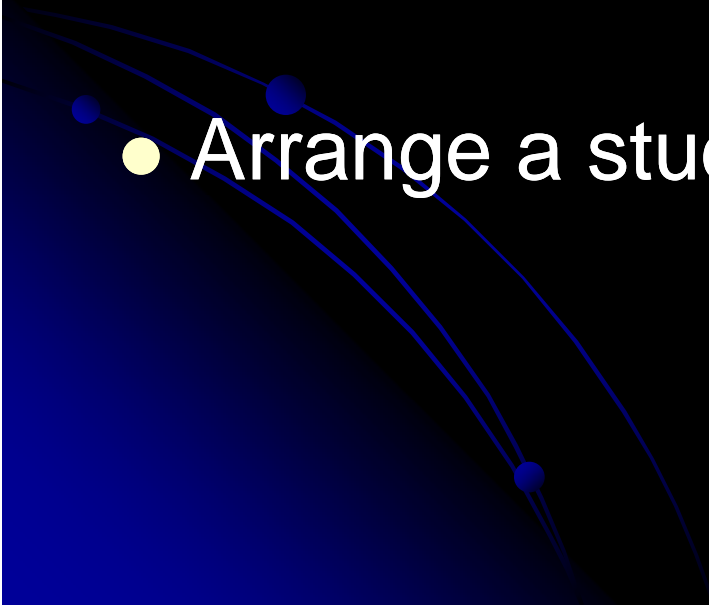


# Types of Essay Exams

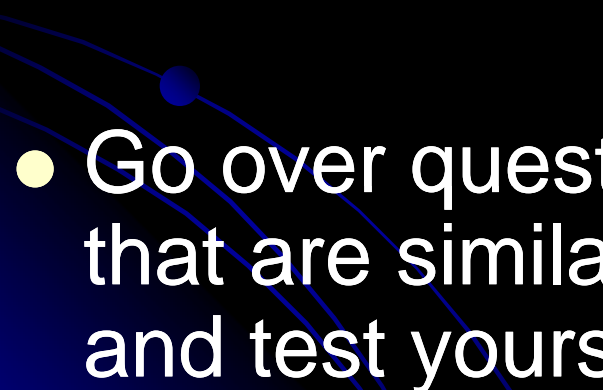
- In-Class
- Take-Home



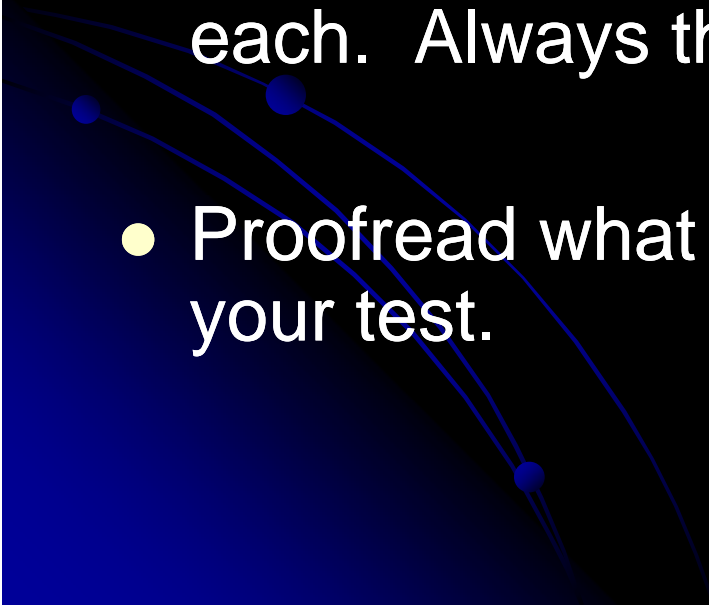
# In-Class – Receive Questions

- Make outlines for each possible questions
    - Include terms that will trigger thoughts
  - Select a quote or two for each question
  - Arrange a study group
- 

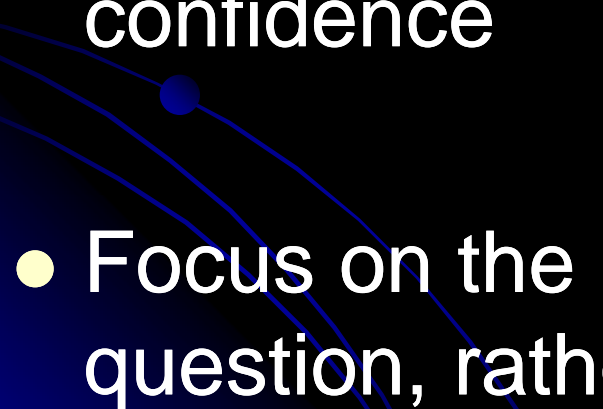
# Strategies for Studying for Unknown Essay Exam Questions

- Look for key concepts and principles.
    - Topics/themes the professor goes over more than once and keep 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.
- 

# During the Test

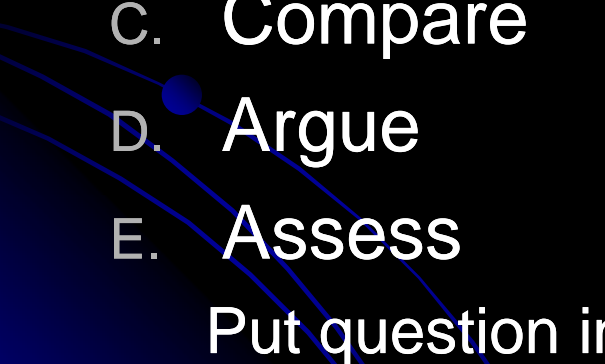
- Set a time schedule.
    - Figure out how much time you have for each question. Bring a watch to keep yourself on track. Consider weighted questions.
  - Select questions and make brief outlines for each. Always think before you write!
  - Proofread what you've written before turning in your test.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

# How to Reduce Exam Anxiety

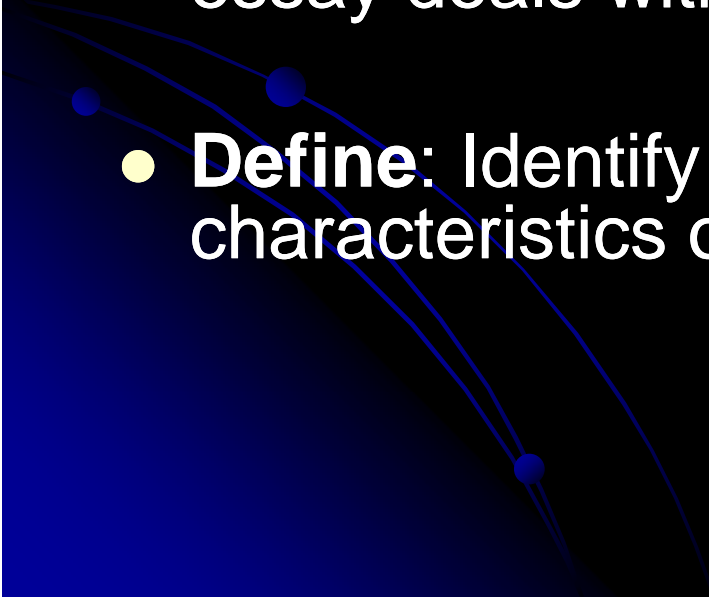
- Sit in the front of the class to reduce distraction
  - Work on easier questions first to build confidence
  - Focus on the process of answering the question, rather than the end result
- 

# Take-Home

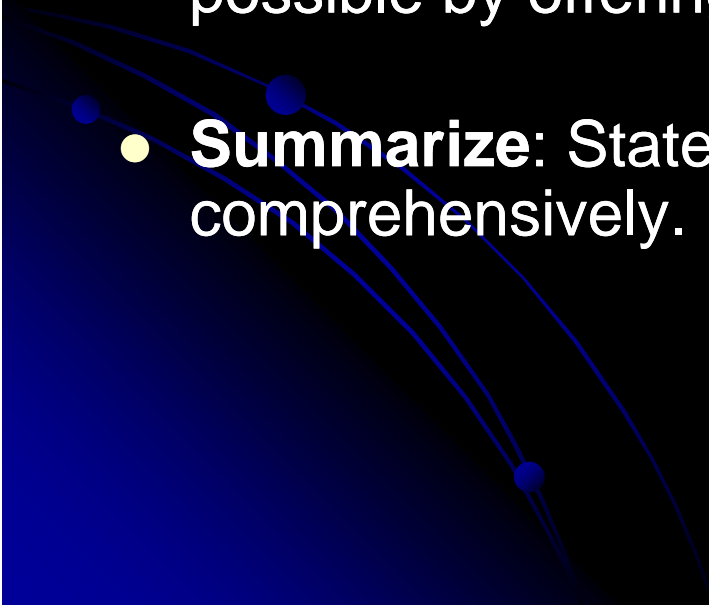
1. Don't wait until the last minute!
  2. Analyze language:
    - A. Identify
    - B. Explain
    - C. Compare
    - D. Argue
    - E. Assess

Put question into your own words.
- 

# 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.
- 

# More Common Terms

- **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.
- 

# Example Question 1

- What effects has television had on American politics since the presidential election of 1960? What are some of the attempts that have been made to regulate television coverage of political campaigns? What further regulations could you suggest?

## Example Question 2

- In the "Improving Memory" segment of our course, we considered a series of memory strategies, including "chunking" and "organization". Describe these strategies and discuss the different ways in which they can be applied to learning different kinds of information. Is one superior to the other? Why? Why not?

# 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

# 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!

# Don't Get Stressed Out!



# Don't Get Stressed Out

- Make sure you have enough time to study by organizing your study time.
- Be realistic.
- Organize time so that you don't get too busy. Allow time to relax and get plenty of sleep.
- Reduce stress and anxiety by:
  - Arriving early
  - Thinking & speaking positively
  - Sit at front of classroom
  - Plan your time during the test
  - Review test before turning it in

# 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

# Execution Continued

- Look over your test and make sure it's complete
- If you need more clarification on a question, ask the professor, not your neighbor

