

Exam Taking Strategies

Objective: By the end of this lesson, learners will be able to :

- 1- identify techniques and strategies to perform effectively in different types of test and exam formats.
- 2- manage common distractions and test anxiety.

General Test-Taking Tips

- Read instructions carefully. Pay close attention to keywords and task requirements. Underline or highlight important phrases.
- Manage your time wisely. Allocate time for each section. Don't spend too long on one question.
- Start with what you know. Answer easier questions first, then return to harder ones.
- Prioritize high-value questions. Focus on questions that carry more marks.
- Write clearly and legibly. Poor handwriting can cost you points.
- Support your answers. Use facts, examples, or evidence when applicable.
- Trust yourself. Don't second-guess unless you're sure you've made a mistake or remembered something new.

Strategies for Different Question Types

1. Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs):

- Try answering the question before looking at the options.
- Eliminate obviously incorrect or extreme choices (e.g., "always," "never").
- Be cautious with "all of the above" – it's often correct if two other choices are.
- If two answers are opposites, one is likely correct.
- Longer answers can sometimes be more accurate – don't dismiss them.

2. Short Answer Questions:

- Be concise but complete – answer clearly using key points.
- Support your response with textual or factual evidence.
- Justify your answers: show how the evidence proves your point.

3. Essay Questions:

- Analyze the task carefully.
- Brainstorm ideas before writing.
- Plan your essay with an outline: intro, body, conclusion.
- Focus on structure, clarity, and supporting evidence.
- Leave time to proofread for grammar, spelling, and coherence.

4. Reading Comprehension:

- Read the questions first to know what to look for.
- Skim the text to grasp the main ideas and structure.
- Use context clues to understand unfamiliar words.
- Answers usually follow the order of the passage – track them down efficiently.
- Don't get stuck, move on and return later if needed.

Dealing with Test/Exam Anxiety

Anxiety is normal. Preparation is key, but here are some in-the-moment strategies:

- Arrive early to get settled and reduce stress.
- Sit confidently – posture affects mindset.
- Take deep breaths to calm your body and mind.
- Replace negative thoughts with positive self-talk (“I’ve got this”, “I prepared well”).

Handling Distractions During Exams

A. Common Distractions – How would you deal with the following?

1. **Noise in the exam hall:**
2. **Personal problems on your mind:**
3. **Exam feels too long, boring, or difficult:**

Task1: Answer the question.

Can you think of other distractions? What are they? How can you handle them?

Task 2: Reflection: Self-Evaluation Activity

Reflect on the techniques discussed:

- a. Which technique(s) have you already used?
- b. Which technique(s) did you find surprising or new?
- c. Which one(s) do you find difficult to apply?
- d. Which one(s) would you like to try in your next exam?

Task3:

In your own words, summarize what a student needs to do to succeed in tests and exams.

Prompt: “To succeed in tests and exams, a student needs to...”