

GENERAL TEST TAKING TECHNIQUES:

A STUDY GUIDE

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TO THE READER

Testing is an accepted part of American life. Americans are, perhaps, the most tested people in the world. The moment a child is born she or he is tested. Parents wait expectantly to hear the results of the Apgar test. Throughout our education, we are constantly tested. Many businesses and companies throughout the United States test their employees for a variety of reasons, including filling positions in an objective way.

Taking a test is neither an easy nor enjoyable task for most people. It can create anxiety, apprehension and even physical discomfort. Usually this occurs because people have never developed a comprehensive method for taking tests. Taking a test is like many activities. It requires preparation, thought and a plan of action. Would you tackle a task on the job without the proper tools? Would you participate in an athletic event without the proper equipment? Would you go on a trip without learning the easiest and most direct route to your destination? Of course not! You would want to be able to do the job correctly, have the proper equipment for your game, and make sure you arrive at your destination expediently and without incident.

This study guide has been written to help you become a better test-taker. You will be introduced to an array of test-taking techniques and strategies to enable you to perform your best on many different types of tests, including Verizon qualifications tests such as the UTB-R and secondary tests. Techniques will be introduced to you, followed by exercises to help you understand how to use them in an actual test-taking situation. Some of the techniques will not be new to you, and some will appear to be just "good, common sense." Hopefully, this guide will serve to remind you of some techniques you may not have had the need to use for a while. Other techniques discussed may open up some new approaches to help you gain confidence as you prepare to take tests.

It is important that you understand this manual is not a substitute for actual test preparation in the content areas of the test(s) you may take. You will want to take advantage of all of the resources available to you for test preparation. Verizon offers test prep courses for UTB-R and secondary tests. Check with Pre-Test Training to determine available test prep courses. Also, libraries and bookstores offer test prep materials in some of the areas on Verizon tests, such as mathematics, spelling and spatial visualization. Test preparation can not only build skills but can also build confidence, and it's the combination of skills, confidence, and test-taking know-how that can make you more successful. Good Luck!

Louis Guinta, Ph.D

Barbara Ritchin, MA, PD.

CHAPTER 1

TEXT ANXIETY: A LITTLE BIT HELPS

Taking tests by definition can be a stressful, anxiety causing task, especially for someone who hasn't taken a test in a long time. It can create feelings, usually unfounded, about someone's ability, work, and aptitude. These feelings can have a direct impact on performance. They can create a negative attitude which can translate into a loss of concentration prior to, during and after the test. They can prevent you from completing the test in the time allotted. They can stop you from doing your best. One of the keys to being a good test-taker is a positive attitude. Let's now discuss your feelings about taking tests.

How do you feel about taking a test?

1.Does your stomach ache? YES ___ NO ___

2.Do your palms begin to sweat? YES ___ NO ___

3.Can you feel your heart beating rapidly when you think about the coming test? YES
___ NO ___

4.Do you feel that it is unfair that you have to take this test?
YES ___ NO ___

5.Do you feel as if someone or something has abandoned you?
YES ___ NO ___

List 5 of your feelings about taking tests.

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

Whatever you checked or whatever you listed are real feelings. You should acknowledge these feelings, but you should attempt not to allow them to affect your test performance.

Psychologists have extensively studied the causes of test anxiety. They have found that people whose test performance was affected by the test anxiety had one over-riding problem, the fear of failure. The fear of failure can create such a negative mind set that the individual reduces his or her chances of passing the test. The individual's pre-occupation with failure pre-determines the outcome. A good example of this idea occurs in sports. We sometimes hear a sportscaster use the term 'psyched out' when describing the poor performance of a team or individual athlete, meaning that a team or an opponent was not mentally prepared to win the match, but to lose it. Fear of failure can be a real problem. How can we deal with it?

STRATEGY #1: FLICK BACK-FLICK UP

Mr. Louis Tice*, a noted lecturer and founder of the Pacific Institute, has worked extensively with individuals and businesses in helping them to develop strategies to maximize their potential. Mr. Tice feels that negative emotions can be overcome in almost any situation. One useful strategy which he has developed and he uses in his Investment in Excellence Program is the FLICK BACK-FLICK UP TECHNIQUE.

***By Permission of Mr. Tice**

According to Mr. Tice, you should always prepare yourself emotionally by anticipating a positive outcome. To do this, when going into a potentially stressful situation, you should reflect back to positive experiences in your life, for example, when you were praised for doing something well or when you were elected to an important position in a club or on a team. We all have had positive experiences in our life which, when we think about them, always make us smile or just feel good. Prior to going into a testing situation, FLICK BACK to that positive experience. Try to feel the emotion from that positive experience and place that energy into the future experience, not just once, but many times. According to Mr. Tice, this emotion of success will project into your future experience and create an environment for more success. Moreover, if you find yourself beginning to feel negative while taking that test, if your fear of failure begins to well up, FLICK BACK to that positive emotional state. This will help to assure that you do your best. Remember to be positive. Let's try the FLICK BACK-FLICK UP TECHNIQUE.

In the space provided, write 5 experiences that you have had which you found to be emotional and positive:

- 11. _____

- 12. _____

- 13. _____

14. _____

15. _____

Now, close your eyes and try to visualize the details of one of these experiences: where it took place, who was there, why it was so positive. How did you feel? Why did you feel this way?

In the space provided, describe how you felt about this experience when it occurred.

Describe how you feel now when thinking about this experience.

Remember to borrow this positive feeling whenever you find yourself in a stressful, anxiety provoking situation, especially when you are taking a test.

Remember also that a little anxiety is to be expected and is not necessarily bad. It gets the adrenaline pumping and readies you for the test, but, as discussed previously, it should be kept at a level at which you have control and which is not disruptive. The FLICK BACK-FLICK UP TECHNIQUE can help you to do this.

STRATEGY #2: REWARD YOURSELF

Another technique which might help you allay your test anxiety and create a positive emotional mind set is to develop a reward system for yourself. Prior to the day of the test, arrange an activity directly after the test period which you will find satisfying or just plain fun. Buying that new outfit, going to dinner or a movie with someone special, going out with friends are all examples of enjoyable experiences. The idea of having something to look forward to can be used during the test session to keep your focus and maximize your performance. For example, if you find yourself becoming anxious during the test session, say to yourself "I am really looking forward to tonight" or "Am I going to have fun." This, similar to the FLICK BACK-FLICK UP method advocated by Mr. Tice, will create a positive emotional state and allow you to get on with the task at hand.

In the space provided list 5 rewards that might reduce your test anxiety.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

STRATEGY #3: RELAXATION ACTIVITIES

If you find yourself becoming tense and anxious when you reach the testing site or while you are taking the test, you may need an activity to help you relax. You will know that this is happening when you find yourself unable to concentrate, no matter how hard you try, or if your muscles begin to tighten. If this does occur, try the following technique. Be sure that you follow each step in the order in which it is presented.

TENSE EVERY MUSCLE IN YOUR BODY AND KEEP IT TENSED STARTING WITH YOUR HEAD AND WORKING DOWN YOUR BODY TO YOUR TOES. CONCENTRATE ON HOW EACH MUSCLE FEELS AS YOU PROGRESS.

FIRST TENSE YOUR FOREHEAD BY SCOWLING, THEN YOUR NECK BY PULLING IN YOUR CHIN, THEN YOUR BACK BY SQUEEZING YOUR SHOULDERS DOWN.

