

Do you ever get that nervous feeling before a test? If so, you should know some feelings of nervousness are normal because it helps us want to do our best and engage in behaviors that will likely improve our chances of doing well. However, there are times when the nerves get the best of us. When this happens, it may be difficult for others to notice and offer help, so we might feel alone. *Do not go it alone. If you find yourself in this situation, please share your experience with a trusted adult, such as a teacher or parent/guardian.* People want to help support you to do your best. This information is meant to empower you so you know there are a things you can do to help yourself through these situations.

## BEFORE A TEST - START AT HOME

There are many things you can do before a test to prepare yourself for a positive test-taking experience.

- Get a good night's rest, especially several night's prior
  - Mayo Clinic Recommends the following hours of sleep based on age:
    - 3-5 Years - 10 to 13 Hours/Night
    - 6-13 Years - 9 to 11 Hours/Night
    - 14-17 Years - 8 to 10 Hours/Night
    - Adults - 7 to 9 Hours/Night
- Feed your mind with nutrients-Eat a Healthy, Balanced Breakfast (Packed with Protein)
- Believe in yourself and your abilities
- Avoid unnecessary stress, especially the morning before a test as this can add to our stress levels.
  - Stay focused. Make a list of extra things going on so you can address those when appropriate.
  - Avoid arguments with family or friends, especially the morning of a test as this can escalate your stress level and tax your coping skills.
- Study at home-This does not mean *just* doing your homework. While it is important to keep up on your homework and practice activities that may be on the test, **ONLY** doing homework is often times not enough. You also need to study each night. Here are a few ideas to help with studying.  
Talk with your teacher for more strategies:
  - Make studying part of your routine
  - Use a study guide
  - Daily review what you learned and put it in your own words. You could "teach" someone at your house how to do the work to ensure you understand it
  - Make digital (or paper) flashcards
  - Reread important words or information
  - Review vocabulary
  - Practice for proficiency-The more you practice, the more prepared you will feel
  - Develop or use mnemonic phrases to help you remember techniques or specific problem-solving strategies.
  - Use graphic organizers or visual aids to help jog your memory
  - Get and stay organized. Find an organizational strategy that works for you to save time and keep materials in an order that makes sense.
  - Find a quiet place to study
  - Review with a study group
- Right before the test, review the material so it is fresh and the information is activated in your mind

## DURING A TEST

- Use Positive Self-Talk: Find a phrase that is easy to remember as well as motivates and inspires you to do your best. It can be as simple as, "I got this." The point is to think of something positive to remind yourself that you can do it. Ignore any self-doubts or negative thoughts about your abilities that may pop into your mind. Squash negative thoughts with positive thoughts.
- Get to a calm state of mind so you can focus and easily retrieve information you have learned. You can do this by practicing relaxation techniques, such as deep breathing, relaxing your muscles, imaging something positive, prayer, meditation, etc.
- Practice solid test-taking strategies
  - Read the directions
  - Read the question and pay attention to wording; Answer what is being asked.
  - Read the passages
  - Use mnemonic devices to help you remember techniques, formulas or specific problem-solving strategies
  - Be mindful of time and pace yourself
  - When possible, skip more difficult items that will take the most time so you can come back to them at the end
  - Before finishing, if time permits, retake the test to double-check and fix mistakes
  - Ask clarifying questions, when allowed

## YOU CAN DO IT!

## REFERENCES

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