

A. Prepare yourself

- Get a good night's rest.
- Eat breakfast the day of the test, but don't eat too big a meal.
- Get to school early.
- Don't drink a lot of fluids just before the test.

B. Take the test

- Concentrate.
- Don't talk.
- Listen carefully.
- Read written instructions carefully before answering questions because instructions can change for different sections.
- Ask questions if you don't understand what you are to do.
- If you don't know an answer, stay calm. Many standardized tests are designed so that very few students know all the answers. Make an educated guess and come back to the question later.
- Pace yourself. Make a note of what the time will be when you'll have five minutes left so you can skim through and answer the rest of the questions as quickly as possible.
- Read each question or problem all the way through and then carefully read all the answer choices before responding.
- Don't puzzle more than a few seconds over any multiple-choice question or problem. On your second pass through the test, change your strategy. Read everything and try to eliminate any of the answer choices.
- Make sure the number of the question in the test booklet matches the number on the answer sheet.

C. Keep a positive attitude; change negative self-talk to positive self-talk

- If you're thinking, "I'll never get finished," change it to, "I can do it one step at a time."
- If you're thinking, "If I miss this, I've really blown it," change it to, "Some anxiety is inevitable, but I don't have to worry about it."

- If you're thinking, "Why am I so anxious? I hate feeling like this. I know I'm doing a lousy job," change it to, "I really do have confidence in my basic ability. I can show what I know."
- If you're thinking, "I'm behind, I've got to hurry," change it to, "Don't anticipate problems, just keep going."
- If you're thinking, "People will think I'm dumb if they finish before I do," change it to, "Good students take all the test time available to make sure their answers are right."
- If you're thinking, "Help, I don't know the answer and I don't have time to figure it out," change it to, "I'll skip this one and come back to it later."
- If you're thinking, "I hate myself, why try?," change it to, "I can do my best and that's all that's required."