

Lesson 03: Beating Test Anxiety

Lesson Objectives:

- Students will learn coping skills to manage test anxiety.
- Students will learn about time management for test preparation

You hear the word "test" and your pulse starts to race, palms start to sweat, and your mouth goes dry. This is a natural response for most people with test anxiety.

In this lesson, you will learn how to manage test anxiety and ace those tests.

Being Prepared

Being prepared is the number one item on the list for managing test anxiety. If you put in the time and are well prepared, you will eliminate a large part of your stress. You want to avoid last minute cramming and set up a reasonable study schedule.

Ask yourself:

- How much time is available to study for the test?
- What grade do I currently have in the class.
- What score do I need on this test to maintain a good grade.

To commit new information to memory you need to review the material at least 10 times. You need to keep this in mind when setting a schedule to prepare for a test.

Relieve Anxiety the Day of the Test

Eating a good breakfast/lunch is important the day of the test. This will give you the mental and physical energy to stay sharp throughout the exam.

It's hard to sit for 2 or 3 hours at a time. You need to be physically ready for the test. A good nights sleep is an important for staying mentally strong.

Do not walk in late to your assessment. This will increase your anxiety before you have even looked at the exam.

Don't beat yourself up during the test. It will not do you any good to wish you had studied more or prepared differently. This will not help you pass the test. [Positive self-talk](#) will help you keep calm and do your best.

Do not worry if other students finish the test before you do! Not everyone tests the same or is as prepared as you are :)

Tips for Staying Calm

If you feel yourself becoming anxious use some relaxation techniques to help you stay calm and focus.

- Close your eyes, take a few deep breaths, and count to ten.
- Make sure you are as comfortable as possible. If you feel more comfortable take off your shoes and sit with your back straight in your chair.
- Try progressive muscle relaxation. Tighten different muscle groups in your body and systematically relax each part of your body. As your body relaxes so will your mind.
- Think of a calming place where you go to relax. Visualizing a calm place will relax your mind and your body so you will be ready to test.

Breathing Exercises

One of the most effective ways to stay calm and focused is to do some deep breathing. Deep breathing can quickly take our bodies out of the stressful "fight of flight" mode and put us into a calm physical and mental state.

Deep abdominal breathing has many physical benefits:

- Allows the lungs to be used to their full capacity.
- Allows diaphragm muscle to "massage" the intestines and organs in the pelvic cavity (thus, enhancing digestion and elimination).
- Empties out all "toxins/waste products/CO2" from the lungs.
- Helps blood in the veins of the legs return to the heart (because of the pressure changes).
- Helps move the "waste" material in the lymphatic vessels toward the heart.

When deep breathing is done slowly, it:

- Helps slow the heart rate.
- Helps the muscles and body to relax.
- Helps increase mental alertness and the ability to focus.
- Helps to stimulate the PNS and de-activate the SNS response.
- Increases the oxygen in the body.
- Increases the quantity of toxins releases through the breath (aids in elimination of wastes).

So, deep breathing:

1. Enhances the body's immune system in functioning
2. Allows the uptake of nourishment
3. Allows the elimination of wastes
4. Can be used as a tool to relax.

Grading Rubric:

To get a 10: All answers are correct the first time, or within first revision. You can have no grammatical or structural errors, within the first revision. Answer in complete sentences; all lesson requirements have been met.

To get a 9: You can have 2 or fewer grammatical errors (spelling, punctuation, capitalization, wrong word, etc.) Answers are in complete sentences; all lesson requirements have been met.

To get an 8: You can have 1 inadequate answers. You can up to 3 grammatical errors. Answers are in complete sentences; all lesson requirements have been met.

To get a 7: You can have 2 inadequate answers. You can have 4 grammatical errors

To get a 6: You can have 3 inadequate answers and/or more than 4 grammatical errors.

To get a 5: Plagiarism - purposely or mistaken which will lower your final grade for the course (so be very careful when posting your work!); lack of effort or disrespect (we are here to communicate with you if you don't understand something); or 6 or more errors of any kind. Lesson requirements have not been met.

Also be aware that you will have a chance to revise your work. More than 2 revisions could result in a lower grade. So read the directions carefully and make sure you meet the requirements.

Assignment:

Do not submit text that you have copied from sources, including websites. All of your work should be in your own words. Using

copied text would be considered plagiarism. For more information, review our page on [Plagiarism and Citation](#)

1. What are the five steps to beating test anxiety? Describe each step in your own words.
2. Add one more personal step that you might use to prepare for a test.
3. What are the three questions you should ask yourself when preparing for a test?
4. Describe three calming techniques you use to stay calm in a stressful situation.

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