

ACADEMIC SKILLS CENTER

STUDY SKILLS LIBRARY

Post-Test Analysis

Discussion

Sometimes you can get valuable study clues for upcoming tests by examining old tests you have already taken. This method works best if the instructor gives many examinations. Obviously, it would not work on the first test. This method is based on the premise that people tend to be consistent. Here's what you do:

- Gather all your notes, texts, and test answer sheets and visit your instructor during office hours. Ask to look over the test that was previously given in our class.
- As you look over the test, try and answer the following questions:
 - Where did this test come from? Did the test come mostly from lecture notes, the textbook, or the homework?
 - Did your instructor lecture hard on Chapter 4 and then test hard on Chapter 4? Does he like lots of little specifics, or does he just test on broad, general areas?
 - What kinds of questions were asked? Were there factual questions, application questions, definition questions? If factual, then know names, dates, places; if application, then study theory; if definitions, then be familiar with terms.

For example, one student discovered that her instructor made up exams by selecting only the major paragraphs in the chapter and then using the topic sentence of each paragraph as the exam question. It was then a simple matter to study for the forthcoming examinations. This knowledge came only after carefully examining the old test.

Tips to Combat Test Panic

1. Sleep. Get a good night's rest.
2. Diet. Eat breakfast or lunch. This may help calm your nervous stomach and give you energy. Avoid greasy or acidic foods, and avoid overeating. Avoid caffeine pills.
3. Exercise. Nothing reduces stress more than exercise. An hour or two before an exam stop studying and go workout. Swimming, jogging, cycling, aerobics.
4. Allow yourself enough time to get to the test without hurrying.
5. Don't swap questions at the door. Hearing anything you don't know may weaken your confidence and send you into a state of anxiety.
6. Leave your books at home. Flipping pages at the last minute may only upset you. If you must take something, take a brief outline that you know well.

7. Take a watch with you, as well as extra pencils, scantron sheets, and blue books.
8. Answer the easy questions first. This will relax you and help build your confidence, plus give you some assured points.
9. Sit apart from your classmates to reduce being distracted by their movements.
10. Don't panic if others are writing and you aren't. Your thinking may be more profitable than their writing.
11. Don't be upset if others finish their tests before you do. Use as much time as you are allowed. Students who leave early don't always get the highest grades.
12. If you still feel nervous during the test, try some emergency first aid: inhale deeply, close eyes, hold, than exhale slowly. Repeat as needed.

Bibliography

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