

Test-Taking Tips for Elementary Students

Tests are important because they help the teacher evaluate a student's needs and progress, the student gauge his or her own level of mastery, and the parent monitor his or her child's progress.

Tips to give your child about taking tests:

- Relax. Just do the best you can.
- Your first choice is usually correct. Don't change an answer unless you have a good reason to do so.
- Be aware of key words such as "all," "now," "always," "never," "only," "exactly."
- In multiple-choice questions, don't skip the longest answer. It should be considered, since test writers want to be sure the correct answer is accurate—they may add lots of details to insure accuracy.
- Watch for negative words like "not," "no," "never."
- Look for information in some of the questions. This information may help you answer other questions.

You can assist your child prepare for testing by doing the following:

- Make sure your child gets a good night's sleep before a test, and make sure your child eats properly the day of a test.
- Maintain a pleasant home environment and avoid unnecessary conflicts. Try to make the morning of the test a pleasant one. Do not add to your child's stress.
- Make sure your child has taken any needed medication.
- Ensure that your child is present during testing (children generally perform better when taking tests in their groups rather than at a make-up time).
- Get your child to school on time the day of the test.
- Wish your child good luck each morning of the test. Tell your child that he/she is special and that you believe in him/her!
- Remind your child the test is important. Encourage him/her to do his/her best.
- If your child is too ill to attend, please call the school office.
- If the test is on a subject for which you can review (such as a spelling test), help your child go over the material.
- Remind your child to listen carefully to the instructions from the teacher and to read the directions and each question carefully.
- Explain to your child the importance of using time wisely. If your child gets stuck on a question, encourage him or her to make the best guess and move on.
- Tell your child to attempt to answer all of the questions and not to leave any blank.
- Encourage your child to stay focused on the test, even if other students finish early.
- If your child is disappointed after taking a test, reassure him or her that there will be plenty of opportunities to improve and succeed.