PULL YOUR STOMACH UP AGAINST YOUR RIBS, TIGHTEN YOUR LOWER BACK, STRETCH OUT YOUR FINGERS, KNOT YOUR UPPER LEG MUSCLES, AND THEN YOUR CALVES.

STRETCH YOUR FEET AND FINALLY YOUR TOES.

At this point you should be as stiff as a board, all over your body. Next, relax each set of muscles that you just tensed. Start with your toes and work upward. Pay attention to how each muscle feels as you relax it, and keep all the muscles relaxed as you move upward. As you do this, concentrate on how you feel as the tension leaves your muscles one by one. When you get to your chest muscles, breathe deeply several times and continue breathing deeply as you finish the relaxation procedure. Also, as you breathe, notice how you exhale all the tension.

In order to master this technique, you must practice it many, many times so that you can do it without hesitation. After you have practiced this relaxation exercise a dozen or so times, you should be able to spot which muscles are the ones you generally tense up under pressure. Those should be your signal muscles, the ones that say to you, "HEY, YOU'RE GETTING TENSE. TAKE A MINUTE TO RELAX."

As soon as you are comfortable in the testing room, you might want to go through the entire relaxation technique once. After that, simply watch for signs of tension in your signal muscles and perform the technique as needed.

These three techniques to reduce test anxiety may also be useful in other anxiety-provoking situations. One employee was successful in using the "Reward Yourself" strategy to reduce the anxiety attacks that he suffered prior to public speaking engagements. In his case, the reward was the purchase of an object that he collected. Reminding himself of this upcoming "reward" enabled him to relax before and during the talk.

Try these three techniques in whatever anxiety-provoking situations you may encounter.

SUMMARY

In this chapter, you have been introduced to understanding test anxiety. You have also been given three specific strategies to help you overcome this potential problem: 1. FLIP BACK-FLIP UP 2. REWARD YOURSELF 3. RELAXATION EXERCISE.

These techniques are useful both before and during the test to help you reduce your test anxiety. Be sure to think about which would be the most beneficial to you.

16. **REVIEW EXERCISES** [Refer to the page 57 for your answers.]List three methods you can use to deal with test anxiety:

1 .

_____ 2 .

_____ 3 .

17. Which of the three methods is likely to be the most useful for you?
Why?

CHAPTER 2

TIME: THE SILENT ASSASSIN

"I COULD HAVE PASSED THAT TEST." "I JUST DIDN'T HAVE ENOUGH TIME." "I ALWAYS FIND MYSELF RUSHING AT THE END TO FINISH THE TEST." These are typical comments made by workers after taking a standardized test. Do you find yourself saying or feeling the same?

Many individuals have a difficult time completing standardized tests in the time allocated. It isn't that they don't know the information; they just don't have enough time to complete the test. This chapter will introduce strategies to you which will help you minimize the effect of the time factor.

Almost all tests are timed. There are basically two different kinds of standardized tests: Power Tests and Speed Tests. Power Tests give you a liberal amount of time to complete the test items. In this kind of test, time is usually not a factor in one's ability to complete it. In Speed Tests, however, time is an important factor. If you wish to complete the test, you must work quickly and make the most out of the time given you. On many Verizon tests, speed is a factor.

In addition, you must keep in mind that on many standardized tests, your score is based upon your number of correct responses. On some tests, however, there is a penalty for wrong answers, that is, an amount is deducted for each wrong answer. This is true for most of the subtests on the UTB-R. Sometimes, Verizon Pretest Training materials will indicate the scoring policy for the test. If you do not know how a test is scored, ask the test administrator or proctor at the time of the test how the test is scored.

One of the major reasons people fail to complete a standardized test is because they are unable to maintain a high level of intensity throughout. They don't have a plan of attack. They simply take the test.

In the space provided, list 3 strategies which you feel might help you overcome the problem of being unable to complete a standardized test.

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

THE SPRINTER, THE WALKER AND THE MARATHONER

Many people approach tests in the same way. Once the test proctor gives the direction to begin, everyone in the room immediately begins to work quickly, diligently and intensely. It is almost as if they are participating in a 100 yard dash. However, after a few minutes the participants seem, almost on cue, to slow down. Their posture changes; their pencils become less active; their intensity diminishes. Rather than the 100 yard dash they began with, it seems that they begin to walk through the test at a leisurely pace. When the proctor indicates that there is one minute left, they begin to sprint again; however, they have already lost the race. Has this ever happened to you?

When taking standardized tests, you should strive to maintain a level of speed and intensity that will allow you to complete all of the items on the test without running out of time. Think of yourself as a marathoner whose primary goal is to finish the test on time. To do this, the following strategies are recommended:

BUDGET YOUR TIME

One of the keys to becoming a good marathoner is to budget your time. Make sure that you have enough time to complete the test. This idea is very simple, but to become proficient at it is a little more difficult.

Whenever you take a standardized test, always make sure that you know how much time you are being given and how many questions are on the test. This information is usually given by the proctor before the test begins. If the proctor fails to give this information, ASK HIM OR HER. Then divide the time allocated by the number of questions. This will tell you how you should pace yourself. For example, if the test consists of 20 questions and you are being given 20 minutes to complete it, you should be able to complete approximately 1 question each minute. By the tenth minute of the test, you should have completed about half of the test. If the test consists of 30 questions and you are given 15 minutes to complete it, you should be able to complete approximately 1 question every 30 seconds.

In the space provided, let's practice this:

	Time Allocated	Seconds Per Question
# of Questions		
10	5 minutes	*
30	10 minutes	
12	6 minutes	
24	8 minutes	

* Answers are on the following page.

YOU HAVE THE IDEA!!!

You may not always be able to complete each question in the time you have allotted. This will occur because some questions will be more difficult than others. The key, however, is to maintain a constant level of completion. This activity will enable you to complete the test. It's better than SPRINTING, WALKING AND SPRINTING AGAIN.

To assure that you are able to follow the course you set for yourself, make sure that you bring a WRISTWATCH to the test room. Place the watch in front of you, and be sure to look at it at sensible intervals to make sure you're not falling behind. This will ensure that you maintain a high degree of intensity and speed throughout the test period. If you know from past test experiences that you tend to work slowly, start by checking the time more frequently. This will help you develop a quicker rhythm. After you have practiced this method and have become accustomed to it, you will develop your own rhythm.

ANSWERING THE QUESTIONS

The order in which you answer the questions on a standardized test can affect your ability to complete it. It has a direct effect on your speed and can also create anxiety. Most people answer the questions exactly in the order in which they are asked. In addition, they dwell too long on some questions and not long enough on others. In the end, they lose points because they fail to answer enough of the questions-many of which they would have answered correctly, if they would have had enough time to try them.

DO THE EASY QUESTIONS FIRST

Have you ever found yourself spending too much time on any one question? We have watched students spend as much as 10 minutes answering one question on a standardized test on which they only had 20 minutes to answer 40 questions, each of which had the same point value. What a waste of time and effort! No wonder they don't complete the test. No wonder they find themselves answering thoughtlessly. No wonder they lose control.

When taking a standardized timed test, always answer the easy questions first. These are the questions which you are able to answer with little thought. By doing this, you calm your anxiety while you activate your memory. It's like an athlete warming up before the race. This strategy will also give you confidence to proceed and give you more time to spend on the more difficult questions. In addition, and most importantly, it assures that you will receive points for information that you know.

ANSWERS: 1. 30 2. 20 3. 30 4. 20

DON'T SPEND TOO MUCH TIME ON SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

If you find yourself spending too much time on any one question, here are some strategies that may help:

18. Stop work and quickly make a note on your scratch paper to indicate items to which you plan to return later.
19. If you are taking a test where there is no penalty for guessing, mark your best answer before moving on to the next question.
20. If the test has a penalty for wrong answers, do not guess at this point unless you feel that through elimination of answers or through an intuitive sense you may have a strong possibility of answering correctly.
21. If you do skip an answer, it is critical that you check to make sure that you've skipped the space on the answer sheet and that you are marking the correct line for your next answer.
22. Do not place unnecessary marks on your answer sheet to indicate items to which you plan to return later. These marks may be interpreted as responses.
23. If you have time left at the end of the test period, go back to the items indicated on your scratch paper.

USE EVERY SECOND

If you complete the test before time has elapsed, go over the test. Go back to questions that gave you trouble. Many individuals who take tests stop working and hand in their test paper as soon as they finish the test. Don't ever do this. Keep working until the end. Check and re-check your answers to maximize your effort.

SUMMARY

In this chapter, you have been shown how important your use of time can be when taking standardized tests. You have been introduced to several strategies which enable you to

use time more effectively and efficiently, including time budgeting, answering easy questions first, and not spending too much time on any one question.

REVIEW EXERCISES [Refer to page 57 for your answers.]

1. Why is it important to budget your time when taking a test?

2. List 3 strategies you can use to help you complete a test.

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

CHAPTER 3

FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS: THE MAP TO SUCCESS

Before we begin our discussion, complete the following test. You will have only 3 minutes to complete the test. Time yourself.

JUST CONCENTRATE, BUT REMEMBER YOU ONLY HAVE THREE MINUTES TO CARRY OUT THESE INSTRUCTIONS:

24. Read everything before doing anything.
25. Put your name in the upper right hand corner of this paper.
26. Circle the word "name" in sentence two.
27. Draw five squares in the upper left hand corner of this paper.
28. Put an "X" in each square.
29. Put a circle around each square.
30. Sign your name in the blank which follows. _____
31. Put a circle around each word in sentence 7.
32. Put an "x" in the lower left hand corner of this paper.
33. Draw a triangle around the "x" you just put down.
34. On separate sheet of paper multiply 9805 by 703.
35. Draw a rectangle around the word "paper" in sentence #4.
36. Call out your name when you get to this point in the test.
37. If you think you have followed directions up to this point call out "I have."
38. Add 8905 and 9850.
39. Put a circle around your answer. Put a square around the circle.

40. Count out loud in your normal speaking voice backward from ten to one.
41. Now that you have finished reading carefully, do only sentences one and two.

If you followed the directions carefully, you read the entire test before completing questions 1 and 2. If you didn't follow the stated directions, you probably completed the test, including calling your name aloud. This exercise wasn't done to try to make a fool out of you. Instead, it was done to show you how easy it is to become too involved in the test, rather than in following directions.

Many individuals do not do well on standardized tests because they fail to perform the task that they are being asked to do. This usually occurs because they do not carefully follow the verbal or written directions that they are given. Have you ever asked directions from someone and found that you had to stop again and ask someone else before reaching your destination? Have you ever found yourself half way through a test and come to a realization that you're doing something wrong? This happens all too often, but, when taking a standardized test, this error can be costly. Remember, you are being timed. You will not get a chance to start all over because you failed to grasp or understand the directions.

Many test-takers aren't aware of the importance of reading and understanding directions. When taking standardized tests, be sure that you fully understand the directions before you start.

EIGHT STEPS TO READING DIRECTIONS **

42. Give the directions a quick first reading just to get the general idea. It will help you quickly understand the level of difficulty of the directions.
43. Never take it for granted that you already know any part of the directions and, therefore, can afford to skip them in your reading.
44. Be sure that you understand fully every step in the directions. You may have to read with special care for this purpose. If you do not understand the directions, you should ask a proctor.
45. It will help you to understand each step better if you can recognize the reason for it.
46. If possible, try to form a mental picture of the steps in the directions.
47. Try to understand why step 1 must be done before step 2, step 2 before step 3, etc. There are good reasons for listing the steps in a certain order.
48. After the careful second reading, go over step-by-step the entire set of directions once more. This time, you may be able to remember the steps in the right order. However, if possible, you should have the directions in front of you while you are performing the steps.
49. If you are permitted to do so, ask the test administrator or proctor any questions you may have about the directions.

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PRACTICE EXERCISES

Using the steps described above, try to complete the following exercises. As you go through these directions, try during a second reading to form a mental picture of the steps. Imagine that you see yourself carrying out each step, one after the other. Remember the steps in order. The answers are at the end of the exercises.

Exercise 1

Road Directions

Mr. Jones was looking for Hillcrest Road. He stopped and asked for directions at a gasoline station. "Well," said the attendant, "you will have to go back the way you came for about a mile to the traffic light. Turn left and go about half a mile to the traffic light. Turn left and go about half a mile until you come to the entrance to a park. Continue into the park until you come to a "Stop" sign. Take the road to the right and follow it to the outside of the park. Turn left alongside the park until you come to Main Street. Then go right for a few blocks until you get to Hillcrest Road. It crosses Main Street."

Mr. Jones said, "Thank you," then turned to his son, John and inquired, "Can you remember the directions?" John thought he could, but when they reached the other side of the park no one could recall which way to turn. They had neglected to form a mental picture of the directions which would enable them to remember the directions.

10. The third thing Mr. Horton was to do in Newburg was

- D. register at the hotel
- E. look for office space for rent
- F. place an ad in the paper

11. It is apparently necessary

- G. for Mr. Horton to stay at the River View Hotel
- H. for there to be several applicants to interview
- I. for Mr. Horton to be back in his office on Thursday

Exercise 3

In this exercise you will find five sentences. Each one contains an underlined word. Following the sentences is a list of definitions. Select the correct definition for each of the underlined words. There are more definitions than words, so you must select your definitions with care. Each definition is designated by a letter. Write beside each sentence the letter of the correct definition.

- _____ 1. Disaster struck the town when the hurricane arrived.
- _____ 1. To be diplomatic, you must appear to be friendly even if you do not feel friendly.
- _____ 1. The preliminary chapter was easier than the later parts of the book.
- _____ 1. The flashlight suddenly illuminated the cellar.
- _____ 1. Things gravitate toward the earth.

DEFINITIONS

- J. lighted up
- K. broke up
- L. an event of great destruction
- M. first or beginning
- N. showing tact and courtesy in relations with other people
- O. bring illness
- P. are pulled

B. Test yourself. Answer these questions without looking back at the instructions.

56. How many words were you asked to define?

57. How many definitions were you given?

58. Where were you to look for the definitions?

59. In your answers, did you have to write words, phrases, or letters?

60. What is the meaning of the word disaster?

ANSWERS

Exercise 1

- 12. Turn left and you go about half a mile to the park entrance.
- 13. you come to a Stop sign.
- 14. Take the road to the right and go.
- 15. Turn left alongside the park until you come to
- 16. a few blocks to Hillcrest Road.

Exercise 2

1. B 2. B 3. C

Exercise 3

- A. 1. c 2. e 3. d 4. a 5. G
- B. 1. 5 2. 7 3. Following the sentences 4. Letters
5. An event of great destruction

MAKE SURE THAT YOU UNDERSTAND

When you arrive at the test site and are being given directions for the test by a test proctor, be sure that you understand the following before you begin the test.

61. THE TIME LIMIT

As discussed in Chapter 2, the time factor is extremely important to test performance. Make sure that you know exactly how much time you have to complete the test.

62. NUMBER OF QUESTIONS ON THE TEST

Knowing the number of questions on the test will allow you to use your time in the most efficient and effective way possible.

63. THE SCORING OF THE TEST

If the proctor has not explained how the test is scored, be sure to ask if there is a penalty for wrong answers.

64. NECESSARY EQUIPMENT

Be sure the test proctor has provided you the necessary materials.

65. SEQUENCE OF TASKS

Some tests require that you perform a number of tasks before you are able to answer the questions. Make sure that you know exactly which tasks you need to perform and in what sequence they should be done. If you are not clear about the sequence, ask the proctor questions until you fully understand. Don't start the test until the proctor has fully and clearly explained the steps involved.

A strategy which you might want to use is to try to make a mental image of the steps as the proctor is explaining the directions.

66. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PRACTICE EXERCISES

Many who take standardized tests do not take the practice exercises seriously. They just go through the motions. They seem to feel that the practice exercises are a waste of time, that they don't mean anything. These are the same people who lose precious time at the beginning of the test because they are unprepared for the form and/or content. These are the same people who become confused because they're not sure if they're doing the right thing.

The practice exercises are extremely important. Take them seriously. They prepare you for what is to come. They give you the chance to experience the test before taking it. They give you direction. They allow you to get an idea about the form and content of the examination. They assure that your start will be smooth and free from confusion. And they allow you to ask the proctor questions before the test begins, thus saving you time.

67. THE IMPORTANCE OF AVOIDING CONFUSION

Sometimes taking a test can be a confusing experience. The confusion arises when directions within the test change and/or when the individual somehow loses sight of the original direction. To assure that these don't happen to you, simply keep the directions in mind as you are answering the questions. As you are answering the questions, keep saying to yourself "To answer these questions, I must" For example, if the direction is to choose the answer which is the next step in a sequence, you should say to yourself "To answer this question, I must give them the next step."

If the directions change in the middle of the test, say to yourself "The directions have changed!! They're now asking me to" Repeat this to yourself before answering the next few questions. This will make sure that you don't become confused.

SUMMARY

In this chapter, you have been introduced to the importance following directions plays in doing well on standardized tests. You have been given steps for following directions and have been made aware of what you should know before starting the test, including time, number of questions, scoring, sequence of tasks, the importance of the practice exercises, and avoiding confusion.

REVIEW EXERCISES [Refer to the page 57 for your answers.]

1. List the steps to following test directions. How can these be helpful in a test situation?

A .

B .

C .

D .

E .

F .

G .

2. Discuss three of the concerns you should have while the proctor is giving directions. Why are these important?

1 .

2 .

3 .

CHAPTER 4

CONCENTRATION: IT ISN'T SO HARD

"I BECOME EASILY DISTRACTED." "I BEGIN TO DAYDREAM." "I JUST CAN'T CONCENTRATE." These are typical comments made by people who have a difficult time taking standardized tests. Do you find your mind wandering when you're taking a test? Are you easily distracted? In this chapter, we will discuss this question with you. We will also give you some strategies to help you control this ever-present problem.

In the space provided, give some examples of how you have found yourself losing concentration while taking a test or while doing some kind of thoughtful task.

1 .

2 .

3 .

In each instance, how did you realize that you had not been concentrating?

1 .

2 .

3 .

How did you refocus your attention on the task?

1 .

2

.

3

.

Everyone has, at one time or another, difficulty concentrating. The exercises you just completed were meant to get you to begin to focus your attention on this all too common problem.

Concentration is the ability to focus one's attention onto a specific task. To concentrate is to think about the task or tasks before you without being distracted. The moment you have to tell yourself to concentrate, there has been a breakdown in this process. Great athletes, for example, don't hear the crowd during the game. Their thoughts are so focused, so concentrated on the game that they don't hear or see anything that will distract them. We have all heard of scientists who become so engrossed in their work that they forget to go home. How many times have you become so involved in some task or event that you lose track of time or forget to eat? It happens to everyone.

While taking a test, if your concentration is somehow impaired, meaning that you are not thinking specifically about the test and procedures that you are being asked to perform, you will lose time. In addition, you will not answer the questions with the degree of accuracy and consistency that you want to attain.

When taking a standardized test, your concentration can be affected by either internal or external distractions. Internal distractions usually consist of problems such as anxiety, personal problems, daydreaming. External distractions consist of things outside of yourself such as the lighting or acoustics at the test site, the ability of the proctor to give directions effectively, the noise level of the people sitting near you. These all contribute to and can have an effect on your performance. Fortunately, most standardized testing situations are managed so that external distractions are minimized.

INTERNAL DISTRACTIONS

ANXIETY

In Chapter 1, we have already discussed the effect test anxiety can have on test performance. We have also given you strategies to combat this potential difficulty. (For a comprehensive discussion, re-read Chapter 1.)

PERSONAL PROBLEMS

Personal problems can have the same detrimental effect as test anxiety. Personal problems which might affect your performance on a test should, if possible, be dealt with before the test. Taking the test itself will cause enough worry; so why encumber yourself? According to most psychologists, the best way to deal with personal problems is to deal with them directly. If you can't do it yourself, ask a member of your family, a friend, clergyman or professional counselor to help you.

On some tests, the proctor may say, "If today is not a day on which you can do your best on the test, please consider rescheduling for another day." Think about whether any personal problems, illness, etc. may inhibit you from doing your best. If possible, reschedule, especially if there is a long retest interval if you are unsuccessful in passing the test. Sometimes, personal problems just can't be pushed totally aside.

DAYDREAMING

One way that people cope with difficult situations is to resort to daydreaming. Everyone daydreams. Everyone has secret desires, goals and objectives. Usually daydreaming does not affect you adversely; however, when you are in a test taking situation and you resort to daydreaming, it will have an extremely negative effect on your performance.

If you are the kind of person who has a tendency to daydream when under pressure, you might want to get into the habit of checking yourself every few minutes to make sure that you are still focusing on the task. Ask yourself "What was I just doing?" every few minutes and get back to the test. If you were attempting to answer a question, you may wish to re-read the question. This might help you get back to work more quickly. Try these strategies or any other techniques which you have used in the past. The key is to maintain a high degree of intensity throughout the test. This will save you a great deal of time, which ultimately might mean the difference.

EXTERNAL DISTRACTIONS

External distractions will be addressed at length when we discuss strategies that will help you on the day of the test. For example, diet, level of physical exercise, and seating patterns can directly affect your level of concentration.

FOUR SURE FIRE WAYS TO PREVENT DISTRACTIONS

68. THINK POSITIVELY

At least a week before the test, begin to get your mind ready. Think positively about your performance on the test. Practice the FLICK BACK-FLICK UP technique discussed in Chapter 1.

69. BE PREPARED

Make sure that you have the necessary equipment to maximize your effort on the test, including a watch, pencils, an eraser, social security number, and any other things that you might need including eye glasses. Often, you will be informed when you are scheduled for your test of what you need to bring.

70. FOCUS YOUR ATTENTION

It is sometimes very difficult to focus your attention on one task. If you want to shift your thoughts during the test, make sure that any shift is directly related to the questions or the information you're trying to understand.

71. THINK ONLY ABOUT THE TASK

When you go into a test situation, you should focus your attention specifically on the task ahead of you. Try to avoid thinking about anything but the test. To help you do this, think about strategies that you will employ in a given situation. Talk to yourself. For example, "If I begin to become tense, I'm going to use the tension relaxer technique described in the manual on test-taking strategies." "If I cannot understand the proctor's directions, I'm going to ask the proctor a question." Anticipate possible problems and offer yourself solutions. This technique will keep you focused and speed up your response to problems which might occur during the test. It will also help you develop a positive mindset because you will feel that you have control over the testing situation, rather than the testing situation having control over you.

In addition, if you become distracted by some kind of noise during the test, DON'T GET ANNOYED. Once you allow an external distraction to annoy you, such as someone coming into the test site late, it will detract from your primary goal - TO WORK AS EFFICIENTLY AND AS SPEEDILY AS POSSIBLE.

SUMMARY

In this chapter, we described the importance of concentration while taking tests. The role of distraction as a key factor in test performance was discussed. The differences between internal and external distractions were defined and examples given. In addition, four strategies for dealing with distraction were offered: 1. Think positively, 2. Be prepared, 3. Focus your attention, 4. Think only about the task.

REVIEW EXERCISES [Refer to page 58 for your answers.]

72. Why is it important to concentrate while taking a test?

CHAPTER 5

THE MULTIPLE-CHOICE TEST

Many of the tests that you will take will be in a Multiple-Choice format. This chapter will discuss strategies to maximize your effort when taking Multiple-Choice tests, specifically how to answer Multiple-Choice questions.

Multiple-Choice tests are constructed to assure that scoring is always consistent. The feelings, pre-dispositions and/or biases of the person or persons scoring the tests will have no effect on the results. Hence these tests are called OBJECTIVE TESTS. Some other kinds of objective tests include True/False, Matching, and Fill-in-the-Blank. These tests are administered to see how a person is able to recall facts, and interpret generalizations, inferences, concepts, and/or the sequence of ideas or procedures. Objective tests are usually timed. You are given a specific amount of time to read and interpret the information provided and to answer the questions.

MULTIPLE-CHOICE TYPE QUESTIONS

The Multiple-Choice test consists of a presentation of some kind of information or procedure followed by questions. You may be asked to read selections of varying length and difficulty to learn the steps in installing a type of equipment or to learn the proper procedures to correct a problem. The questions are used to determine your reading comprehension, your vocabulary, your ability to think through a problem, your ability to remember information, or your ability to apply information.

Each question on a Multiple-Choice test will offer you several possible correct answers. Your task as a test taker is to choose the BEST possible answer from the answer choices. Your answers should be based solely on the information provided on the test.

The Multiple-Choice question usually consists of a STEM, which is an incomplete statement, which leads you to the possible answer listed directly under it. The incorrect answers are called distracters.

Examples: The largest river in the world is the [The Stem]

- A. Hudson [Distracter]
- B. Delaware [Distracter]
- C. Amazon [Correct Answer]
- D. Tiber [Distracter]

MULTIPLE-CHOICE TEST TAKING STRATEGIES

The following are seven strategies which you should keep in mind as you take a Multiple-Choice type test. Each strategy will be explained in greater detail below.

75. WORK QUICKLY
76. ANTICIPATE THE ANSWER
77. DON'T READ MORE INTO THE QUESTION THAN IS NEEDED
78. ELIMINATE IMPLAUSIBLE ANSWERS
79. GUESS, IF APPROPRIATE, DEPENDING UPON THE SCORING POLICY
80. DO CHANGE ANSWERS AND CHECK ANSWER SHEET
81. NEVER GIVE UP

STRATEGY #1: WORK QUICKLY

We have, throughout the discussion, emphasized the importance of working quickly. Since most tests are timed, it is important that you budget your time appropriately. When you take a Multiple-Choice test, read each stem or question once, asking yourself "What is the examiner trying to tell me?" or "What is the examiner trying to ask me?" Once you have determined what the question is asking, look at your options and determine as quickly as possible your response. If an answer seems obvious, have confidence in yourself and mark it on the answer sheet. **DON'T WASTE TIME!!!**

STRATEGY #2: ANTICIPATE THE ANSWER

A good test taker is always thinking. One form of thought is anticipation. After you have read the question or stem, try to figure out the correct answer before you look at your choices. If your projected answer is among the choices, assume that it is likely the correct answer and go on with the test. This strategy will save you a great deal of time. If your anticipated choice isn't there, forget that choice and start to study each of the options.

STRATEGY #3: DON'T READ MORE INTO THE QUESTION THAN IS NEEDED

Don't lose time by trying to read something into the question which might not be there.

STRATEGY #4: ELIMINATE IMPLAUSIBLE ANSWERS

THE ROLE OF DISTRACTERS

When Multiple-Choice tests are constructed, many answers are written to distract you from picking the right answer. Disregard these options immediately. There are several different types of distracters. Some distracters are just wrong while others are just plain ridiculous. They have nothing to do with the question. Some distracters are partly wrong and make you waste time. If any answer is wrong in any significant way, don't select it. Distracters can have a negative effect on your performance, especially if your concentration begins to wane.

STRATEGY #5: GUESS, DEPENDING UP THE SCORING POLICY

Find out the scoring policy. If your score is the number of correct answers, and there is no penalty for wrong answers, you may want to guess at some items. If there is a penalty for wrong answers, guess only when you can eliminate some answers and/or have an intuitive sense of the correct answer.

STRATEGY #6: DO CHANGE ANSWERS AND CHECK ANSWER SHEET

Test-takers always ask "Should I change an answer?" The research shows that when you have a feeling that an answer should be changed, your feeling is usually correct. Some people, however, change answers, not out of conviction, but because of their anxiety. To limit this possibility, don't go over answers until you have attempted all of the questions on the test. In addition, don't keep changing answers back and forth. THIS WASTES TIME!!!

Make sure you've put all of your answers in the correct places on the answer sheet. If you don't, you may get out of "sync" and cause all following answers to be incorrect. You'd be shocked at the number of people who lose points for not checking. Then, go back to those questions which had given you trouble, and analyze your answer before changing it.

Finally, before you hand in your test booklet and answer sheet, MAKE SURE THERE ARE NO MARKS THAT DON'T BELONG, especially on your answer sheet. These tests are usually marked by a computer. If you have other marks on the answer sheet, the computer may mistake them for answers.

STRATEGY #7: NEVER GIVE UP!!!

You have been exposed to several Multiple-Choice question strategies. The key to success is to use these strategies as you take the test. Many test-takers fail to pass these tests because they become frustrated easily and fail to employ these strategies and techniques. No strategy or technique is worth anything unless it is used. Test-wise students keep moving along. They attempt to answer each question and move right on to the next one without stopping and/or hesitating. **DON'T EVER GIVE UP!!!** An employee recently explained that while taking a Verizon test she felt she was doing poorly and should give up. Fortunately, she did continue and later found out that she qualified for several positions she wanted.

MORE SUGGESTIONS ABOUT ANSWERING THE MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTION

82. READ EACH QUESTION CAREFULLY AND CRITICALLY

Read the stem carefully. Make sure that you know exactly what kind of information the question is seeking.

