

Taking an Objective Test

General Test Taking Tips:

1. Get a good night's sleep. Going into the test rested and alert will benefit you more than staying up all night cramming.
2. Get to the room a few minutes early. Relax, look over your notes. Don't listen to other students who may be panicking about the test. Stay focused.
3. When you get the test, write any mnemonic devices, formulas, etc. in the margin in pencil while they are fresh in your mind.
4. Look over the entire test before you begin. Get an idea of how much time you need to spend on each section.
5. Read the directions carefully. Make sure you know what you are being asked to do. If not, ask the professor to clarify.
6. Don't leave blanks. Make an educated guess.
7. Answer questions you are sure of first. Mark in pencil those you skip and come back to them later. Don't allow yourself to get bogged down on one question and use up valuable time. Another question further on in the test may give you a clue about one you skipped.
8. Use all the time you have to check computation on math or science questions.
9. Check the backs of pages of the test, especially the last page, for additional questions.
10. Change an answer **only** if you can justify the change (i.e., you misread the question). Do not change answers simply because you are panicking or running out of time. Students find that when they do this they usually change right answers to wrong answers!

ANSWERING MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

1. Read the question carefully, twice if necessary, and underline key words.
2. Before reading the answer options, try to think of the answer on your own.
3. Read the question again and end it with option A. Is this a true statement? If so, it is a **possible** answer (although it may not be the **best** answer.) If option A does not make the statement true, cross it out.

4. Follow this procedure with each of the options. Hopefully, you will be left with one answer. If you are left with two possibilities, you will have to choose the most correct answer, or make an educated guess, but you have raised your odds of a correct answer to 50/50.

Clues to correct answers:

- "all of the above"
- one of two opposite answers
- one of two similar answers
- the most inclusive answer

Clues to incorrect answers:

- a totally unfamiliar term
- the highest or lowest in a set of numbers
- an answer that would make the statement grammatically incorrect

ANSWERING TRUE/FALSE QUESTIONS

1. Read the statement very carefully. Be alert to negatives.
2. Remember that for a statement to be true, every part of it must be true.
3. Extreme modifiers like "always", "only", and "never" are usually clues to false statements since they don't allow for any exceptions.
4. Words like "often", "frequently," and "usually" often indicate a true statement, since they do allow for exceptions.
5. If a statement has double negatives, cross out both and then evaluate the statement.

ANSWERING MATCHING QUESTIONS

1. Look over both sides of the list. Are there the same number of items on each side? Will some answers be used more than once or will there be some left over?
2. Work from the list with the longest phrases and see which shorter phrase fits. This will save you time.
3. If each answer will be used only once, cross off answers as you use them.

ANSWERING FILL-IN-THE-BLANK QUESTIONS

1. Look at the number of blanks in the question. The answer may have the same number of words.
2. Think about what type of answer is required - a date? a term? a number? a person's name?
3. If the blank is preceded by "an", the answer will start with a vowel.
4. Make sure your answer will make the sentence grammatically correct.
5. If you can't think of the exact word you need, use a synonym that would make the statement true.

PROBLEM SOLVING IN SCIENCE OR MATH

1. Read the directions and the problem carefully. Be sure you know what you are solving for.
2. Drawing a picture or making a table is often helpful when solving word problems.
3. Check your work by using opposite operations when possible.
4. Check to see if your answer is logical and reasonable.
5. Show your work. If you have set up a problem correctly but get the wrong answer because of a calculation error, you might still receive partial credit.

WHEN YOU GET THE TEST BACK. . .

1. Make sure you learn the correct answers to the questions you missed.
2. Analyze your test. What was the source of most of the information you missed? - text? class notes? outside reading? handouts? Pay particular attention to that source in preparing for the next test.
3. Evaluate how well you were able to predict test questions? Was most of the information on the test marked in your text or in your notes, or was there information that you totally missed?
4. Decide if you missed questions because you failed to read directions carefully?
5. Learn from your mistakes and remember that test questions tend to resurface on mid-terms and finals!

