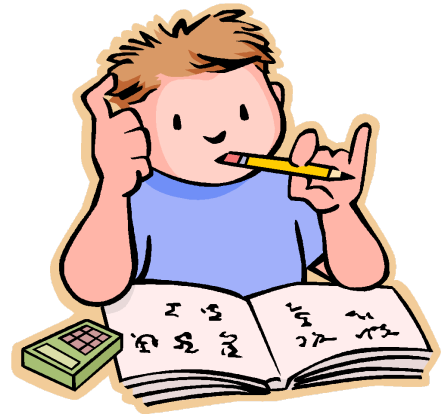


An Exam and Test Taking Study Guide for SUCCESS!



St. Joseph High School

- The importance of where you study**
- Classroom Tips**
- Exam writing tips and strategies**
- Handling Stress**
- Multiple Choice Strategies**
- Essay Question Strategies**
- Checklist and Study Schedule**

Study in the right SETTING

Make it your JOB to study effectively!

1. Be comfortable – sit on a straight chair, with good light.
2. Be clear – clear off your study space – have a table or desk to work at.
3. Be prepared – have your need materials with you – texts, pens, pencils, paper, calculator, highlighter, etc.



4. Be on schedule! – Keep a study schedule and make sure you follow it

5. Be free from distractions! – Go to a quiet room, and stay away from your cell phone, avoid social media, TV, computer, etc.

Ten Super Tips for Studying

1. Choose an effective place to do your homework and study – free from distraction, a firm, comfortable chair, and have all of the tools you need available.
2. Make a weekly homework/study schedule. Allow yourself breaks to reward yourself. Revise and reflect on your schedule and how you did with it at the end of the week.
3. Psychologists say we have a good chance at remembering things if we recall it within 24 hours. This means you need to look back at notes you took at school each day, to let the information “stick” in your memory.
4. Try to do more than the bare minimum in your classes. Trying hard will make you enjoy the course more and therefore lead you get better marks.
5. Understand what you are supposed to do for homework and how to do it BEFORE you leave your teacher that day.
6. Read ahead, or look ahead in your textbook to see what you might be looking at next in class. This will help prepare you!
7. Finish your chores, or check your social media, etc. BEFORE you start your homework so you aren't distracted!
8. Look at the way you take notes – do you write down and highlight important information? Do you keep track of the date, and the title to keep yourself organized?
9. Don't fall behind! If you miss a day, get caught up ASAP or you'll end up feeling discouraged.
10. Be positive – you can be successful! You NEED to put in the effort!

TEST and EXAM WRITING TIPS, and STRATEGIES

THE BASICS:

Start EARLY!!! Don't leave things to the last minute!

1. Create a schedule and include all of your exam dates, including when you'll study for each test/exam.
2. Make sure your notes are all caught up before you start studying – if you are missing some, ask a friend or the teacher.
3. Know when and where the exam is and how much it is worth for your final grade.
4. Ask your teachers questions about topics/exam formats that you don't understand.
5. Study in a place that is free from distraction – no cell phone!!
6. Take breaks from time to time, and reward yourself for studying effectively!

STUDY STRATEGIES:

7. Make a list of the items that are going to be on the exam. You might also want to ask what WON'T be on the exam, so you don't waste time studying it!
8. **Ask your teacher what TYPE of questions will be on the exam.** This will help you decide how you will study.
9. Ask your teacher if there are old exams available to study from.
10. Think about what the teacher really focused on throughout the year, and during the exam review. This will help you prioritize what to study.
11. Use index cards to rewrite definitions, terms, and theories. This is really helpful for true/false and multiple choice questions.
12. Highlight important information in your notes – like names, places, facts, theories, or dates. You might want to use a different colour for each (ie. Blue for places, pink for dates, etc.)
13. For essay style questions, predict what the questions will be based on what your teacher focused on in class. Remember, you are usually proving something in your answer – gather your proof (information, quotes, examples) and prepare sample answers.
14. Mix up how you study – don't just read over your notes silently, also read them out loud, have someone quiz you, write out definitions, and study as a group. This will ensure you are retaining the information.
15. Don't overwhelm yourself with too much information all at once. Break up your studying into chunks so you are able to learn the material. This means studying for multiple days, rather than cramming at the end!
16. Once the exam day comes, be confident – you know your stuff! If you think of the exam as a CONTEST, a time to show off - you'll be prepared and you'll win!

EXAM and TEST ANXIETY

**First things first...
Breathe! Your teacher is
not out to get you! Even
still... exam anxiety is
very common!**

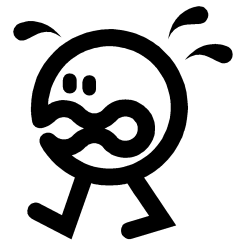


What is EXAM ANXIETY?

It is an effect of stress. Stress is a reaction to a threatening event or situation that disrupts our regular routines. Stress can sometimes be helpful because we can control it and it motivates us to search for solutions for it (like studying). But, when stress isn't controlled it's called anxiety. In an exam, anxiety can cause you to lose focus. It often starts with negative feelings that lead to physical reactions/symptoms like headaches, nausea, increased heart beat, poor concentration, or your "mind going blank".