83. ANSWER THE EASY QUESTIONS FIRST

This strategy was discussed previously when we were describing the efficient use of time. This is important because a. it will assure that you get the maximum number of correct answers, b. information required to answer one question may help you answer other questions, and c. information given in the test may help you answer more difficult questions.

84. READ ALL ANSWER CHOICES

Many times the correct choice is not just a right answer. Instead, it is the best or most correct answer. Even though your choice might seem to meet the requirement of the stem, it may not be the desired answer.

SUMMARY

In this chapter, you have been introduced to the Multiple-Choice type test. These tests are objective and are usually timed. The Multiple-Choice question consists of a Stem, followed by 4 or 5 possible answers. The answer you choose should be the BEST or most correct choice. Several strategies were presented showing you how to: 1. WORK QUICKLY, 2. ANTICIPATE THE ANSWER, 3. DON'T READ TOO MUCH INTO THE QUESTION, 4. ELIMINATE IMPLAUSIBLE ANSWERS, 5. GUESS, IF APPROPRIATE, 6. DO CHANGE ANSWERS AND CHECK YOUR ANSWER SHEET, AND 7. NEVER GIVE UP. In addition, the importance of reading each question carefully, answering the easy questions first, and reading all answer choices were stressed.

REVIEW EXERCISES [Refer to page 58 for your answers.]

85. Why is it important that you BUDGET YOUR TIME WISELY when taking a Multiple-Choice test?

CHAPTER 6

PRE-TEST STRATEGIES

In Chapter 1, we discussed the impact of test anxiety on test performance. Many times test anxiety begins because test-takers do not have a plan of activity before the test. This chapter will explore those techniques that will help you prepare for tests.

STUDY

If the test is one for which you can prepare, take the time to study in advance. There's nothing that can substitute for knowing the content and mastering the skills in advance. Studying can make you more knowledgeable and, therefore, more confident.

PHYSICAL PREPARATION

Americans have become increasingly concerned about physical well-being. The emphasis on diet and exercise can be seen in the food we eat and in the activities in which we choose to engage.

The benefits of good diet and exercise have not gone unnoticed by corporate America. Companies realize that the more physically fit their workers are, the more mentally alert and productive they will be. This is also true for people who are going to take a test.

DIET

Your diet can directly affect your performance on a test. If you do not eat well-balanced, nutritionally beneficial meals, your level of energy will not be sustained. During the test, you will be susceptible to tiring easily. This will directly affect your concentration. You already know how important concentration is to your success.

If you are a junk food addict, you should develop better eating habits. Several weeks prior to the test, include vitamin-rich foods into your diet. If you are not sure what a good diet consists of, consult your doctor, borrow books from the library or purchase books on proper nutrition. There is plenty of information available. After a while, you may find yourself more energetic and more alert.

EXERCISE

Proper exercise is important to your physical well-being. You should exercise daily. Exercise can help you increase your mental endurance and reduce stress.

When asked what he does to prepare for world chess competition, Bobby Fisher, a world class chess grandmaster, stated that he works out in a gymnasium before and during chess tournaments to make sure that he is mentally alert throughout the match. Former President Jimmy Carter jogged. These men are both in professions which involve a great deal of mental activity.

Your performance on a test may be directly affected by your level of endurance. The better shape you are in, the more likely you will be able to sit for a long period of time without becoming fatigued.

As stated previously, taking a test can be a very stressful experience. When you are under stress, you can tire easily, get headaches or have your muscles tense. Physical exercise can help you cope with stress by enabling you to channel your energy, rather than keeping it inside.

If you think that you should be more physically fit, **CONSULT WITH YOUR DOCTOR** before beginning any strenuous exercise program.

BEFORE - THE - TEST STRATEGIES

Preparing for a test is like getting ready for an event. The problem is most test-takers don't prepare themselves either mentally or physically for this activity. The following are six strategies which you should keep in mind and follow prior to the test.

88. FOLLOW A NORMAL ROUTINE
89. GET A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP
90. STAY AWAY FROM STIMULANTS/TRANQUILIZERS
91. DON'T DRINK A LOT OF LIQUIDS BEFORE THE TEST
92. DON'T EAT A BIG MEAL ON THE MORNING OF THE TEST
93. DON'T CRAM TO FILL ANY KNOWLEDGE GAPS. STUDIES SHOW THAT INTERMITTENT STUDYING OVER A LONGER PERIOD OF TIME IS MORE BENEFICIAL THAN CRAMMING.

STRATEGY #1: FOLLOW NORMAL ROUTINE

Many people taking a test for the first time in years make the mistake of following a different routine than normal. This is counter-productive. Staying home, not speaking to family or friends, not reading or watching television leaves you time for one thing and one thing only, WORRYING ABOUT THE TEST. The last thing that you want to do is to increase your level of anxiety. You should follow as normal a routine as possible. However, if your test is on a Saturday, and you normally go out on Friday night, change that routine.

STRATEGY #2: GET A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP

The night before the test get as much rest as possible. Don't over-exercise. Don't go out until the wee hours of the night. Don't do a lot of chores around the house. RELAX! Try some of the relaxation exercises cited in this manual. Get to bed early enough so that you can be at your best for the test.

STRATEGY #3: STAY AWAY FROM STIMULANTS/TRANQUILIZERS

You live in a society in which taking drugs is, for some people, a way of life. Alcohol, smoking, and taking medication are common. When you take a test, your mental alertness and physical fitness are all important. If you are unable to sleep the night before a test, don't be tempted to take a sleeping pill or drink excessively. These may help you get to sleep but may affect your test performance the next day. On the day of the test, don't be tempted to take a stimulant or use excessive caffeine. It can make you so wide-awake and so hyper active that you may not be able to remain attentive or focused during the test.

STRATEGY #4: DON'T DRINK A LOT OF LIQUIDS BEFORE THE TEST

Are you a morning coffee, tea or soda drinker? Do you have to have two or three cups or glasses before you begin work? On the day of the test, try not to drink a great deal of liquids. This practice could lead to a problem as the test proceeds. Remember most of these tests are timed. If you have to stop in the middle of the test to go to the lavatory, you are going to lose precious time. Don't place yourself in this situation.

STRATEGY #5: DON'T EAT A BIG MEAL ON THE MORNING OF THE TEST

In our discussion regarding diet, you were told that you should not eat a big breakfast on the morning of the test. A large meal, even if you are accustomed to it, might make you sluggish and cause fatigue. Remember, your aim is to be as alert as possible so you can do your best. So limit yourself to a light breakfast. If you need further nourishment, bring a SNACK to the test. However, only eat it during a break, if allowed, not during the test.

STRATEGY #6: DON'T CRAM TO FILL ANY KNOWLEDGE GAPS

Many test-takers cram up to the last second to fill knowledge gaps. This practice can have a negative effect on you. It can cause you to become anxious, especially if you begin to think that you don't know the material. Rather than focusing on specific information, practice your concentration techniques or think about some of the strategies which you are going to use during the test. This will create a sense of control. You know what to do and you know when to do it. If the test is one for which you can prepare by studying in advance, allow enough time to accomplish this, so that you will not feel the need for last minute cramming. Cramming is usually far less effective than studying over a longer period of time.

