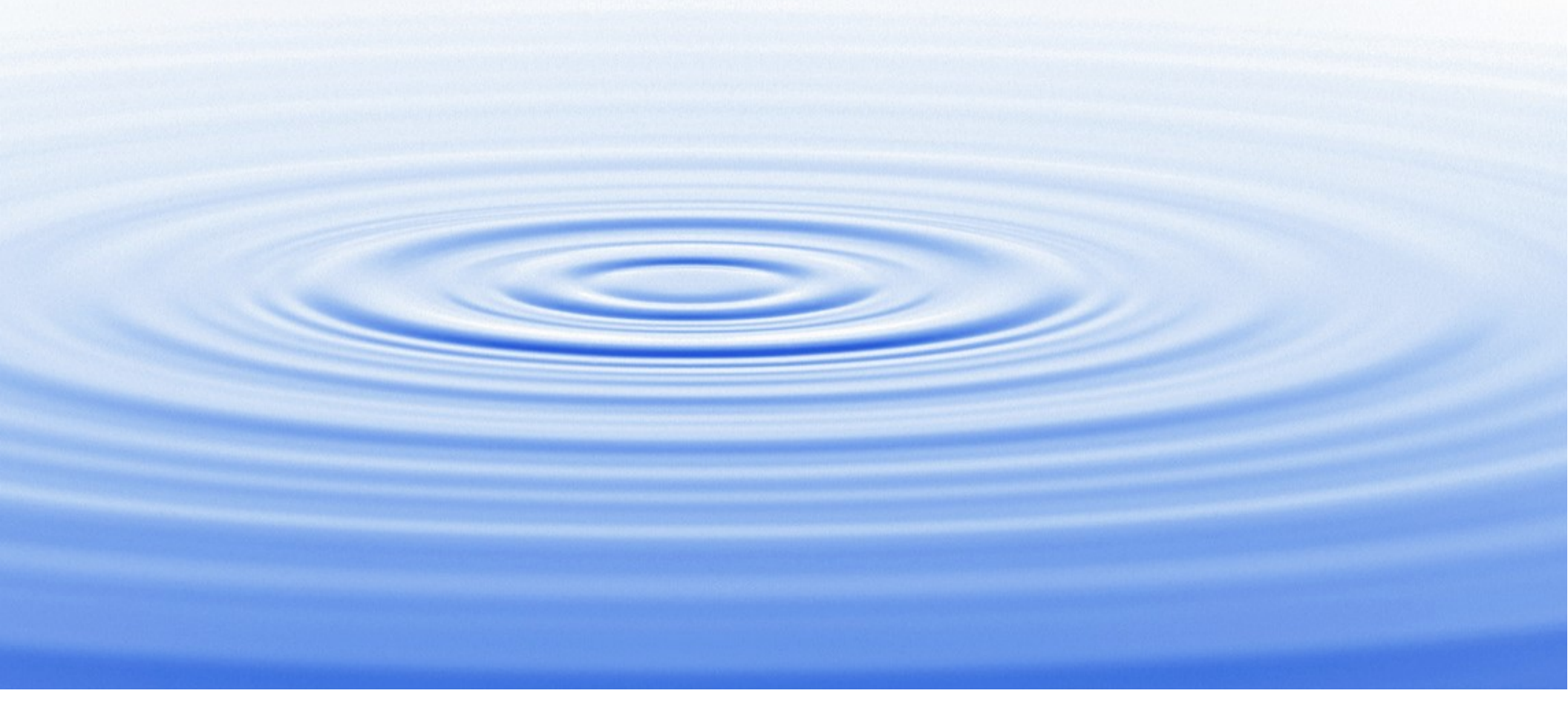


JROTC

Testing Taking Skills





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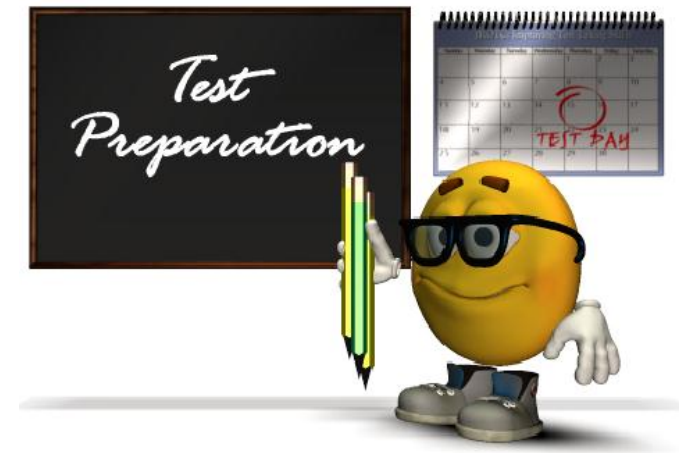
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# Test Preparation

The best preparation for taking a test is to try the following strategies:

- Keep up with assignments.
- Visualize.
- Talk to your instructor.
- Practice good study skills.
  - Develop a study schedule.
  - Study when you are rested, alert, and have planned for it.
  - For classes that require recitation, such as foreign language, be sure to schedule a study period just before the class.
  - Study in a quiet place.
- Study at one particular time of day; do not change the time that you study.
- Ask friends and family to support your efforts while you are studying.
- Learn to say no to distractions (phone, friends, or TV).
- Allow sufficient time for sleep.
- Schedule 50 minute blocks of study.
- Study as much as possible during daylight hours.



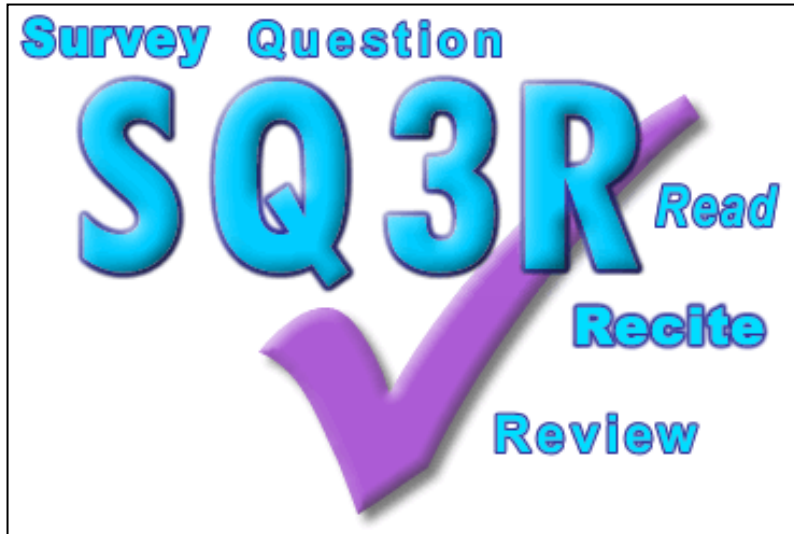
**Reference:** Lesson 1 – Test Preparation

## Study Skills



Reference: Lesson 1 – Test Preparation

## The SQ3R Method



Sharpen your study skills with SQ3R.