Symptoms of anxiety:

- Feeling panicky or depressed
- Procrastinating
- Having a short temper
- Negative self talk – you talk yourself down, lowering your self confidence and esteem



Here are some anxiety relieving tips:

1. Be prepared! Study effectively, and consistently
2. Seek support from family and friends
3. Tell yourself you're well prepared and that you are going to do well
4. Think of an exam as an opportunity for you to show off – if you are well prepared you will do very well. You can show your teacher (and yourself) how hard you've worked and how well you know the material!

Your Study Skills Checklist

1. I have asked the teacher what I should focus on.
2. I have made sure I have all of the handouts, notes, etc. required to study effectively.
3. I have confirmed the format of the exam.
4. I have asked the teacher any questions I have about possible questions, ideas I don't understand, etc.
5. I have a study setting that is free from distractions.
6. I have created and stuck to a study schedule.
7. I have used a variety of study techniques, including reading, talking, writing, studying as a group, etc.
8. I have made study sheets (preferably on index cards) and have prepared possible answers for essay tests.
9. I have broken down my studying into manageable chunks
10. I am confident I will succeed on this exam!



Multiple Choice Tips and Tricks

Tests and exams often include a number of multiple choice questions. As a result, to be prepared, you should review effective multiple choice taking strategies. This will help you in your courses, on tests and exams.

Step-by-Step Strategy

1. Read the question carefully (take your time!) and underline any important terms in the question.
2. Cover the answers while you are reading the question.
3. Once you have read the question, decide what the correct answer is before looking at the options.
4. Read all of the options before selecting the correct answer. Read the question each time you read one of the options, especially if it is an incomplete statement.

For example: If the question reads,

Many teenagers like:

- a. to listen to loud music
- b. to wear clothes that are “in”
- c. to be on their own
- d. to go to parties
- e. all of the above

You would read the question in five ways before picking the correct answer.

(Many teenagers) like to listen to loud music.

(Many teenagers) like to wear clothes that are “in.”

(Many teenagers) like to be on their own.

(Many teenagers) like to go to parties.

(Many teenagers) like all of the above.

What happens if you still don't know the answer?

Follow these tips:

- Cross out the answers that you know are incorrect. This will help you narrow down the correct choice.
- Look for two answer choices that are opposites. Chances are that one of these choices is correct.

Ex: What happens when you add salt to water before boiling?

- a. It turns the hydrogen in the water to helium
- b. It makes the water boil faster
- c. It makes the water boil slower
- d. It turns to salt crystals
- e. Nothing happens

*Notice that “b” and “c” are opposites. “c” is the correct answer.

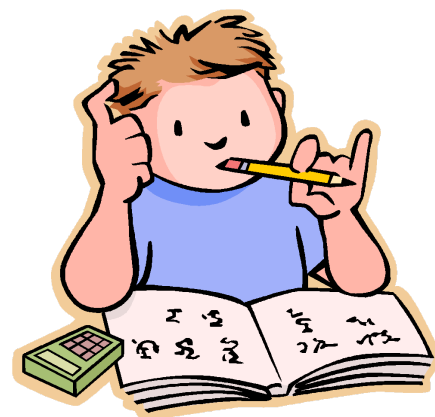
- If one choice is much longer than the rest, and it seems likely to be right, go with it. Longer answers tend to be right more often than shorter answers.
- Look for hints about the correct answer choice in other items on the test. The correct answer choice may be part of another item on the test.
- Look for choices that contain language used by your teacher or found in your textbooks. An answer choice that contains such language is usually correct.
- Do not change your initial answer unless you are sure another choice is correct. More often than not, your first choice is correct.
- Be careful when ‘all of the above’ and ‘none of the above’ are used as choices. Be sure that more than one answer is correct if you are choosing ‘all of the above.’ Make sure that none of the answers are correct if you are choosing ‘none of the above.’
- When in doubt, guess. Your guess may be right, leaving a blank won’t be.

How To: Take Essay Tests

Predict: Ask your teacher, or your peers to help you predict questions that might be on the exam. Come up with as many as you can.

Organize: Organize the information (quotes, facts, theories, etc.) needed to answer the questions you've predicted. You might choose to list the information, or organize it in a graphic organizer.

Rehearse: Look over all of the information you've organized in your lists and graphic organizers. Study these consistently leading up to the exam.



Practice: Practice writing answers to your predicted questions. Time yourself to see if you'll have time to write and proofread your work. Be sure to add examples to back your ideas!

Evaluate: Look over your answers from a teacher perspective – what are you missing? Is your information organized clearly?

*Preparing for these questions could be done with a peer – you could evaluate one another's answers and add to each other's points.



Exam Study Schedule

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
3:00pm							
4:00							
5:00							
6:00							
7:00							
8:00							
9:00							
10:00							

Exam Dates:

1) Subject: _____

Date/Time: _____

2) Subject: _____

Date/Time: _____

3) Subject: _____

Date/Time: _____

4) Subject: _____

Date/Time: _____