TEST - SITE ARRIVAL TIPS

Many test-takers begin to have the most difficulty when they arrive at the test site. They become anxious and tense, allowing the test environment to overwhelm them. The following are five tips which might make your arrival at the test site easier.

94. GET TO THE TEST SITE ON TIME.
95. DON'T LET TEST ANXIETY GET YOU DOWN.
96. DON'T FIGHT THE TEST.
97. PUSH ON!
98. LISTEN CAREFULLY TO DIRECTIONS.

TIP #1: GET TO THE TEST SITE ON TIME

Some testing centers will not let you into the testing room until just before the test begins. Consequently, you will have to wait a few minutes before you are allowed in. We have always been amazed how so many individuals arrive at the test site just before the test is to begin or after it has already begun. These people run into the testing room out of breath, tense and upset. WHAT A WAY TO BEGIN! You should avoid this at all costs. Arriving late creates a negative mindset from which you may not fully recover. GET THERE ON TIME.

To assure that you arrive at the right place, at the right time: a) place a sheet of paper, giving the time and place of the test in a conspicuous place in your home, such as the door of your refrigerator b) get directions to the test site – ask more than one person for directions to make sure. If you are still unsure, make a trial run to the test site in the days before the test. c) set your alarm, giving yourself at least twenty minutes extra traveling time. d) if you are required to bring any equipment to the test site, make sure that you have it in your possession a few days before the test. To assure that you take this equipment with you to the test, place it under your keys or wallet the night before. If you need to wear eyeglasses during the test, don't forget to take them. Don't forget to bring a wristwatch.

You may be assigned seats in the testing room. If not, try to get a comfortable chair so you don't feel cramped. **DON'T SIT NEXT TO A FRIEND.** You are not there to socialize. Your thoughts should be totally on the test. Remember, taking a test is serious business. In addition, during the test you might be tempted to check your answers against those of your friend, not to cheat but just to see how you are doing. Don't put yourself in that kind of position. Also, you may be perceived as cheating and, therefore, disqualified from taking the test.

While you are waiting for your test booklet and directions from the proctor, practice your relaxation techniques. Block out all distractions by concentrating on the coming task.

TIP #2: DON'T LET TEST-ANXIETY GET YOU DOWN

In Chapter 1, the causes of test anxiety were discussed. You were also given a variety of strategies to employ if you became anxious during a test: FLICK BACK-FLICK UP, Reward Yourself, and a relaxation technique. Remember, a little anxiety is natural. It is only a problem when it begins to control you or impedes your success. Before the test begins, treat the anxiety like any other kind of distraction, try to ignore it. Usually, when the test begins and you begin to work, you will forget about it.

TIP #3: DON'T FIGHT THE TEST

Many test-takers fight the test. We have witnessed individuals literally arguing with the test. Several times, we have had individuals stop taking the test and begin arguing with the proctor because they couldn't accept the logic or procedures outlined within the test. You may fall into this trap, especially if the test describes a procedure which you feel is inaccurate or incorrect. By fighting the test, you lose time. Remember that your sole objective is to pass the test. What you think about the accuracy or inaccuracy of the information or the questions on the test has no effect on your score. Base your answers on the information provided within the test, not your experience or feelings, unless specifically asked to do so. Don't focus on whether you should have to take the test.

TIP #4: PUSH ON

Throughout the test period, don't hesitate. Keep working until you are told to stop. The mind works better when it is under pressure. If you know this test counts for something, you will probably do your best. Any endeavor is worth your best effort, SO GIVE YOUR BEST!!!

TIP #5: LISTEN CAREFULLY TO DIRECTIONS

In Chapter 3, we addressed the importance of following directions. Review this chapter for a comprehensive discussion. If you do not hear or do not understand the directions, ask the test administrator to repeat them until you do. It cannot be emphasized too many times how important it is that you understand the directions before the test begins.

WHAT TO DO ABOUT PRE-TEST NERVOUSNESS

A large part of the discussion focused on how you feel about taking tests. Your mental state can directly affect your test performance. Let's end as we began by giving you some ideas which you might find helpful in enabling you to deal more directly with pre-test worry. The following are four specific strategies:

99. BOLSTER YOUR CONFIDENCE
100. MINIMIZE DISCOMFORT
101. GET HAPPY
102. SHAKE YOUR ANGER

STRATEGY #1: BOLSTER YOUR CONFIDENCE

Throughout your test preparation, you should create a positive attitude. Tell yourself repeatedly that you are going to pass. Doing this is like a "SELF FULFILLING PROPHECY". You will do as well as you expect to do. Confidence is the key to success. If you follow the procedures outlined in this manual, you should be confident that you will know exactly what to do when you take tests. Most importantly, if the test is one for which you can prepare, take the time to do so. Consider test prep materials and courses. Talk with others who may have taken the test(s).

STRATEGY #2: MINIMIZE DISCOMFORT

In Chapter 4, we discussed the negative effect distractions can have on your test performance. To avoid being distracted by things within the test environment, identify them as soon as you sit down and eliminate as many as possible. For example, if there is noise from a fan in the test room, try to imagine that it doesn't exist or that it has a pleasing sound to it, or ask the proctor if the noise could be eliminated. If your muscles begin to tighten, employ the relaxation technique identified in Chapter 1.

STRATEGY #3: GET HAPPY

We have repeatedly discussed the role of a positive attitude. Another strategy which you might want to try is to create a positive feeling by avoiding potentially depressing situations. One week prior to the test, seek enjoyable experiences, such as placing yourself into social and familiar settings with people you enjoy and who enjoy you.

STRATEGY #4: SHAKE YOUR ANGER

Your personal feelings about someone or about taking the test can also interfere with your test performance. If you are angry with someone, or if you are angry about having to take the test, don't let either affect your test score. Channel that energy into maximizing your effort on the test. Your personal feelings aren't worth losing points on the test. Remember that your objective is to perform well on the test, not to be angry or upset that you need to take it.

SUMMARY

This chapter discussed the importance of Pre-Test strategies on test performance. Physical preparation, before-the-test techniques, and test-site arrival tips were emphasized. In addition, specific strategies to help you cope with pre-test worry and anxiety were presented.

REVIEW EXERCISES [Refer to page 59 for your answers.]

103. How are physical fitness and diet important to a test-taker?

104. How can you assure that you arrive at the test site on time? What are some other important factors in test preparation?

105. Why is it important not to fight the test?

106. Discuss four ways to help you relieve pre-test nervousness.

A .

B .

C .

D .

GENERAL TEST TAKING TECHNIQUES: FINAL TEST

The Answer Key for this test is on page 65.