SQ3R stands for:

1. Survey
2. Question
3. Read, Recite, and Review

Reference: Lesson 1 – Test Preparation



# Taking Notes

Effective note-taking takes practice until you find a method that you like.

Good note-taking techniques can help you in school as well as at work later in life.

Here are some hints that can help:

- Do not try to write down every word the speaker says
- Condense the information



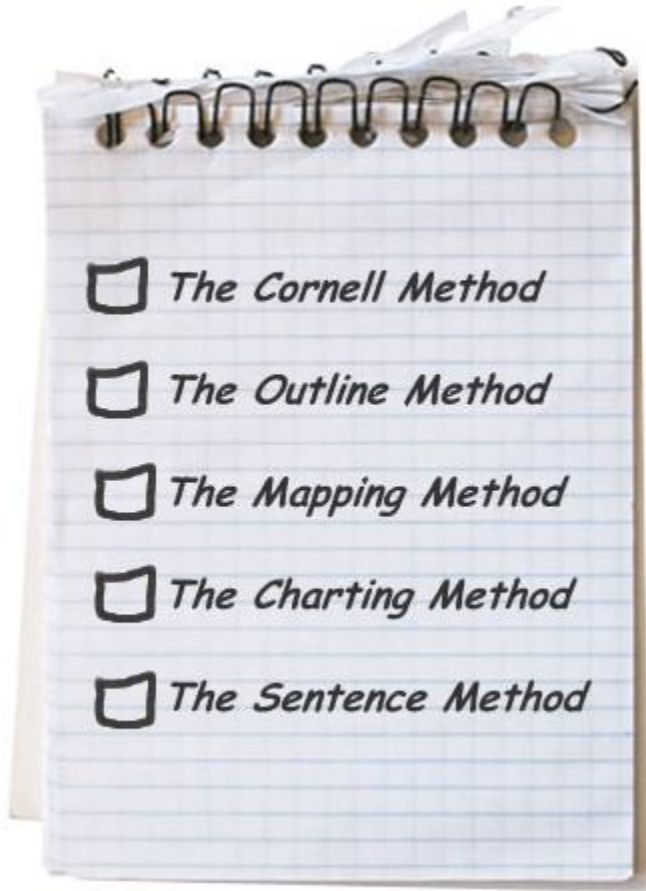
**Reference:** Lesson 1 – Test Preparation

Listen for key phrases and transitions such as:

- The four causes were
- To sum up
- Therefore
- In conclusion
- In summary

Listen for information that the speaker repeats.

## Note Taking Methods



**Cornell Method** – During class, take down information in the six-inch area. When the instructor moves to a new point, skip a few lines. After class, complete phrases and sentences. For significant information, write a cue in the left margin. To review, cover your notes with a card, leaving the cues exposed.

**Outline Method** – Listen and then write in points in an organized pattern based on space indentation. Place major points farthest to the left. Indent each more specific point to the right. Levels of importance will be indicated by distance away from the major point. Roman numerals or decimals are not necessary as space relationships will indicate the major/minor points.

**Mapping Method:** Write a main idea down and draw branches from it to related terms or ideas. Group similar facts together.

**Charting Method** – Determine the categories to be covered in lecture. Set up your paper in advance.

**Sentence Method** – Write every new thought, fact or topic on a separate line, numbering as you progress and using shorthand as necessary.

## Test Preparation



1. Learn the scope of the test.
2. Know the type of test.
3. Know how much time you will have.
4. Know the importance of the course requirements.
5. Know what needs to be studied.
6. Plan your study time.
7. Look over the subject.
8. Make exam questions.
9. Use flash cards as a memory aid.

**Reference:** Lesson 1 – Test Preparation

## Test Anxiety

1. Avoid "cramming" for a test. Trying to master a semester's worth of material the day before the test is a poor way to learn and can easily produce anxiety. This is not the time to try to learn a great deal of material.
2. Combine all the information you have been presented throughout the semester and work on mastering the main concepts of the course.
3. When studying for the test, ask yourself what questions may be asked and try to answer them by integrating ideas from lectures, notes, texts, and supplementary readings.
4. If you are unable to cover all the material given throughout the semester, select important portions that you can cover well. Set a goal of presenting your knowledge of this information on the test.



**Reference:** Lesson 2 – Test Anxiety

## Anxiety and Attitude

- Remember that the most reasonable expectation is to try to show as much of what you know as you can.
- Remind yourself that a test is only a test – there will be others.
- Avoid thinking of yourself in irrational, all-or-nothing terms.
- Reward yourself after the test – take in a movie, go out to eat, or visit with friends.
- Think of the test as an opportunity.
- See the test as a signpost.
- Put the test in perspective.
- Seek study partners who challenge you.
- Set yourself up for success.
- Practice relaxation.



**Reference:** Lesson 2 – Test Anxiety

## Test Day

- Begin your day with a moderate breakfast and avoid coffee if you are prone to "caffeine jitters." Even people who usually manage caffeine well may feel light-headed and jittery when indulging on the day of a test.
- Try to do something relaxing the hour before the test – last minute cramming will cloud your mastering of the overall concepts of the course.
- Plan to arrive at the test location early – this will allow you to relax and to select a seat located away from doors, windows, and other distractions.
- Avoid classmates who generate anxiety or disrupt your concentration.
- If waiting for the test to begin causes anxiety, distract yourself by reading a magazine or newspaper.
- Have a positive attitude going into the test.



**Reference:** Lesson 2 – Test Anxiety

## Remember the Basics

- Continue the habits of good nutrition and exercise. Have fun! Pursue activities you enjoy whether they are solitary or social. These all contribute to your emotional and physical well-being.
- Follow a moderate pace when studying; vary your work when possible and take breaks when needed.
- Get plenty of sleep the night before the test - when you are overly tired you will not function at your absolute best.
- Once you feel you are adequately prepared for the test, do something relaxing.



