

EDUCATION

Putting it to the Test

How best to prepare for tests and quizzes

One of the most dreaded aspects of school is taking quizzes and tests. Teachers and educators design assessments that allow students to demonstrate their testing abilities and retention of material learned in class.

There are numerous reasons why testing is treated with strong dislike. In the minds of some students, the forbidden four-lettered words "test" and "quiz" bring on feelings of anxiety. One way to avoid this unwanted experience is to be prepared.

Attending class on a regular basis is necessary. Teachers are valuable people who dedicate their time to educating students. Class time involves important discussions, explanations and more importantly, an opportunity to ask questions when confusion arises. Taking notes increases a student's ability to be prepared for future tests and quizzes. Being present in class is one aspect in getting prepared. Participating actively and appropriately is another.

Being an active participant requires students to complete assigned work. Assignments given in class and those that are to be finished at home are required for a reason. They allow students the chance to make sense of and fully comprehend learned material in a

contextual setting. It is an opportunity for practice and synthesis. Most teachers create tests and quizzes that are relevant to class assignments and homework. Demonstrating diligence in completing assigned work means less work is required when it comes time to prepare for tests and quizzes.

Knowing when assessments will occur is imperative. Students often say that adequate time to study is not provided. This is true when they wait until the night before to prepare. Teachers usually announce the dates of quizzes and tests within a reasonable time frame. It is valid to say that sometimes students are only given a day's notice or are completely surprised by an unannounced assessment. However, when there is advance notice, it is the students' responsibility to be proactive in their study habits.

Depending on how a student learns best, there are several



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ON THE CHALKBOARD

different methods of preparation. It is critical for all students to understand that not keeping up with their work or paying attention in class makes doing well on assessments more diffi-

cult.

Study guides are a great way to organize information. When teachers announce a test, students need to ask specific questions regarding what they really need to know about the topic. This allows students to be more effective in their preparation. They use this information to create a guide displaying explanations in a meaningful manner. Students sometimes ask why should they make a guide if the information is already in their notes and textbooks. The answer is that making a guide puts all the data in one place. Studying is easier when students are organized.

Flash cards are helpful for all subjects, especially learning spelling and vocabulary. Students write one part of the concept on one side with the answer on the other. These are

great for students who are on the go and like studying with other people. They are also easy to transport.

Listening to tested material on an auditory recording device is beneficial for those students who are auditory learners. When used in conjunction with a study guide or flash cards, students may find significant improvements in their scores.

Study groups, when used correctly, are another popular method for test preparation. Problems arise when socialization overtakes the objective of studying. It is necessary that students stay focused and on task.

Being prepared for tests and quizzes significantly increases a student's potential to achieve success by earning higher scores. It requires time and effort, but proves positive results.

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