- 1) Which is NOT an example of an objective-type test?
 - a. Multiple-choice test
 - b. True-False test
 - c. Matching test
 - d. Essay test
- 2) The morning of the test, you should
 - a. Eat a large breakfast
 - b. Drink a lot of orange juice
 - c. Study things you are not sure of
 - d. None of the above
- 3) Which of the following is not a method which helps you deal with test anxiety.
 - a. Tense relaxation exercises
 - b. Flick Back-Flick Up
 - c. Daydreaming
 - d. Having a positive activity planned after the test
- 4) When re-reading your answer selection, you should
 - a. Change an answer when you feel it should be
 - b. Look at your neighbor's answers
 - c. Change all your answers
 - d. Never change an answer
- 5) According to psychologists, one cause of test anxiety is
 - a. Poor nutritional habits
 - b. Poorly developed concentration skills
 - c. Fear of failure
 - d. Fear of success
- 6) When answering questions on tests, you should
 - a. Answer each question in the order they are presented
 - b. Answer the easy questions first
 - c. Answer the difficult questions first
 - d. None of the above
- 7) If there is a penalty for wrong answers on the test, you should

- a. Never guess unless you are absolutely sure you are right
 - b. Pick any answer at random
 - c. Guess only when you can eliminate some wrong answers and have an intuitive sense of the right answer
 - d. Choose either B or C since these are in the center of the answer key and are most often the correct answers
- 8) When taking a multiple choice test you should
- a. Read all of the options before choosing your answer
 - b. Choose the first option which seems correct to you
 - c. Choose the option which you cannot understand
 - d. All of the above
- 9) If you complete a test before time has expired, you should NOT
- a. Go back to questions which gave you trouble
 - b. Check and re-check your answers
 - c. Hand in your paper immediately
 - d. Work until the proctor asks for your paper
- 10) Flick Back-Flick Up refers to
- a. Dreaming about your past test performance
 - b. An anxious mental state
 - c. A technique which uses a positive past performance to help you relax during a test
 - d. A relaxation technique
- 11) Before the test begins, you should make sure you understand
- a. The test instructions
 - b. Who will be scoring the results
 - c. How many people pass or fail the test
 - d. Where the cafeteria is located
- 12) Physical preparation is important to good test results because
- a. It helps you keep your cholesterol level down
 - b. It makes sure that you can do your job
 - c. It helps keep you mentally alert
 - d. It alerts your fear of failure
- 13) Test takers have difficulty concentrating because of
- a. Lack of knowledge

- b. Internal and/or external distractions
- c. The lack of motivation
- d. The fear of failure

14) If you don't understand the directions to the test, you should

- a. Ask the test administrator for clarification
- b. Re-read the directions until you understand them
- c. Try to form a mental picture
- d. All of the above

15) When you get to the test site, you should

- a. Practice tension relieving exercises
- b. Take a stimulant to get your adrenaline flowing
- c. Study your areas of weakness
- d. Talk to friends about the test

16) The value of anticipating the answer to a multiple-choice item is that

- a. It helps you to preview the test
- b. It enables you to project the distractors
- c. It increases your awareness of how test items relate
- d. If the answer appears as an answer choice, it is likely to be correct

17) As described in this manual the good test-taker should maintain a pace which

- a. Starts quickly and then slows down
- b. Is slow and methodical
- c. Assures that the test is completed on time
- d. Starts quickly, slows down and ends strongly

18) Your answers on multiple-choice tests should be based on

- a. Your feelings about the subject
- b. The information provided on the test
- c. Your experience with the subject
- d. Your favorite letter of the alphabet

19) The practice exercises on the test are important because they

- a. Allow you to practice the Flick Back-Flick Up method

- b. Assure that you answer the difficult questions first
- c. Tell you how many questions are on the test
- d. Give you the chance to experience the test before doing it

20) The night before a test, you should

- a. Go to an all night party
- b. Take a sleeping pill or drink a few martinis
- c. Follow a normal routine
- d. Go to bed after dinner

21) If you complete a test early, you should NOT

- a. Pass in your test immediately to avoid changing any questions
- b. Go back and review the questions you were unsure of
- c. Erase all extraneous marks on your paper
- d. Check to make sure you have marked your answers on the correct lines on the answer sheet

22) A generally useful test preparation strategy is

- a. Cramming to memorize significant details
- b. Aerobic exercises to improve concentration
- c. Talking with other employees about vocational choices
- d. Intermittent study over time

23) According to the manual, most people don't do well on tests because

- a. They have a fear of success
- b. They have never developed a comprehensive method for taking tests
- c. They don't know what to do
- d. They have been out of school too long

24) One of the keys to becoming a good test-taker is

- a. Having a positive attitude
- b. The fear of failure
- c. Being a better learner
- d. Knowing where the test will be given

25) One technique to assure that concentration is maintained is to

- a. Arrive at the test site early
- b. Think positively about your test performance

- c. Guess at answers you don't know
- d. Sit next to a friend for moral support

ANSWER KEY TO REVIEW EXERCISES

Chapter 1

17. A. Flick Back-Flick Up

B. Reward Yourself

C. Relaxation Exercise

18. Answers will vary

Chapter 2

19. Gives you enough time to complete the test

Helps to minimize test anxiety

20. Any three of the following are correct:

Q. Budget your time

R. Answer the easy questions

S. Use every second

T. Limit time on any one question

Chapter 3

21. A. Read for the general idea. B. Don't skip. C. Make sure you understand each step. D. Use reasoning. E. Form a mental image. F. Follow the steps in order.

G. See if you can remember the steps

22. Any three of the following are correct:

The Time Limit-This will allow you to budget your time properly.

Acceptable Equipment Use-This will allow you to use all of the information and tools available.

Sequence of Tasks-This will allow you to know which tasks you must complete and in what order you must complete them.

The Importance of Practice Exercises-They prepare you for what is to come on the test. They also allow you to experience the test.

The Importance of Avoiding Confusion-This allows you to keep yourself focused on the directions. It also assures that you are basing your answers on the directions.

Chapter 4

23. It will allow you to use your time as efficiently as possible, or it will stop you from being easily distracted.
24. Internal Distractions are problems you create for yourself. They limit your ability to concentrate. Possible examples are: anxiety, personal problems, or daydreaming.
- External Distractions are problems coming from an outside source which stop you from concentrating. Possible examples are: noise, lighting, the proctor, etc.
25. Any of the following answers are correct:
- U. Thinking Positively-Use the Flip Back-Flip Up technique
 - V. Being Prepared-Have all the required equipment with you at the test site.
 - W. Focus Attention-Only think about what the test requires.
 - X. Ignore the World Around you-Focus all of your thoughts and energy on the test.

Chapter 5

26. To insure that you have enough time to complete the test, including time to go over difficult questions at the end of the test period.
27. You should guess if your score will be based upon the number of correct responses. By guessing, you are given a chance to get it right. However, if the test gives a penalty for wrong answers, only guess if you feel you are likely through elimination or intuition to answer the problem correctly.
28. It will assure that you maximize your score. Sometimes information from easy questions will enable you to answer more difficult ones.

Chapter 6

29. They will allow you to have stamina during the test period.

30. The correct answer should include the following:

Y. Know where the test is being given and at what time it begins

Z. Know how to get to the test site

AA. Make sure you have all of the equipment required for the test

BB. Don't sit next to a friend

CC. Have a wristwatch with you

31. This activity wastes time, breaks your concentration, and makes you more susceptible to distraction.

32. The correct answer should include the following:

DD. Bolster Your Confidence-Have a positive attitude

EE. Minimize Discomfort-Identify external distractions when you arrive at the test site

FF. Get Happy-Before to the test, place yourself into positive social settings

GG. Shake Your Anger-Channel negative energy to maximize your test effort

FINAL TEST ANSWER KEY

- | | |
|-------|-------|
| 1. D | 13. B |
| 2. D | 14. A |
| 3. C | 15. A |
| 4. A | 16. D |
| 5. C | 17. C |
| 6. B | 18. B |
| 7. C | 19. D |
| 8. A | 20. C |
| 9. C | 21. A |
| 10. C | 22. D |
| 11. A | 23. B |
| 12. C | 24. A |
| | 25. B |