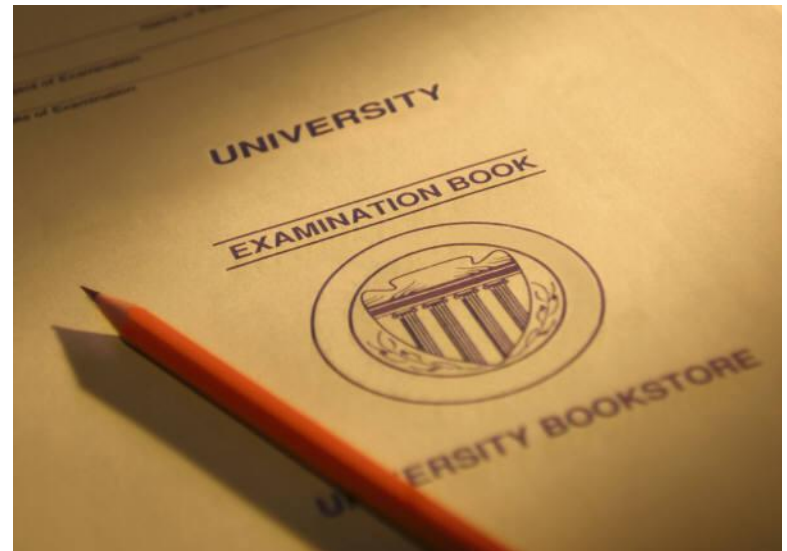
## During the Test

First review the entire test; then read the directions *twice*. Try to think of the test as an opportunity to show the instructor what you know; then begin to organize your time efficiently. Work on the easiest questions first.

For essay questions, construct a short outline for yourself – then begin your answer with a summary sentence. This will help you avoid rambling and repetition. For short-answer questions, answer only what is asked – short and to the point. If you have difficulty with an item involving a written response, show what knowledge you can. If proper terminology evades you, show what you know with your own words.

For multiple choice questions, read *all* the options first, then eliminate the most obvious. Unsure of the correct response? Rely on your first impression, and then move on quickly. Beware of tricky qualifying words such as "only," "always," or "most."

Do not rush through the test. Wear a watch and check it frequently as you pace yourself. If it appears you will be unable to finish the entire test, concentrate on those portions which you can answer well. Recheck your answers only if you have extra time – and only if you are not anxious.

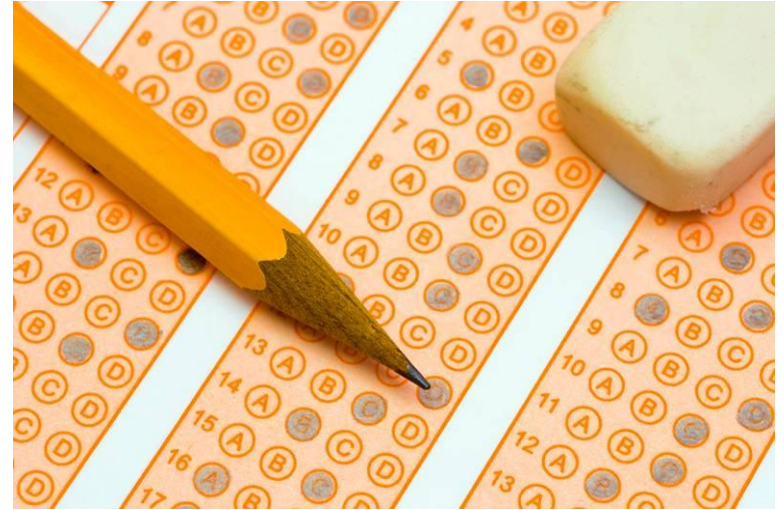


**Reference:** Lesson 2 – Test Anxiety

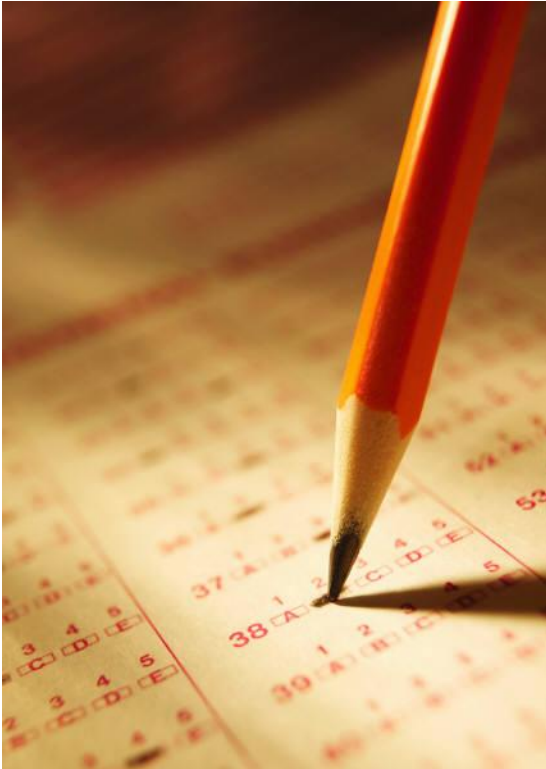


## After the Test

- List what worked, and hold onto these strategies. It does not matter how small the items are; they are building blocks to success.
- List what did not work for improvement.
- Celebrate that you are on the road to overcoming this obstacle.
- Try not to dwell on all the mistakes you might have made. Do not immediately begin studying for the next test. Indulge in something relaxing for a little while.



