

Combating Test Anxiety

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General Advice

- SLEEP

- Get a good night's rest

- 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.

- EXERCISE

- Nothing reduces stress more than exercise. An hour or two before an exam, stop studying and start working out: swimming, jogging, running, aerobics, basketball, etc – any continuous exercise for 20 min or more is very helpful.

Before the Examination

- Allow yourself enough time to get to the test without hurrying
- Don't swap questions with others at the door. Hearing anything you don't know may weaken your confidence and send you into a state of anxiety
- 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.

During the Examination

- Take a watch with you, as well as extra pencils, calculator, water, and a light snack (granola bar, trail mix) if permitted.
- Answer the easy questions first. This will relax you and help build your confidence, plus give you some assured points.
- Sit apart from your classmates to reduce being distracted by their movements.
- Don't panic if others are writing and you aren't. Your thinking may be more profitable than their writing.

During the Exam (cont'd)

- 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.
- If you still feel nervous during the test, try this:
 - Inhale deeply
 - Close your eyes
 - Hold
 - Then exhale slowly
- Repeat as needed