

Grade 12 October Part 3

Test taking: Seven steps to better grades

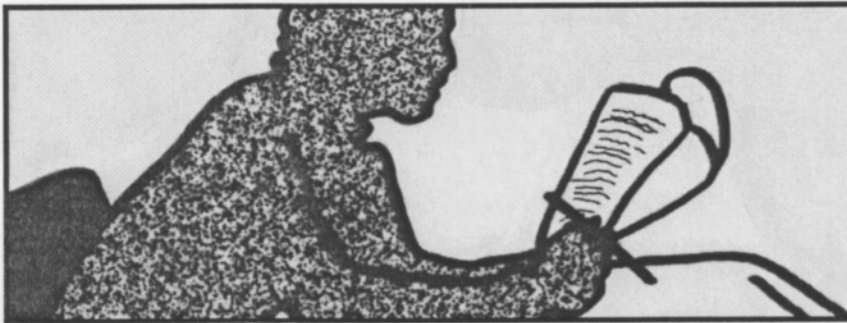
Tests, tests, tests!

Is this all there is to school? At times it seems so!

We prepare for so many tests; we could put 'test-expert' on our resume. Most of us have even developed special study methods. And, for the most part, they work well for us.

But, have you ever spent a great deal of time studying only to go into a test and blow it?

Often the problem is not lack of preparation. Often it is inefficient or inappropriate test-taking strategies.



Test-taking skills

1. **Know the vocabulary.** What does the teacher mean by compare, contrast, criticize, define, describe, diagram, discuss, enumerate, evaluate, explain, illustrate, interpret, justify, list, outline, prove, relate, summarize, trace?

2. **Read each test question carefully, slowly.** Underline the important words in each question.

3. **Budget your time carefully.** How much time can you give to any one question? Remember to give more time to important questions that count for more points. Remember to leave some time for review at the end.

4. **Begin with the easiest question for you.** Jot down all relevant data for this question. First, this gets the ideas flowing. Secondly, it helps organize your answer. Thirdly, it shows the teacher all the facts you have in case you miss a few in your written answer.

5. **Write clear, concise, complete answers.** Work rapidly, but don't be rushed. Ignore people who finish while you are still writing. This isn't a hundred-yard dash! Quite possibly they're not as well prepared as you are. Stick to your plan!

6. **Make your handwriting clear and neat.**

7. **Don't panic!** Don't understand a question? Can't decide what the teacher wants? Go on to the next one. Come back to this question at the end of the test.

Also, don't hesitate to ask the teacher or supervisor for help or clarification.

If you're still unsure, start listing all the relevant facts you can. In this list, somewhere, there will be some important points for which you can get partial credit.

Finished your list? Make an educated guess. From all the data listed, develop an answer using those facts that seem most important to you.

Your path to success: study sufficiently; follow the seven simple test-taking steps. The goal is within your grasp!

"Success in life is not so much a matter of talent or opportunity as of concentration and perseverance." --- C.W. Wendte