## General Test Taking Strategies

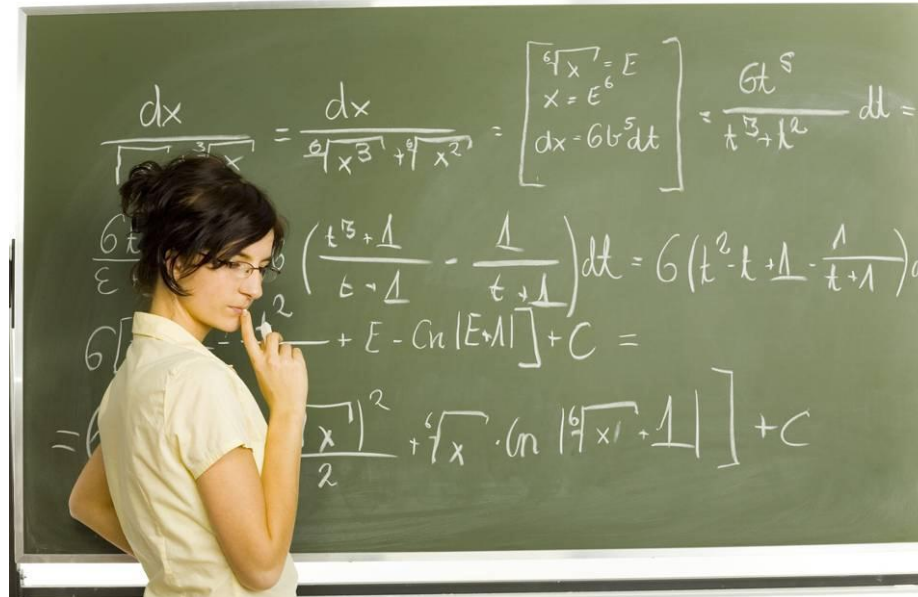


- Write down key facts.
- Begin with an overview of the exam.
- Read test directions.
- Work from easy to hard.
- Watch the clock.
- Master the art of intelligent guessing.
- Follow directions on machine-scored tests.
- Tests are composed of two main components:
  - The directives
    - You should review the test directions to help you answer questions correctly. Answer the easiest questions first.
  - Test questions

## Critical Thinking and Strategies

Critical thinking is a process of actively and skillfully:

- Conceptualizing
- Applying
- Analyzing
- Synthesizing
- Evaluating information
- Notice differences.
- Think through causes and effects.
- Find the best idea to match the example or examples given.
- Support ideas with examples.
- Evaluate each test question.
- Recall facts, procedures, rules and formulas.
- Think about similarities.



## Steps for Successful Test Taking



1. Prepare well in advance. Keep up every day if you can, but don't judge yourself harshly if you don't. Avoid last-minute cramming. Don't go without sleep the night before.
2. Know the time and place of the test and what you need to bring.
3. Don't talk about the test with classmates immediately beforehand, especially if you know this sort of thing raises your anxiety level.
4. Read over the test and plan your approach. Review point values per part, time limits for each section, and which question you'll start with to boost your confidence.
5. Don't hesitate to ask for clarification from the instructor if you have questions.
6. Be clear about your job. A test is a thinking task, and your job during an exam is to think as clearly as possible based on what you currently know. Focus on your job (the thinking process) and practice letting go of what you don't control (the grading). Approach the test determined to think to the best of your ability, but also accept the limits of what you currently know as a beginner.
7. Reduce anxiety with activity. If you go blank and can't think of anything to write, go on to another question or another part of the test. On an essay question, jot down anything you can recall on scratch paper to stimulate your memory and get your mind working.
8. Relax yourself physically during the test, especially if you notice that you are not thinking well or your muscles are tight. Pause, put your test down, and take several slow, deep breaths. Tense and release your muscles. Do this in particular if you notice that you are worrying excessively about one problem, not reading carefully, and unable to recall information you know.
9. Pay attention to the test, not to others. Don't waste time wondering how other people are doing.

**Reference:** Lesson 3 – Test Taking Strategies

## Before the Test



- Practice with timed readings if you become anxious during timed tests.
- Make a habit of reading novels or other materials for fun to build concentration.
- Start preparing for your exams the first day of class. You can do this by reading your syllabus carefully to find out when your exams will be, how many there will be, and how much they are weighed into your grade.
- Plan reviews as part of your regularly weekly study schedule; consequently, you review over the whole quarter rather than just at exam time.
- Review for several short periods rather than one long period. You will find that you retain information better and get less fatigued.
- Turn the main points of each topic or heading into questions and check to see if the answers come to you quickly and correctly. Try to predict examination questions; then outline your answers.
- It may seem "old-fashioned", but flashcards may be a helpful way to review in courses that have many unfamiliar terms. Review the card in random order using only those terms that you have difficulty remembering.

## During the Test

### Five Common Test-Taking Errors

- 1 Applying the wrong rule or formula**
- 2 Skipping steps in the thinking process**
- 3 Failing to apply information taught in class**
- 4 Guessing rather than thinking systematically**
- 5 Providing too little support for a conclusion**

- Preview the test before answering the questions.
- Read the directions carefully and pay attention to all parts of the questions!! Many points have been lost because students didn't follow the directions.
- Remember to preview the test to see how much time you need to allot for each section. If the test is all multiple choice questions, it is good to know that immediately.
- Work on the "easiest" parts first. If your strength is essay questions, answer those first to get the maximum points.
- Find out if you are penalized for incorrect responses. (This is probably covered in the directions. If not, make educated guesses. If there is a penalty, avoid guessing.
- When answering essay questions, try to make an outline in the margin before you begin writing.
- Save time at the end of the exam to review your test and make sure you haven't left out any answers or parts of answers.

## After the Test



If the instructor reviews the exam in class, make sure you attend. Many students choose to skip class on the day of the review because "nothing is happening" that day. On the contrary, this is an important class to attend because it helps reinforce the information one more time in long term memory. Even if you aren't interested in the "learning" aspect of the class, it is an opportunity to hear what the instructor was looking for in the answers. This can help you on the **NEXT** exam.

**Reference:** Lesson 3 – Test Taking Strategies

## Mastering Different Types of Directives (Part 1 of 2)

<b>Compare</b>	Examine qualities or characteristics to discover things in common. Compare is usually stated as 'compare with.' You are to emphasize similarities, although differences may be mentioned.
<b>Contrast</b>	Stress the differences of things, qualities, events, or problems.
<b>Criticize</b>	Express your judgment on correctness or merit. Discuss the limitations and good points or contributions of the plan or work in question.
<b>Define</b>	Definitions call for concise, clear meanings. You must keep in mind the class to which a thing belongs and whatever differentiates the particular object from all others in the class.
<b>Describe</b>	In a descriptive answer, you should recount, characterize, sketch, or relate in narrative form.
<b>Diagram</b>	If you are asked to diagram, present a drawing, chart, plan, or graphic representation in your answer. Generally, you are expected to label the diagram, and some cases add a brief explanation or description.
<b>Discuss</b>	This word directs you to examine, analyze carefully, and present considerations both for and against the topic involved. This type of question calls for a complete and detailed answer. As you discuss, you may compare, contrast, define and describe.
<b>Enumerate</b>	This word specifies a list or outline form of reply. In such questions, recount one by one the points required.
<b>Evaluate</b>	This word specifies a careful appraisal of the problem, stressing both advantages and limitations. Evaluation implies authoritative and, to a lesser degree, personal appraisal of both contributions and limitations.
<b>Explain</b>	In explanatory answers, you must clarify and interpret the material you present. In such an answer, state 'how or why,' reconcile any differences in opinion or experimental results, and, where possible, state causes. Make plain the conditions that laid the foundation for the topic.
<b>Illustrate</b>	This word requires you to explain or clarify your answer to the problem by presenting a figure, picture, or concrete example.

