LEARNING TECHNIQUES

LESSON 9-7 ▲ TEST ATTACK SKILLS

**LEARNING GOALS/OUTCOMES**

* Demonstrate how to evaluate a test in order to discern time requirements and order of response.
* Outline how to use classroom notes to prepare for a test.
* Outline how to use textbooks and assigned reading to prepare for a test.

**MATERIALS NEEDED**

* **Student Handouts:**
* Sample Test
* Evaluating a Test
* Test Prep Guide – Classroom Notes
* Test Prep Guide – Notes from Assigned Reading

**CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES**

1. **Students debate the value of tests.** Divide the classroom in half. One side is for the position, “Tests have no value” and the other side is for the opposite position, “Tests can be a valuable way to learn.” Ask students to vote with their feet by moving to the side of the room that represents their opinion. Compare how many students have chosen each position and write the totals on the board. Ask for one or two volunteers from each side to debate their positions. Why do some students feel that tests have no value? Why do some students feel that tests can help them learn? Write their points on the board.
2. **Students vote on the value of tests.** Ask students to return to their seats. Have them put their heads down on their desks, cradled in one arm with eyes closed so that they cannot see. While they are unable to see each other, ask them to raise their hands in response to the two points, “Tests have no value” or “Tests can be a valuable way to learn.” Tell them they can change their opinion based on your debate. Count votes and write the new totals on the board. Have students open their eyes and compare the totals. Discuss whether your debate changed anyone’s opinion, and quickly wrap up by discussing why tests could, in fact, be a valuable way to learn.
3. **Students evaluate a sample test.** Distribute the *Sample Test Handout.* Tell students that this is a general test of knowledge and that, if they were taking it, they would be given 50 minutes to complete it. Ask students to work in pairs to look through the test and decide what they would do if they were given this test. They are NOT to try to answer the questions. Instead, they should write down on a blank piece of paper: (1) what they should do first; (2) what section of the test they would complete first and why; and (3) about how much time (out of the 50 minute total) they would give to each section and why. Give the student pairs about 10 minutes to develop their “plan” for the test.
4. **Students review strategies for how to evaluate a test to establish time requirements and order of response.** After the student pairs have had time to evaluate the *Sample Test*, ask for volunteers to share the answers to the three points they were asked to consider. Write their answers on the board and discuss why students made the choices they did. Encourage students to understand that it is crucial to have a strategy (an attack plan) when they are given a test. They should not just start writing answers. Instead, when they are given a test, they should read the instructions, determine how much time they should allot to each section, and decide which sections to answer first.

After your discussion, project or distribute *Evaluating a Test Handout.* Review the strategies with students. How did their ideas compare with the suggestions on the handout? Discuss the handout’s suggestions and then ask each student to write a few more ideas on their handout based on their work evaluating the *Sample Test* or on your classroom discussion.

1. **Students** **outline how to use classroom notes to prepare for a test.** Explain to students that having a good “attack plan” for taking a test is very important. But good preparation for the test is just as important.

With students still in their pairs, pose this question: “When you are taking notes in class, how can you tell what is important and might be on a test?” Have the pairs brainstorm and write down a list of ideas. Then call students together and ask for volunteers to share their top ideas. Write the ideas on the board, noting common themes. Project the *Test Prep Guide – Classroom Notes Handout* or distribute it. Review the suggestions with students. How did their ideas compare with the suggestions on the handout? Discuss the handout’s suggestions and then ask each student to write a few more ideas on their handout based on their pair’s work or on your classroom discussion.

1. **Students outline how to use textbooks and assigned reading to prepare for a test.** Ask students to turn back to their pairs and brainstorm ideas to this question: “When you are doing assigned reading for class, how can you tell what is important and might be on a test?” Have the pairs brainstorm and write down a list of ideas. Call students together and ask for volunteers to share their top ideas. Write the ideas on the board, noting common themes. Distribute the *Test Prep Guide – Notes from Assigned Reading Handout* to students. Review the suggestions. How did student ideas compare with the suggestions on the handout? Discuss the handout’s suggestions and then ask each student to write a few more ideas on their handout based on their group’s work or on your classroom discussion.

**STUDENT PRODUCTS**

* **Completed *Sample Test***
* **Test-taking tips** as identified at the bottom of their *Evaluating a Test Handout*
* **Studying tips** as identified at the bottom of their *Test Prep Guide Handouts*

LEARNING TECHNIQUES

LESSON 9-7 STUDENT HANDOUT

SAMPLE TEST

Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ School \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Print your name and the name of your school on the lines above. You have 50 minutes to complete this test. Tests without a student name or school name will not be graded.

**PART I – TRUE/FALSE**

Underline the word TRUE or FALSE to show your response. Wrong questions will be subtracted from the correct ones. Each question is worth one mark.

1. Facebook has never made a profit. TRUE FALSE
2. Elephants are the only animal that cannot jump. TRUE FALSE
3. In Hyder, Alaska, it is illegal to melt snow intentionally. TRUE FALSE
4. Dalmatian dogs are born without spots. TRUE FALSE
5. Google is the common name for a number with a million zeros. TRUE FALSE

**PART II – SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS**

The value of each question is listed at the end of each question. Write clearly. Illegible answers will be marked as incorrect.

1. If a statue in the park of a horse and rider shows the horse with both \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

front legs in the air, what does it mean? **(1)**

1. Name five parts of the human head that are spelled with three \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

letters. **(5)** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Name four Pixar movies that are not a version of *Toy Story*. **(4)** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. What is the largest amount of coins a person can have without \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

being able to make change for a dollar? **(1)**

1. What is unique about the vowels in the word ‘facetious’? **(2)** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. Name the two Snow White dwarves whose name does NOT \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

end in the letter ‘Y’. **(2)** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**PART III – MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS**

Circle the letter of the correct answer. Each question is worth two marks.

1. Which of the following is NOT a field event in the Olympic decathlon?

**(a)** Long Jump **(d)** Triple Jump

**(b)** Javelin **(e)** Discus

**(c)** Pole Vault

1. Which of the following characters has been played by Michael Keaton, Val Kilmer, George Clooney, and Christian Bale?

**(a)** John Kennedy **(d)** Shrek

**(b)** Buzz Lightyear **(e)** Batman

**(c)** Tarzan

1. Which of the following sports has 15 players on the field on each team?

**(a)** Rugby **(d)** Field Lacrosse

**(b)** Football **(e)** Soccer

**(c)** Field Hockey

1. Which of the following is NOT a real name of a country song?

**(a)** *How Can I Miss You When You Won’t Go Away?*

**(b)** *I’m So Miserable Without You, It’s Like Having You Here*

**(c)** *If the Phone Doesn’t Ring, It’s Me*

**(d)** *I Lost My Honey Bunny on a Bad Hare Day*

**(e)** *My Wife Ran Off With My Best Friend (and I Sure Do Miss Him)*

1. What color are Donald Duck’s pants?

**(a)** White **(d)** Red

**(b)** Blue **(e)** Donald Duck Doesn’t Wear Pants

**PART IV – ESSAY QUESTIONS**

The value of each question is listed at the end of the question. Write clearly. Illegible answers will be marked as incorrect.

1. Identify five ‘Bucket List’ things you’d like to do in your life and briefly explain why you are interested in each one. Use the back of this page or a blank page. (5)
2. In the 1989 movie, Say Anything, John Cusack’s character Lloyd Dobler says, *“I am looking for a ‘dare to be great’ situation.”* Using the back of this page or a blank page to outline how you plan to make your life a ‘dare to be great’ situation. Identify your Plan A and Plan B career goals, the educational path you intend to follow for each, and the high school courses and activities you plan to be involved in to get you the qualifications you need to create a meaningful life for yourself. (15)

LEARNING TECHNIQUES

LESSON 9-7 STUDENT HANDOUT

EVALUATING A TEST

You’ll take a lot of tests during high school. What should you do when you start a test to make sure you do your best? Here are four strategies that can help you focus and do better on tests at school.

**STRATEGY 1: READ THE INSTRUCTIONS**

This sounds obvious, but when you’re stressed or in a hurry it’s easy to forget. Before you start each section of a test, read all the instructions. Make sure you write your name and any other required information in the appropriate place. Find out how much time you have. Make sure you know where you’re supposed to mark your answers. Find out what type of answers are required (for instance, fill in the bubble, short answer, or essay). And learn where you can take notes. Remember: even if you get the answer right, you won’t get credit unless you answer in the right way.

**STRATEGY 2: FIND THE POINTS**

When you start a test look through it quickly and see if you can determine how points will be awarded. Then focus your time and energy on the sections of the test that award the most points. If you have a choice between writing an essay that is worth 50 points or answering 10 multiple choice questions that are worth 1 point each, focus more attention on the essay – it will count more toward your grade.

**STRATEGY 3: ANSWER EASY QUESTIONS FIRST**

As you work through each section of a test, answer every question that you can. But if you don’t know the answer to a question, don’t spend time on it: move on to the next one. You can come back to the questions you skipped later, but it is important that you answer as many questions correctly as possible. **IMPORTANT TIP:** If you skip a question on a multiple choice test, make sure you also skip that line on your answer sheet.

**STRATEGY 4: PACE YOURSELF**

Most tests have a time limit. Before you begin a test make sure you know how much time you will have, and check your watch or the clock in the classroom to see when you will need to stop. Then quickly check to see how many questions you must answer in that time. Set yourself a rough time estimate for each question (for instance, 2 minutes per question or 10 minutes for each essay). Then try to keep pace. You want to make sure you have the chance to finish the test and check your work.

Can you think of any other test-taking tips? Write them here:

LEARNING TECHNIQUES

LESSON 9-7 STUDENT HANDOUT

TEST PREP GUIDE – CLASSROOM NOTES

When you study for a test you can make your job easier by relying on the clues that are in your notes and your textbooks or assigned reading. Here are a few tips on using your notes and readings effectively to prepare for a test. Add your own tips, then use this guide to help you organize your test prep.

**STUDYING FROM CLASSROOM NOTES**

Information from your notes is likely to be on the test if:

* Your teacher has repeated it.
* Your teacher has written it on the board or screen.
* Your teacher has included it in a handout or homework assignment.
* It’s also in your textbook.

Write your own tips for using your notes effectively to prepare for a test:

LEARNING TECHNIQUES

LESSON 9-7 STUDENT HANDOUT

TEST PREP GUIDE – NOTES FROM ASSIGNED READING

**STUDYING FROM TEXTBOOKS AND ASSIGNED READING**

Information from your textbook or assigned reading is likely to be on the test if:

* It is highlighted in some way (it’s in bold or italic type, for instance).
* It is included in the textbook’s review questions.
* Your teacher has written it on the board or screen.
* Your teacher has included it in a handout or homework assignment.

Write your own tips for using assigned reading effectively to prepare for a test: