

## Tips for Reducing Test Anxiety

- Prepare by using frequent short study sessions. “Cramming” = test anxiety.
- Get plenty of rest and sleep the night before the exam.
- Don’t forget to eat the day of the exam, preferably something nutritious.
- Dress appropriately.
- Avoid arriving too early or late to the exam.
- Avoid last minute studying.
- Avoid listening to others or discussing the exam with others while you are waiting for the exam.
- Don’t forget to breathe!
- Don’t get bogged down and worry about questions you don’t know; move on.
- Reward yourself when you are finished with the exam.



## TEST ANXIETY QUESTIONNAIRE

To complete the evaluation, read through each statement and reflect upon past test experiences. You may wish to consider all testing experiences or focus on a particular subject (history, science, math, etc.) one at a time. Indicate how often each statement describes you by choosing a number from one to five as outlined below.

Never=1 Rarely=2 Half-time=3 Often=4 Always=5

\_\_\_ I have visible signs of nervousness such as sweaty palms, shaky hands, and so on right before a test.

\_\_\_ I have “butterflies” in my stomach before a test.

\_\_\_ I feel nauseated before a test.

\_\_\_ I read through the test and feel that I do not know any of the answers.

\_\_\_ I panic before and during a test.

\_\_\_ My mind goes blank during a test.

\_\_\_ I remember the information that I blanked on once I get out of the testing situation.

\_\_\_ I have trouble sleeping the night before a test.

\_\_\_ I make mistakes on easy questions or put answers in the wrong places.

\_\_\_ I have difficulty choosing answers.

Now add up your score on all the statements. Scores will range from 10 to 50. A low score (10-19 points) indicates that you do not suffer from test anxiety. In fact, if your score was extremely low (close to 10), a little more anxiety may be healthy to keep you focused and to get your blood flowing during exams. Scores between 20 and 29 indicate that, although you exhibit some of the characteristics of test anxiety, the level of stress and tension is probably healthy. Scores over 30 suggest that you are experiencing an unhealthy level of test anxiety. You should evaluate the reason(s) for the distress and identify strategies for compensating.



## CELEBRATIONS OF LEARNING: TEST TAKING & TEST ANXIETY!



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# TEST TAKING STRATEGIES

## *As you start the exam—Take control*

1. Listen closely to directions.
2. Look over the entire test and read carefully each section.
3. Budget time accordingly.
4. Build confidence by answering question you know first.
5. Mark questions you're unsure of and recheck later.
6. Your first guess may not always be the best.
7. Some questions may jog memory or provide answers to other questions.
8. Know what the question asks for before selecting an answer.
9. If you note what appears to be a typo, ask the teacher; it may not be a typo.
10. Scan any text, figures, charts, or drawings that accompany a question; then read the questions to see what information you will need. Next, return to the drawings for a more careful reading.
11. Answer every question. A blank answer is always wrong; a guess may be right.

## **Multiple Choice**

1. Read directions carefully noting how many correct answers for each question.
2. If there is only one correct answer, you are looking for the one best answer.
3. Read the stem and all answers before marking an answer.
4. The more choices you eliminate, the better the chance of a correct guess.
5. Be reasonable. Some answers make more sense than others.
6. Watch for negative words such as not or except.
7. Note absolutes (100% words) such as all, no, best...Except in math and science, these are more often incorrect choices.
8. Foolish options are usually wrong.
9. "All of the above" is often used when all statements are correct unless it is a choice for every question. If you can find at least two correct answers to a question, then "all

of the above" may be the best choice unless you can mark more than one answer correct.

10. Dates—if you don't know, eliminate the high and low and make an intelligent guess.
11. Watch for similar answers. It indicates focus, and usually one is correct.
12. Often the correct answer is longer or more inclusive.
13. Watch for clues such as an/a; is/are.

## **Matching**

1. Read the directions, noting if an answer may be used more than once.
2. Run down both columns to see what you are dealing with. Count choices in each column to see if every choice will be used.
3. Start with the left column and then read down the right. Consider all possibilities before making a final choice.
4. Fill in all you are sure of, skipping those you are unsure of. If you can write on the test, mark off the answers selected.
5. Don't guess until you have answered all you are sure of.
6. Make lists of possibilities and associated facts and ideas.

## **Short answers**

1. Think before you write.
2. Use simple, concise answers and sentences; write legibly.
3. If unsure of an answer, write as much as you can recall.
4. Answer the question that is asked.



## **Essay tests**

Use the acronym **LABBOWL**:

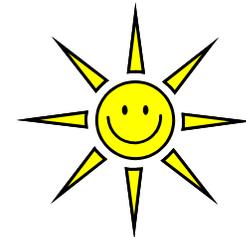
- L** Look over the entire exam.
- A** Ask for point allotment.
- B** Budget time.
- B** Build confidence and momentum.
- O** Outline each question before writing.
- W** Watch for key words.
- L** Look over exam when finished.

Use the acronym **COPS**:

**Capitals, Organization, Punctuation, Spelling**

Suggested usage of 45 minutes in class:

10 minutes planning, 30 writing, & 5 COPS.



1. Organize intelligently. Give a statement then explain in more detail. One idea per paragraph. Include the best reasons in first few lines. End with a summary sentence.
2. Avoid unsupported opinions or statements.
3. Use complete sentences and transition words like next, first, last, consequently, on the other hand.
4. Number your responses, especially if a certain number is necessary.
5. Incorporate subject specific vocabulary used by the instructor and textbook.
6. If time permits, don't leave a question blank. Try for partial credit.
7. Leave wide margins and several blank lines between questions to allow for inserting information.
8. Have answers for every question listed on instructor made study guides.
9. If no study guide is given, make up your own sample questions.