Reference: Lesson 4 – Mastering Different Types of Test Questions



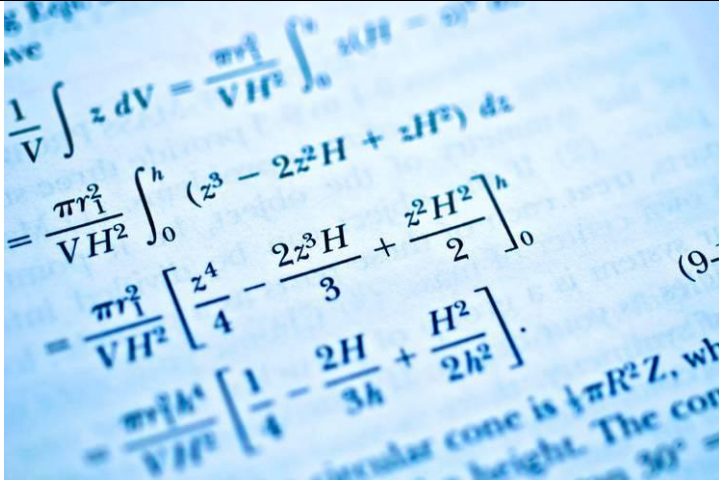
## Mastering Different Types of Directives (Part 2 of 2)

<b>Inference</b>	When asked to infer, you are required to make a determination of a given problem based on the proposition, statement, or judgment considered as true within another problem.
<b>Interpret</b>	An interpretation question is similar to one requiring explanation. You are expected to translate, solve, or comment on the subject and usually to give your judgment or reaction to the problem.
<b>Justify</b>	When you are instructed to justify your answer, you must prove or show your grounds for decisions. In such an answer, present evidence in a convincing form.
<b>List</b>	To list is to enumerate. You are expected to present an itemized series or tabulations. Answers should always be given in concise form.
<b>Outline</b>	An outline answer is an organized description. Give the main points and essential details. Omit minor details. Present the information in a systematic arrangement.
<b>Prove</b>	A question that requires proof is one that demands confirmation or verification. Establish something with certainty by evaluating and citing evidence or by logical reasoning.
<b>Relate</b>	If you are asked to relate or show the relationship, emphasize the connections and associations in descriptive form.
<b>State</b>	In questions directing you to specify, give, state, or present, you are called on to express the high points in brief, clear narrative form. Omit details and illustrations or examples.
<b>Summarize</b>	To summarize, give in condensed form, the main points or facts of the problem or topic. Omit all details, illustrations, and elaboration.
<b>Trace</b>	To trace, give a description of progress, historical sequence, or development from the point of origin. Such narratives may call for probing or deduction.

**Reference:** Lesson 4 – Mastering Different Types of Test Questions

## Mastering Different Types of Objectives

<b>Objective Questions</b>	True-false or multiple choice questions appear on objective tests. Since both types of question involve understanding a statement and making a choice in response to it, strategies for answering well are very similar.
<b>Essay Questions</b>	When you answer an essay question, you're showing how well you can explain and support an idea, not just what you know.
<b>Problem Solving Questions</b>	<p>When you work a problem, ask yourself three questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are you being asked to find?</li> <li>• What do you need to know in order to find this?</li> <li>• What are you already given on the problem to help you with your search?</li> </ul> <p>After working through the problem, look back at what it asked you to find. Does your answer cover it? If not, go through the three questions again.</p>

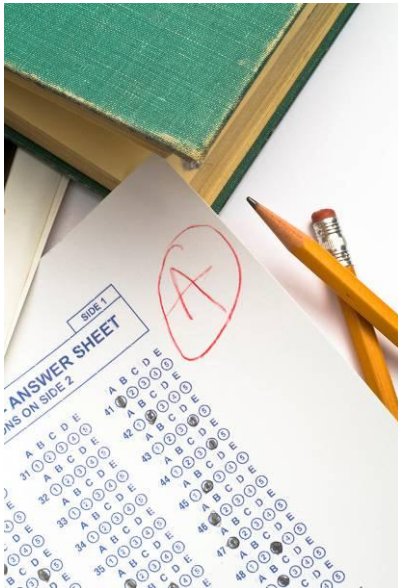


**Reference:** Lesson 4 – Mastering Different Types of Test Questions

## Mastering Multiple Choice Questions

Multiple choice questions are a form of assessment in which respondents are asked to select one or more of the choices from a list. Suggestions for taking multiple choice tests:

- Read questions carefully.
- Determine if you are to select one or several responses.
- Watch out for distracters, which are false answers that look correct.
- If more than one choice is correct, 'all of the above' is probably correct.
- If you don't know the answer immediately, try to eliminate obviously incorrect answer choices.



1. Read the questions carefully, noting key words that can help you answer the questions.
2. Use the process of elimination.
3. “Absolute” statements are usually distracters.
4. Jokes and insults are usually distracters.
5. When one answer is more complete or inclusive, it is likely to be correct.
6. Know what to do when answers contain confusing negatives.
7. “All of the above” is more likely to be the correct answer than is “None of the above.”
8. When two answers are synonyms, eliminate both.
9. When two answers are similar in meaning, one is often the correct answer.
10. If you have kept up with assignments fairly well, multiple-choice options that contain unfamiliar terms are usually distracters.
11. Be careful when you are allowed to select two answers.

**Reference:** Lesson 4 – Mastering Different Types of Test Questions

## Mastering True/False Questions

Pay attention to qualifiers and negatives.

Qualifiers like 'never,' 'always,' 'none,' and 'only' usually indicate a FALSE statement.

Qualifiers like 'sometimes,' 'often,' 'generally,' and 'frequently' usually indicate a TRUE statement.

Negative words such as 'can't' and 'no' can be confusing. Try to evaluate the statement without the negative word.

