

Test Taking Strategies

Before You Begin

Preview the test before you answer anything

- This gets you thinking about the material
- Make sure to note the point value of each question since this will give you some ideas on budgeting your time

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

Calculate how much time you should allow for each section

- Quickly calculate how much time you should allow for each section according to the point value
- You don't want to spend 30 minutes on an essay question that counts only 5 points

Taking A Test

Read the directions

- Can more than one answer be correct?
- Are you penalized for guessing?
- Never assume that you know what the directions say.

Answer the easy questions first

- Get them out of the way, plus your confidence will build and give you the momentum to get through the rest of the test
- Remember, you are sure these answers are correct!

Go back to the difficult questions

- While looking over the test and doing the easy questions, subconsciously your mind has already started working on the solutions to the difficult questions
- Also, later items on the test might give you useful or needed information for earlier items

Answer all questions

- Unless you are penalized for wrong answers

Ask the instructor to explain any items that are not clear

- Don't ask for the answer
- Phrase your question in a way that shows the instructor you have the information but are not sure what the question is asking for

Try to answer the questions from the instructor's point of view

- What did the instructor emphasize and feel was important?

Use the margin to explain why you chose the answer

- If the question does not seem clear or if the answer seems ambiguous, explain how you came to your answer

Circle key words in difficult questions

- You will be able to focus on the central point more effectively.

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
- If you used a Scantron, make sure your answers line up between the test and answer sheets
- Double check to make sure you haven't skipped any questions
- For any of the questions you guessed on, go back to see if you still agree with your answer