

Test Taking Tips

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TEST TAKING REVIEW AND TEST TAKING TIPS

*THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTE
FOR DAILY PREPARATION*



An Appropriate Mind Set

- *The suggestions below will indicate how to review for examinations and apply general test taking strategies to objective and essay tests.*
- *As with any set of rules, they must be practiced often to produce success .*



TEST REVIEW TECHNIQUES

- *1. Do not confuse reviewing with the much practiced educational crime of cramming. The results of cramming are usually what the victim expects, failure.*
- *2. Predict test questions using your lecture and textbook notes. Questions should play a major part in any review. Be sure to include technical words in your questions. If your teacher has given you review questions, use them with diligence.*

- *3. Know the exact meaning of key test taking words used during the term by your instructor ,e.g., explain, evaluate, justify, state, relate, illustrate, interpret, define, diagram, describe, compare, contrast, etc. Your teacher expects you to do a particular thing when a question is given.*
- *4. Review the way you are to be tested. Ask your instructor what type of examination will be given. If you are to be tested for information, review for information; if for skill, review for skill; if for ability to think, review by solving sample problems. If your examination is to be the essay type, write out the answer to two or three essay questions on topics your instructor has stressed. If the examination is to be a true-false type, review by learning facts. If it is to be the completion type, practice picking out the exact meaning and significance of the facts.*

- *5. Review to establish order and continuity between parts of the subject. When new information is learned relate it to the parts of the subject which you already know. This will tend to consolidate your learning.*
- *6. Review for main points rather than for details. Details should be mastered during daily study or repeated daily study. If they were not, it is almost impossible to cover them in review.*

- *7. Review by condensing what you know. The ability to put much thought into a few words is the ability which will probably prove your best time-saver in college and in life. Your grade on an examination is often determined largely by the number of ideas you can express in a given time or a given amount of space.*
- *8. Review using a group/team approach in order to save time. Form a review group with three or four fellow students. Divide the term's work into equal parts, condense your daily notes into summary sheets. When each person has finished their part, study as a group.*

- *9. Use the chapter questions and exercises for review. Don't overlook the importance of review questions, chapter test and instructor suggested questions.*
- *10. Review previous exams given during the current term.*

- *11. Review exams or tests from previous terms.*

A RECOMMENDED APPROACH TO EXAMINATIONS

- *GENERAL TEST-TAKING STRATEGIES and/or TIME-USING STRATEGIES*



- *1. Survey the test.*
- *2. Set up a time schedule for progress through the test.*

GENERAL TEST-TAKING STRATEGIES and/or TIME-USING STRATEGIES

- *3. Answer the easier questions first.*
- *4. Omit or guess at items which resist a quick response.*
- *5. Mark omitted items, or items which could use further consideration to assure easy relocation.*

ERROR-AVOIDANCE STRATEGIES



- *1. Pay careful attention to directions and key words, determine clearly what the question is asking you to do.*
- *2. Ambiguous questions, statements which can be taken in more than one way, should be brought to the attention of the instructor.*
- *3. Ask the examiner for clarification when necessary, if it is permitted.*

ERROR-AVOIDANCE STRATEGIES



- *4. Never turn in an examination paper without checking it thoroughly; check for spelling, punctuation and neatness, and, also, reread answers to be sure they say exactly what you mean. **Be very careful about changing answers; if you are in doubt, rely on your first answer.***
- *5. Remember to select the correct alternative, identify the alternative choice and item number. Transfer this information from the test booklet (if necessary) to the answer sheet.*

GUESSING STRATEGIES

- *GUESSING STRATEGIES*
- *1. Always guess if right answers only are scored.*
- *2. Never guess if the correction for guessing results in a score less than zero if your response is incorrect. For example, you missed a true/false question and the correction for guessing is 1.5. This would result in a score of -.5 for the item. In this case don't guess.*
- *3. Always guess in multiple choice if you can change the odds of being correct by eliminating incorrect alternatives. This rule should be used with reasoning especially if guessing is severely penalized.*