1. For a statement to be true, all parts of the statement must be true.
2. Absolute words tend to make the statements false.
3. Words such as sometimes, usually, and often tend to make statements true.
4. Be careful when statements contain confusing negatives.

The word "True?" is written in a large, bold, blue font with a red outline and a slight 3D effect. The question mark is also in the same style.

The word "False?" is written in a large, bold, blue font with a red outline and a slight 3D effect. The question mark is also in the same style.

## Mastering Matching Questions

Matching questions ask the student to match up items from one column with items in a second column.

Matching questions give you some opportunity for guessing. If only one match is allowed per item then once items become eliminated, a few of the latter ones may be guessed.

1. Read through all of the items on the list; don't choose the first answer that seems correct. You may find a more precise answer further down the list.
2. Answer the questions you know first, and check them off as you use them.
3. If you're unsure of an answer, don't mark it. If there are an equal number of items to match and you choose one incorrect match, another match will also be wrong.
4. To save time, match longer items (such as definitions) to shorter items (such as vocabulary terms) so you'll be reading the longer items only once.
5. The relationship is the crucial factor in a set of matching items. Usually the relationship is common to all included items. For example, all the items in Column B define the terms in Column A, or the individuals named in Column A wrote the books listed in Column B.



## Tips for Using Test Time Effectively

- First read the entire test rapidly.
- If the test is long and divided into sections, see if the instructor has labeled the point value of each section, and then allot your time accordingly.
- If you're not sure of the answer to a question with high point value, try at least to write some kind of relevant information.
- After you've answered questions with high-point value, take a close look at the remaining questions.
- Label the questions by difficulty from A to C, with A being the hardest.
- Begin with the A questions, skipping over the ones you labeled B and C.
- Now answer the questions you labeled B.
- Answer C questions last.
- If time remains, check your work.



**Reference:** Lesson 4 – Mastering Different Types of Test Questions

## Mastering Short Answer Questions

Short answer or fill-in-the-blank questions require you to know or recall the answer.

Look for grammatical clues within the question to help you determine the correct answer. If you don't think of several correct answers, let your instructor know and you may be rewarded with a clue as to the answer he or she is looking for.

1. Read the questions very carefully.
2. Pay attention to the point distribution of the questions.
3. Think before you write.
4. Put forth your best effort on composition and spelling.
5. Use clues on the test when in doubt.



**Reference:** Lesson 4 – Mastering Different Types of Test Questions

# Mastering Problem Solving Questions

Be sure of what is expected on each question.

1. On mathematics test, find out if points will be assigned for correct answers only or if partial credit will be given for proper procedures.
2. Know ahead of time if you are expected to memorize formulas.
3. Take all calculations and other materials allowed to the testing situation.
4. Practice, practice, practice! Practice doing questions from old exams, the textbook and lab manual, and other texts on the same topic. If you can't find enough practice problems, create some with your study group or partner.
5. Review regularly, either on a daily or weekly basis. Regular review is often critical to developing a thorough understanding of mathematics-based problems.
6. Study a section, and then practice problems from that section. Make sure you understand the information in each section before moving on to the next, particularly in courses that build on previous sections. Pay attention to problems emphasized in class, the text, and assignments. If a particular problem appears in more than one of these places, there's a good chance a similar problem will appear on the exam.
7. Study questions out of order. Problems on exams rarely appear in the order taught and may include questions that combine information from a number of sections. To prepare for this, practice questions out of order. Pay attention to the possible links between questions and how the instructor might combine questions on an exam, and seek out combination questions on old exams.
8. When studying a section, note the important formula. Although it's important to know how to use a formula, knowing when to use it is just as critical. Make connections between ideas and formulae and note how to distinguish between similar scenarios to choose the correct formula.
9. Use old exams when available. Old exams often give you a good feel for the types of questions that are likely to be tested on the coming exam. While working on old exams, you should take some time to compare the exam questions with those presented in lecture, problem sets, and the text:
  - Where do the majority of exam questions come from? (Text, lecture, or assignments?)
  - How are the exam questions different from those in the text, lectures, and assignments?
  - If equations are involved, which ones are needed and which ones are provided?

**Reference:** Lesson 4 – Mastering Different Types of Test Questions



## Mastering Essay Questions

Remember that the essay is a subjective question that demands information recall and also asks you to use critical thinking strategies to answer the question. You must then organize, write, and revise a written response.

Start by identifying how much time you can devote to answering the question. Jot down key words or ideas so you can retrieve them later when writing your essay.

Begin with a strong sentence that clearly states your essay's main theme. Follow that with the key points that you will discuss. Expand on your key points by writing a paragraph for each point.



Plan your time before writing your answers, and pace yourself.	Stick to the question asked.	Use correct composition, grammar, and spelling.
Outline your ideas before you begin to write.	If you do not know a complete answer, write a partial answer that includes what you do know.	If essay exams make you nervous, first answer a question you know well.
Write organized answers, and resist rambling.	Write legibly.	Leave time at the end of the test to proofread your answers.

**Reference:** Lesson 4 – Mastering Different Types of Test Questions

## Mastering Open Book Tests

Most students are thrilled when the instructor announces that an upcoming exam will be open book. They assume that because they will be able to look up all the answers in the textbook, they will not need to study very much or at all.

Unfortunately, many of these same students do not do very well on the exam. This is because they underestimate how much they need to prepare and study for the test



Spend an equal or greater amount of time preparing as you would for a normal test; the open book test will most likely be harder than if it were a closed book exam.	Highlight important points, use post-it notes, bookmarks and make notes in your book, if it is allowed.
Familiarize yourself with the book and relevant materials.	Bring all the resources that your instructor allows for.
If it's allowed, write down all the important formulas and key information on a separate sheet so you don't have to search through your book for it.	Answer the easy questions that you know off the top of your head first, then go back and answer the questions where you need to reference your book.
Focus on learning the main ideas and get a feel for where they are located in the book, learn the details later if there's still time.	Use quotations from the book to support your view, but don't over-quote, be sure to give your own insight and commentary.

**Reference:** Lesson 4 – Mastering Different Types of Test Questions

# Mastering Reading Comprehension Questions

In reading comprehension questions, you read a short paragraph and answer questions about it. Comprehension is especially critical during test taking. You must read and interpret correctly the test directions, the questions, and the answers.

It helps to read the questions before you read the text.

Suggestions for reading comprehension:

1. Develop a broad background.
2. Know the structure of paragraphs.
3. Identify the type of reasoning.
4. Anticipate and predict.
5. Look for the method of organization.
6. Create motivation and interest.
7. Pay attention to supporting cues.
8. Highlight, summarize, and review.

## Develop a broad background.

Broaden your background knowledge by reading newspapers, magazines and books. Become interested in world events.

## Know the structure of paragraphs.

Good writers construct paragraphs that have a beginning, middle and end. Often, the first sentence will give an overview that helps provide a framework for adding details. Also, look for transitional words, phrases or paragraphs that change the topic.

## Identify the type of reasoning.

Does the author use cause and effect reasoning, hypothesis, model building, induction or deduction, systems thinking?

## Anticipate and predict.

Really smart readers try to anticipate the author and predict future ideas and questions. If you're right, this reinforces your understanding. If you're wrong, you make adjustments quicker.

## Look for the method of organization.

Is the material organized chronologically, serially, logically, functionally, spatially or hierarchical?

## Create motivation and interest.

Preview material, ask questions, and discuss ideas with classmates. The stronger your interest, the greater your comprehension.

## Pay attention to supporting cues.

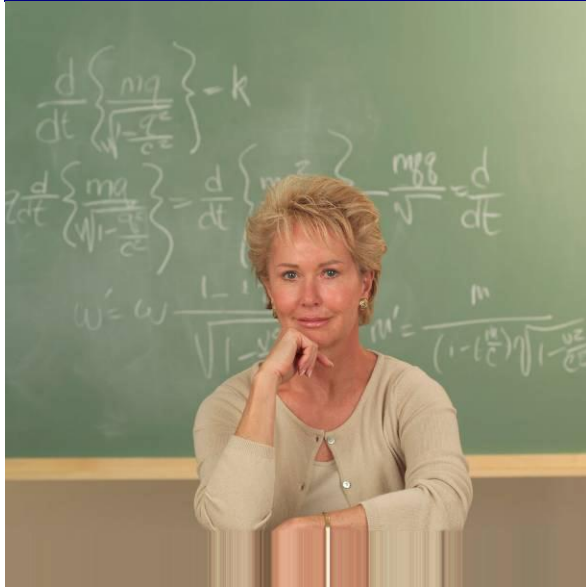
Study pictures, graphs and headings. Read the first and last paragraph in a chapter, or the first sentence in each section.

## Highlight, summarize and review.

Just reading a book once is not enough. To develop a deeper understanding, you have to highlight, summarize and review important ideas.

**Reference:** Lesson 4 – Mastering Different Types of Test Questions

## Suggestions for Math Tests (Part 1 of 2)



Always review daily and then do a major review one week before your exam. Use study checklists and flash cards.

Once an exam is announced:

- Determine the scope of the test.
- Construct a list of topics to review.
- Find specific problems for each topic on your list.
- Make your list long enough to provide enough practice for mastery.
- Include all types of problems and of various levels of difficulty.

To guarantee success of your math test, you must master all the topics on your list **BEFORE** you work on any practice tests.

Do not expect to be able to work out very difficult problems on a test if you have not practiced working out these kinds of problems ahead of time. So work out lots and lots of difficult problems dealing with each topic. Do one topic at a time.

The best way to ensure success on a test is to take and master "practice tests" that have the same form as the actual tests you are preparing to take. Create sample tests for yourself from study guides and course outline review texts that have the correct answers listed so you can check your solutions. Test yourself often. When you can get 100 percent on your own tests, you are bound to do well on your exam.

If you will have a time limit on your exam, then give yourself timed practice tests similar to the one you expect in class. Practice various types of problems and see how fast you are working. Often speed counts on a test. You may have to practice some types of problems over and over again until you can work them in less time.

Learn to recognize your math concepts, formulas or procedures in random order, that is, in a different order than they were presented in your textbook or in class.

Remember, it is not possible to study too much for a math test. It is not possible that over studying can lower your grade.

**Reference:** Lesson 4 – Mastering Different Types of Test Questions

## Suggestions for Math Tests (Part 2 of 2)



Do an error analysis of your homework problems, practice tests and past exams. Note the typical careless or "dumb" errors you usually make and the types of problems that cause you difficulty. Give yourself more practice in these areas of difficulty.

After completing your next exam, be sure to proofread as you would do an essay, to correct these typical errors. This will often give you many more points on an exam.

Know how much time you have and the point value for each question. Set up a schedule for progressing through the exam, not spending too much time on any one problem. Work at a regular pace.

Often it is best to start with the easiest question and then go to the next easiest and so on. You do not have to begin at the beginning. Omit and mark questions that resist a ready response.

When you get your exam, write out all of your formulas on the top corner of the sheet. This becomes your "cheat sheet" and you can refer to it any time during the exam. Be sure to put down even the easiest formulas so you will not blank on them later, as some students have.

Get into the habit of always checking every problem you work out. Estimate the correct answer first and then see if you worked out answer is close to your estimate. Do the problem a different way and see if you get the same answer.

Throughout the exam focus on remaining calm, relaxed and positive. Relax any tight neck or shoulder muscles and push away any negative or disturbing thoughts. Keep saying positive things to yourself such as: "I can do it... I know I am capable... Tests are becoming easier for me... This test is a positive challenge."

Give yourself the entire test period to finish and do not get spooked because others leave early. Teachers often say that students who leave early often do poorly on exams.

After finishing your exam, check your answers, proofread for your typical errors and then leave and reward yourself for a job well done.

**Reference:** Lesson 4 – Mastering Different Types of Test Questions

# The Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT)

## What is the SAT?

The SAT is a widely used entrance exam that measures the academic skills and knowledge students most need for success in college. It is an aptitude test.

An aptitude test is designed to demonstrate a student's talent, skill, or potential for learning, rather than their accumulated knowledge.

Both private and public colleges use SAT scores in evaluating students for admission. They also use SAT results as a basis for granting scholarships.

## When is the SAT Offered?

The SAT is offered several times a year at locations across the country. It takes three hours and 45 minutes to administer. Students generally take this test late in their junior year. If their scores are not as high as they would like, they can take it again in the fall of their senior year.

## How is the SAT Scored?

The SAT gives students scores on three skills: Reading, Writing, and Math.

The highest possible score on each part is 800, meaning that the entire test has a maximum of 2400 points. The average SAT score is around 1500.

In addition to numerical score, students receive percentile rankings on the SAT. Your percentile ranking tells you what percentage of students scored below you. For instance, if you score in the 80th percentile, then you have scored better than 80 out of every 100 students who took the SAT.

**Reference:** Lesson 5 – Taking Standardized Tests

# The American College Test (ACT)



## What is the ACT?

The ACT is a college entrance examination that is an alternative to the SAT. While the SAT primarily measures a student's aptitude, or learning potential, the ACT is an achievement test, which tests what a student has actually learned. Most schools require either the SAT or the ACT.

Colleges use ACT scores, just as they use SAT scores, in making decisions regarding admissions and scholarships as well as in placing students in special programs and honors or remedial courses. Like the SAT, the ACT has a waiver of registration fees for students who can demonstrate financial hardship.

## When is the ACT Offered?

Most students take the ACT during the winter or spring of their junior year. If they think they can improve their scores, they take the test again in the fall of their senior year.

If a college gives you the option for taking either the SAT or the ACT, you may want to take both. Then you can decide which score you want to have submitted to the college.

## How is the ACT Scored?

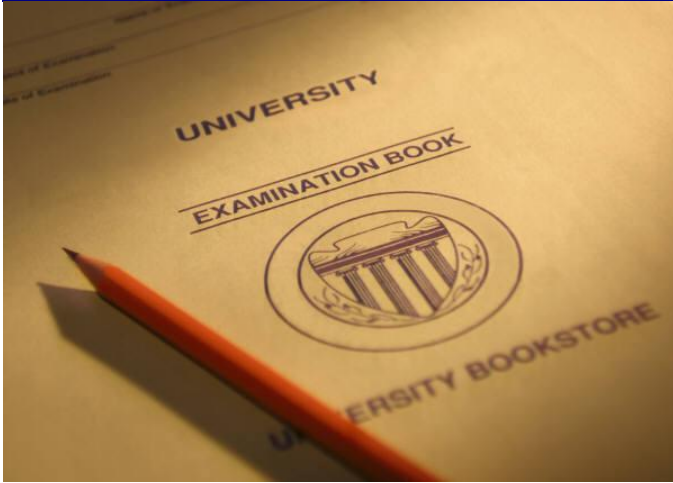
The ACT is two hours and 55 minutes long and is composed entirely of multiple-choice questions. There is an optional 30-minute writing test. (The writing test on the SAT is mandatory.) Scores on each of the four sections range from 1 to 36. These scores are averaged to produce a composite score.

The ACT has four sections:

- English
- Mathematics
- Reading
- Science Reasoning

**Reference:** Lesson 5 – Taking Standardized Tests

## College Entrance Exams and Advanced Placement Exams



### Advanced Placement Examinations

Colleges give advanced placement (AP) exams to students who have taken AP course in high school. Doing well on these exams gives students the opportunity to earn credit or advanced standing at most colleges and universities. AP exams cover 34 subjects, including history, government, English, music, art, some sciences, and foreign languages.

### College-Level Examination Programs

The College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) enables new college students to receive college credit without taking a basic or introductory course if they can show they already know the information covered in that course. Around 2900 colleges grant credit or advanced standing for CLEP exams. Receiving such credit enables a student to move on more quickly to studying advanced topics. Business, industry, government, and professional groups use the CLEP to decide whom to admit to training programs.

### ACT ASSET

ACT ASSET is a series of short placement tests designed to measure a student's strengths and needs in language, reading, comprehension, mathematics (numerical skills, elementary algebra, and geometry), and study skills. ACT ASSET takes two to three hours to complete. It is used primarily by community and technical colleges.

### ACT COMPASS

The ACT Computerized Adaptive Placement and Support System (COMPASS) is a series of tests in mathematics, reading, and writing. It also has a component that determines placement levels for students who want to take classes in English as a Second Language. Like ASSET, COMPASS is used primarily by community colleges.

### Institutional Challenge Examinations

Some colleges allow students to take an institutional challenge exam to qualify for course credits. If a student demonstrates proficiency on this exam, he or she receives college credit for the course without having to enroll. For more information on institutional challenge examinations, consult individual colleges and universities.

**Reference:** Lesson 5 – Taking Standardized Tests



# The Writing Section of the Exams

The questions in the writing section test your skills in the following areas:

## Improving Sentences:

These sentences test correctness and effectiveness of expression. Part of each sentence or the entire sentence is underlined. Beneath each sentence are five ways of phrasing the underlined material. Choice A repeats the original phrasing; the other four choices are different. If you think the original phrasing produces a better sentence than any of the alternatives, select choice A; if not, select one of the other choices.

In making your selection, follow the requirements of standard written English; that is, pay attention to grammar, word choice, sentence construction, and punctuation. Your selection should result in the most effective sentence, clear and precise, without awkwardness or ambiguity.

## Identifying sentence errors:

This section tests your ability to recognize grammar and usage errors. Each sentence contains either a single error or no error at all. No sentence contains more than one error. The error, if there is one, is underlined and lettered. If the sentence contains an error, select the one underlined part that each must be changed to make the sentence correct. If the sentence is correct, select choice E. In choosing answers, follow the requirements of standard written English.

## Improving paragraphs:

This section has a number of short passages. You read a paragraph and select the best answers for the questions that follow. Some of the questions focus on sentence structure or word choice. Others focus on the organization and development of the passage.

## Essay writing:

This section tests your ability to develop your ideas in writing, to reason and present evidence, and to use standard written English. The SAT graders know that students must write these essays under time constraints, so they aren't looking for perfection. They just want to see whether you can organize your thoughts and write a good first draft.



**Reference:** Lesson 5 – Taking Standardized Tests

## March 2 Success

Tests will often be used to determine if you will graduate or go on to the next grade, what schools you can get into, your eligibility for scholarships, and your qualification for entry into a government job such as fire, police, or the military.

March 2 Success is a great way to get started!

The program content was designed by Peterson's and Educational Options. Peterson's is a leader in SAT, ACT and standardized test preparation, and many students and their parents pay for their help. Educational Options is an individually customized study program that builds a course around areas where a student needs the most instruction based on an initial assessment test.

March 2 Success teaches you how to take tests and, along the way, helps you to improve your Math and English knowledge and skills. Best of all, it's free and as close as your computer. What have you got to lose? Learn more about March 2 Success. Read the answers to some Frequently Asked Questions or better yet, why not Register Now and take the first step towards your success.

To find out more about March 2 Success, visit [www.march2success.com](http://www.march2success.com).







Navy Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps