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For the Classroom

Test Taking Skills: Preparation

Discussion Questions

- Why is it important to prepare for a test?
- How soon before a test should you begin to prepare?
- How do you usually feel before taking a test? During a test? After a test?

Activity: Before, During and After

Students will demonstrate their knowledge and readiness of how to prepare for a test by listing strategies with their classmates and teacher.

MATERIALS

- Notecards (3 per student)

PROCEDURE

1. Explain to the class that studying for a test is not the only way to prepare for it. There are strategies one can use while taking a test that will help improve their performance, as well as reflection strategies that will help prepare them for future tests. As a class, make three lists on the board: Before, During, and After.

BEFORE:

- Pay attention in class
- Take good notes
- Study when you receive notice of test
- Complete homework assignments/review corrected homework assignments
- Review study materials on a regular basis
- Manage your time – save enough room for studying so you aren't cramming
- Go to study review sessions
- Ask questions in class
- Ask instructor what areas of information will be emphasized on test
- Review all documents from class and look over textbook
- Always eat before a test – it gives you energy!
- DON'T pull an all-nighter

- Try to show up to class at least 5 minutes early before test so you are not flustered
- Try to use the restroom before taking a test

DURING

- Bring at least two sharpened pencils with erasers/calculator if appropriate
- Make sure your name is on the test
- Wear a watch to help pace yourself
- Remain relaxed/take a few deep breaths
- Don't worry about how your classmates are doing/if they're moving along more quickly than you are
- When you first receive the test, look through it so you can manage your time and know which areas will take the most time to complete
- Do the easiest problems first/don't waste too much time stuck on a problem
- Do the problems with the greatest point values first if time allows
- Pace yourself, don't rush
- If you have a question, ask instructor for clarification
- Write neatly – you don't want the instructor to mark it wrong for not being able to read it
- If you have enough time, go back and review your answers

AFTER

- Always look over the test to make sure there are no grading errors
- Look over the test and make sure you now understand your mistakes. If not, look up the answer or ask a classmate for help
- If the teacher goes over the test as a class, be sure to take notes on how she/he would have liked it answered
- If you are not satisfied with your grade, ask the teacher if there will be chances to bring your grade up. (i.e., make up tests, extra credit, etc.)
- Save the test as material to study for future cumulative tests

(Discuss each bullet point with class as it goes up on the board.)

2. Hand out 3 notecards to each student. Have them label one notecard "BEFORE", one notecard "DURING", and one notecard "AFTER". Now have them copy these lists onto their notecards.
3. Inform students they should keep these notecards and look them over on a regular basis so they can prepare appropriately for future tests.