

## TEST TAKING TIPS

### **BEFORE YOU BEGIN:**

- 1. Preview the test before you answer anything.** This gets you thinking about the material. Make sure to note the point value of each question. This will give you some ideas on budgeting your time. As you read the questions, jot down brief notes indicating ideas you can use later in your answers.
- 2. Quickly calculate how much time you should allow for each section** according to the point value. (You don't want to spend 30 min. on an essay question that counts only 5 points.)
- 3. Do a mind dump.** Using what you saw in the preview, make notes of anything you think you might forget. Write down things that you used in learning the material that might help you remember. Outline your answers to discussion questions.

### **GENERAL TEST TAKING TIPS:**

**Come prepared; arrive early for tests.**

**Stay relaxed and confident.** Don't let yourself become *anxious*. Don't talk to other students before a test; anxiety is contagious. Instead, remind yourself that you are well-prepared and are going to do well.

**Be comfortable but alert.** Choose a good spot to take the test. Make sure you have enough room to work. Maintain an upright posture in your seat.

**Bring all your supplies!** Bring at least two pens/pencils with good erasers, calculator with enough batteries and any other resources that your instructor allows you to.

**Bring a watch** to the test with you so that you can better pace yourself.

**Keep a positive attitude** throughout the whole test and try to stay relaxed. If you start to feel nervous take a few deep breaths to relax.

**Keep your eyes on your own paper.** You don't want to appear to be cheating and cause unnecessary trouble for yourself.

**When you first receive your test, do a quick survey of the entire test** so that you know how to efficiently budget your time.

**Read the directions.** (Can more than one answer be correct? Are you penalized for guessing? etc.) Never assume that you know what the directions say.

**Answer the easy questions first.** This will give you the confidence and momentum to get through the rest of the test. You are sure these answers are correct. Try not to spend too much time on one question.

Do the problems that have **the greatest point values first**.

**Don't rush** but **pace yourself**, read the entire question and look for keywords.

**Ask the instructor to explain any items that are not clear.** Do not ask for the answer, but phrase your question in a way that shows the instructor that you have the information but are not sure what the question is asking for.

**Write legibly**, if the grader can't read what you wrote they'll most likely mark it wrong.

Always **read the whole question carefully**. Don't make assumptions about what the question might be.

**Go back to the difficult questions.** While looking over the test and doing the easy questions, your subconscious mind will have been working on the answers to the hardest ones. Also, later items on the test might give you useful or needed information for earlier items. Don't worry if others finish before you; focus on the test in front of you.

**Answer all questions** (unless you are penalized for wrong answers).

**Try to answer the questions from the instructor's point of view.** Try to remember what the instructor emphasized and felt was important.

**Use the margin to help you figure out** if the question does not seem clear or if the answer seems ambiguous.

**Circle key words in difficult questions.** This will force you to focus on the central point

**Express difficult questions in your own words.** Rephrasing can make it clear to you, but be sure you don't change the meaning of the question.

**Use all of the time allotted for the test.** If you have extra time, cover up your answers and actually rework the question.

**Reserve 10% of your test time for review.** Review the test; resist the urge to leave as soon as you have completed all the items. Make sure you have answered all the questions. Proofread your writing for spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

**Don't worry if others finish before you;** focus on the test in front of you.

Double check to make sure that you **put your first and last name on the test**.

## **MULTIPLE CHOICE TEST TAKING TIPS ( Good for provincials exams in grade 10)**

**Read the question before you look at the answer.**

**Do all the questions you know first.** Go back and try the others after.

**Come up with the answer in your head before looking at the possible answers.** This way the choices given on the test won't throw you off or trick you.

**Eliminate answers you know aren't right.**

**Read all the choices** before choosing your answer.

If there is no guessing penalty, **always take an educated guess** and select an answer.

Don't guess if you have no basis for your choice and if you are penalized for guessing.

Since your first choice is usually correct, **don't change your answers unless you are sure** of the correction or unless you miss-read the question.

In "All of the above" and "None of the above" choice questions, **if you are certain one of the statements is true don't choose "None of the above"**. Also, if one of the statements is false, don't choose "All of the above".

In a question with an "**All of the above**" choice, if you see that at least two correct statements, then "All of the above" is probably the answer.

**A positive choice is more likely to be true than a negative one.**

Usually the correct answer is the choice with the most information. Be careful to read the entire question and the answer selections regardless so you are making a thoughtful choice.

## **ESSAY TEST TAKING TIPS**

**When taking essay tests, think before you write.** Create a brief outline for your essay by jotting down a few words to indicate ideas you want to discuss.

**When taking essay test, get right to the point.** State your main point in the first sentence. Use your first paragraph to provide an overview of your essay. Use the rest of your essay to discuss these points in more detail.