GUESSING STRATEGIES

- *4. Don't make wild guesses. Many times you can get the answer by a process of reasoning and elimination. Try recalling a forgotten fact by some relationship. Think of the book in which you read it, the page, an illustration, etc. If you cannot recall it drop it and come back to it later, if there is time.*

PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL READINESS

- *1. Develop a good attitude toward the exam. To do well on an exam, you must think positively. Put everything else out of your mind and think only of doing your best on the test.*
- *2. Don't panic. Feel confident, this comes from preparing yourself for the test.*
- *3. Get plenty of sleep the night before the test. Cramming at the last minute is an ineffective approach to taking a test.*



PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL READINESS

- *4. Have a good meal before leaving the house. You will need a good protein breakfast to keep you alert during the test.*
- *5. Be on time. Get up early enough so that there will be no need to rush.*
- *6. Go into a test situation alert but calm.*

PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL READINESS

- *7. Try to develop a positive attitude about your ability to perform well on a test.*
- *8. Control anxiety during the test by deep breathing, visualization, and body relaxation techniques.*

MISCELLANEOUS TIPS

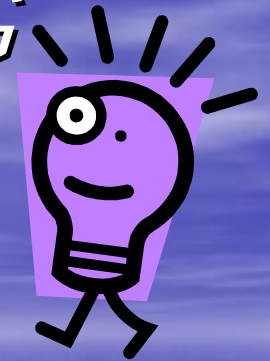


- *1. Concentrate upon one question at a time. Don't try to think ahead while still working on a question.*
- *2. Concentrate your attention on test relevant matters while directing attention away from self-evaluation.*
- *3. Examine carefully all possible responses before attempting to choose the correct answer.*

MISCELLANEOUS TIPS

- *4. Use relevant content information in other test items and options.*
- *5. Do not expect to find a pattern in the positions of the correct choice.*

SUGGESTIONS FOR TAKING OBJECTIVE TESTS



- *1. Read all directions carefully. Reread anything which is unclear. An objective test measures not only knowledge but also carefulness in reading. Underline all significant words in the directions.*
- *2. Absolutes like all, never, only, and none usually indicate a false statement.*
- *3. Qualifying adjectives, indicating possibility e.g., sometimes, may, generally, and perhaps usually indicate a true statement.*

SUGGESTIONS FOR TAKING OBJECTIVE TESTS



- *4. Partly true and partly false statement are false.*
- *5. In matching questions, mark out items as you use them, unless directions say that items may be used more than once.*
- *6. In completion questions put down the best answer even when it does not fit the number of dashes. Use a substitute word in preference to leaving it blank. Do not feel afraid of sounding silly.*

SUGGESTIONS FOR TAKING OBJECTIVE TESTS

- *7. In multiple-choice questions, eliminate obviously wrong choices first, then carefully consider the remaining ones. If the directions for multiple-choice questions say "best" answer, put in only one answer. If the directions say "more" than one answer can be correct, treat each choice as a true-false question.*

GENERAL STATEMENT ABOUT MULTIPLE CHOICE ALTERNATIVES

- *1. If you are blindly guessing, the answer is most likely the third choice if there are five alternatives and the second or third choice if there are four alternatives.*
- *2. An alternative answer which is much longer or shorter than the others tends to be the correct answer.*
- *3. When the stem and the alternative do not make grammatical sense when read as a complete sentence that choice is wrong.*
- *4. Alternatives which include the words "all", "always", "none", or "never" tend to be wrong. The corollary of this rule is: Alternatives which include the words "most", or "some" tend to be correct.*



GENERAL STATEMENT ABOUT MULTIPLE CHOICE ALTERNATIVES

- *5. Look for clues in other questions.*
- *6. If among several alternatives, two are exactly the same except for one word. One of them is usually the correct answer.*
- *7. None of the above is usually the wrong answer.*
- *8. If you are sure that two alternative answers are correct and another alternative is "All of the Above" that is usually the answer.*

SUGGESTED TEST PREPARATION STRATEGIES FOR ESSAY EXAMS

- *Adapted from Test-Taking Skills: Effective Study Techniques; The Skills Group of the Center for Humanities, Inc., White Plains, N.Y*
- *Students discover that they can prepare for essay questions by going through their notes and studying the points that the teacher emphasized. From this material, students can predict possible questions and try to answer them.*
- *If your notes list a group of people or things, the kind of essay question to predict is a short answer question. These questions usually contain words such as: list, name, define, identify.*



SUGGESTED TEST PREPARATION STRATEGIES FOR ESSAY EXAMS

- *If your notes describe the steps in a process, or the history and development of something, the type of essay question to predict is a trace question. Some key words and phrases found in trace questions are: "Describe the steps in...", "Outline the history of...", "Trace the development of..."*
- *If your notes compare and contrast two things, the type of essay questions to predict is a compare and contrast question. Such questions usually contain these words: "Compare and contrast ..."; "Show the similarities and differences between ..."; "Tell how two things are alike and different".*
- *If your notes describe the effect of one thing on another, or the significance of a particular event, the type of question to predict is a discuss question. These questions usually begin with the following words: "Discuss the significance of..."; "Discuss the role of..."; "Discuss the effect of..."*

IMPORTANT WORDS IN ESSAY QUESTIONS



- *The following terms appear frequently in the phrasing of essay questions. You should know their meaning and answer accordingly. (Adapted from C. Bird and D. M. Bird, Learning More by Effective Study, Appleton-Century-Crofts, New York, 1945, pp 195-198)*
- **Compare** *Look for qualities or characteristics that resemble each other. Emphasize similarities among them. But in some cases also mention differences.*
- **Contrast** *Stress the dissimilarities, differences, or unlikeness of things, qualities, events, or problems.*
- **Criticize** *Express your judgment about the merit or truth of the factors or views mentioned. Give the results of your analysis of these factors, discussing their limitations and good points.*

IMPORTANT WORDS IN ESSAY QUESTIONS

- ***Define** Give concise, clear, and authoritative meanings. Don't give details, but make sure to give the limits of the definition. Show how the thing you are defining differs from things in other classes.*
- ***Diagram** Give a drawing, chart, plan, or graphic answer. Usually you should label a diagram. In some cases add, add a brief explanation or description.*
- ***Discuss** Examine, analyze carefully, and give reasons pro and con. Be complete, and give details.*

IMPORTANT WORDS IN ESSAY QUESTIONS

- **Describe** Recount, characterize, sketch, or relate in sequence or story form.
- **Enumerate** Write in list or outline form, giving points concisely one by one.
- **Evaluate** Carefully appraise the problem, citing both advantages and limitations. Emphasize the appraisal of authorities and, to a lesser degree, your personal evaluation.
- **Explain** Clarify, interpret, and spell out the material you present. Give reasons for differences of opinion or of results, and try to analyze causes.

IMPORTANT WORDS IN ESSAY QUESTIONS

- *Illustrate* Use a figure, picture, diagram, or concrete example to explain or clarify a problem.
- *Interpret* Translate, give examples of, solve, or comment on, a subject, usually giving your judgment about it.
- *Justify* Prove or give reasons for decisions or conclusions, taking pains to be convincing.
- *List* As in "enumerate", write an itemized series of concise statements.

IMPORTANT WORDS IN ESSAY QUESTIONS

- ***Outline Organize** a description under main points and subordinate points, omitting minor details and stressing the arrangement or classification of things.*
- ***Prove** Establish that something is true by citing factual evidence or giving clear logical reasons.*
- ***Relate** Show how things are related to, or connected with, each other, or how one causes another, correlates with another, or is like another.*
- ***Review** Examine a subject critically, analyzing and commenting on the important statements to be made about it.*

IMPORTANT WORDS IN ESSAY QUESTIONS

- ***State** Present the main points in brief, clear sequence, usually omitting details, illustrations, or examples.*
- ***Summarize** Give the main points or facts in condensed form, like the summary of a chapter, omitting details and illustrations.*
- ***Trace** In narrative form describe progress, development, or historical events from some point of origin*

SUGGESTIONS FOR WRITING ESSAY EXAMINATIONS



- *1. Read all questions through first unless there is a large number of questions each requiring a short answer. Spend five minutes or more making a very sketchy outline of the answers, jotting down key words and phrases. Do this especially for questions to which answers are on the tip of your tongue. Organize yours answers in advance of writing them if you expect the reader to understand you. Read the questions through once in order to:*
- *A) Identify the easiest questions first;*

SUGGESTIONS FOR WRITING ESSAY EXAMINATIONS

- *B) Choose the questions which you desire to answer if there are any options;*
- *C) Allow you more time for any "blocked" information to appear. You have probably had experience trying to recall a person's name, and although you knew it well, finding yourself utterly unable to do so, only to have it suggest itself at some later time;*
- *D) Identify weighted questions which count for more points;*

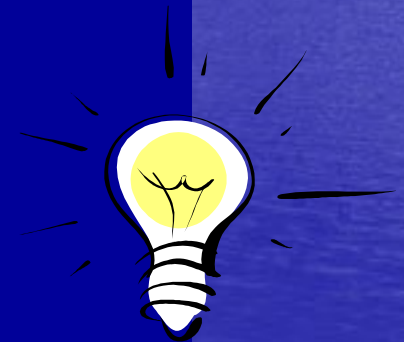
SUGGESTIONS FOR WRITING ESSAY EXAMINATIONS

- *E) Identify the key words used as well as the similarity in the*
- *various questions. To avoid writing overlapping answers.*
- *2. Make up your mind quickly on optional questions. Don't waste time worrying about your decision.*
- *3. Answer the questions you know first. Leave plenty of space for answers to omitted questions. After each answer leave four or five lines for additional thoughts.*

SUGGESTIONS FOR WRITING ESSAY EXAMINATIONS

- *4. Be sure you know exactly what is wanted before you begin to write.*
- *5. Think more and write less. Teachers are usually impressed by brevity, conciseness, and accuracy.*

When preparing for an exam, consider developing a test preparation worksheet like the model on the next slide.



Developing such a sheet will help you identify a meaningful goal setting plan.

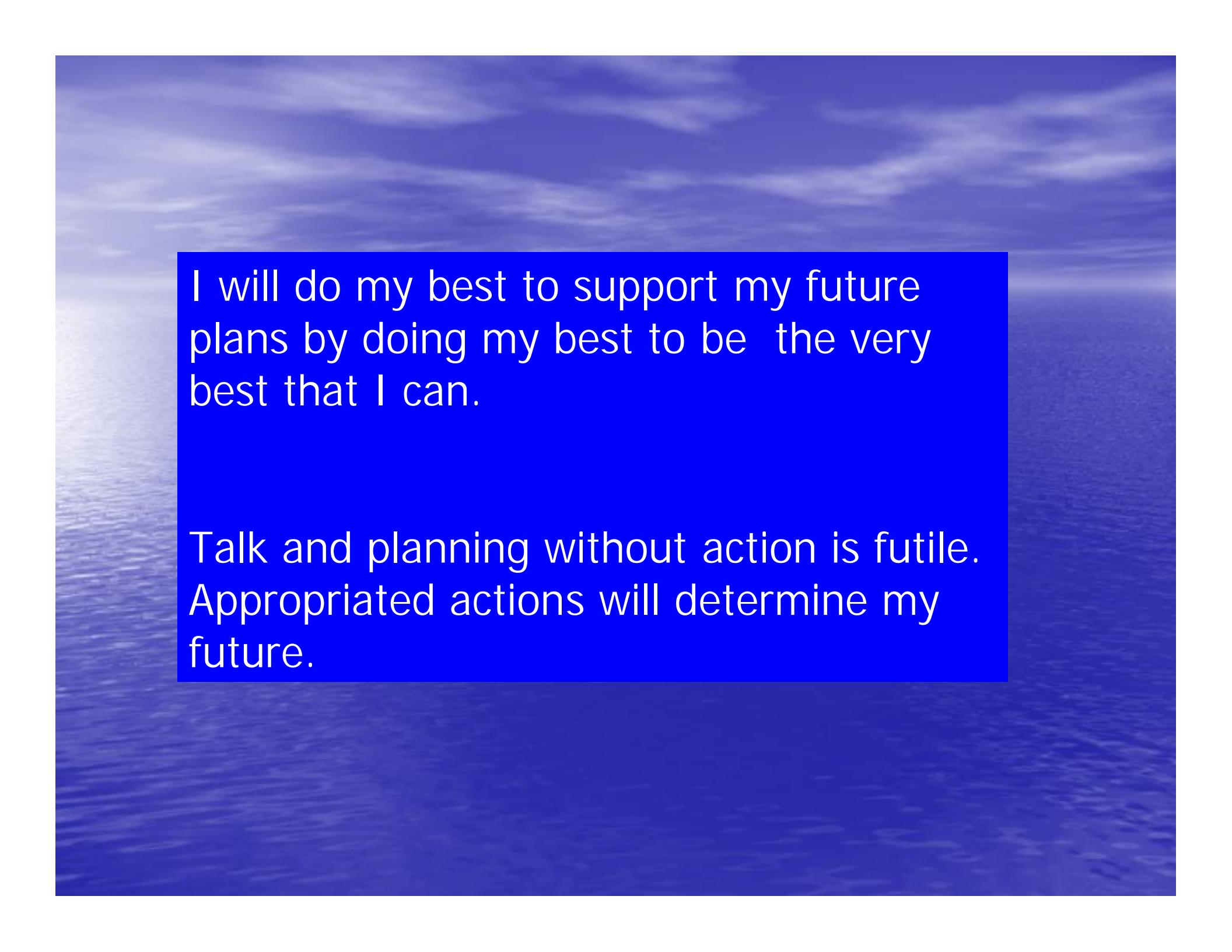
TEST PREPARATION WORKSHEET FORMAT

-
- *Test Date:* _____
- *Test Time:* _____
- *Location*
: _____
- *Topic (s) Covered*
- *Chapter/Materials Used*

Task/Need	Deadline	Reward	Y/N

TEST PREPARATION WORKSHEET Example

-
- Test Date: December 3
- Test Time: 12.00 P.M.
- Location : Peck Hall 1215
- Topic (s) Covered Chapter/Materials Used
- 1.2.3.4.5.6.7.8.9.10.1.2.3.4.5.6.7.8.9.10.
- Task Deadline Reward (Y/N) Need
- **1. I will review previous test (s) covering the topic (s). I will complete this task by the end of the 13th week of the semester and treat my self to a movie.**
- **2. I will review terms used in chapter (s)/ section (s) weekly and reward myself with a time for friends, church and family.**
- **3. I will review notes and predict possible test questions using my notes at least two weeks prior to the final exam. My girlfriend will treat me to a movie and dinner.**
- **4. I will answer questions I develop, work problems or do chapter questions daily. I will treat myself to two hours of gym time each day.**
- **5. I will use tutoring or the instructor to clarify the following points when ever I am unclear. My reward will be peace of mind and improved confidence.**
- **6. I will develop a schedule for test preparation for the final exams at least one month prior to finals. I will feel in control and feel more confident going into the finals.**



I will do my best to support my future plans by doing my best to be the very best that I can.

Talk and planning without action is futile. Appropriated actions will determine my future.