

HOW TO SUCCEED FRESHMAN YEAR



THE OBJECTIVE

To provide tips to assist you in

* developing strong study habits

* avoiding “test anxiety,”

* becoming a successful student at SVHS





GOALS

- Setting goals is an important step in becoming a better student
- Stay organized
 - So you know what you want/need to do and how to do it



GOALS

- Two types of goals
 - Short term
 - Long term
- Use your student agenda to record assignments, due dates, etc..



GOALS

- Think about two goals you would like to accomplish while in high school
 - Take several minutes to write them down
 - Refer back to them at the end of the first nine weeks to reassess your goals

STUDY SKILLS

Studying, test-taking, reading, and writing papers are not natural abilities



NOTE TAKING

The ability to take good notes will help you...

- Earn better grades
- Understand the lesson
- Prepare for tests
- Prepare for college



NOTE TAKING

- Good note taking is as important as reading or organization
 - Many students take notes, but few take good notes
 - How do you take good notes?





NOTE TAKING TIPS

Don't overdo it. Don't go crazy taking notes, though: You'll be frantic if you try to write down every word that's said in class. And if you focus too much on getting your notes right, you might miss important points. Some people actually learn better by listening, writing down a few key points, and then going over the material after class when they have more time.

Ask. Don't be afraid to ask the teacher to repeat something you miss. If the teacher's going too fast, chances are your classmates will also be relieved to hear the information again. If you don't want to ask in class, see your teacher afterwards. It's much easier than wondering if you got the notes right as you study.



NOTE TAKING

***Compare.** Keep your notes handy when you're doing your reading assignments. Compare what you wrote with what the readings say – you may even want to add to your notes as you read. Going over your notes with a friend and comparing what the two of you put down can help reinforce what you're learning. And going over your notes will alert you and your friend to any errors.*

***Copy.** Depending on how neat your handwriting is, you may want to recopy your notes when you get home. If you've taken notes in a hurry, you're more likely to figure out an unreadable word or sentence on the day of the lesson than you are weeks later when you look back over your notes in preparation for a test.*

NOTE TAKING



***Organize.** Keep notes for each subject in one place so you can find everything easily when it comes time for a test. That may mean keeping a notebook or section of a notebook for each subject as you take notes in class.*

Good note-taking requires extra time and organization. It may help if you think of the time you spend reviewing notes as an investment. For example, if you decide to recopy your notes each evening, you'll probably have less time to watch TV or messaging friends. But you'll save time later when it comes to studying for the actual test.

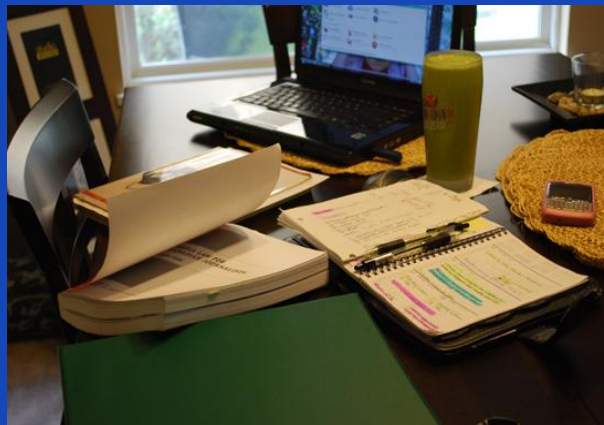
NOTE TAKING HIGHLIGHTS



- Be prepared
- Listen closely
- Ask questions
 - Don't try and record everything
 - Take notes in your own words, use abbreviations, and other shortcuts
- Learn how your teacher indicates what's important
- Rewrite notes at home
- Add notes when reading textbook

STUDYING

- Review your notes regularly, write to reinforce
- Plan study breaks
- Study with a strategy
 - Difficult to easy, key terms, main themes, dates, broad ideas to specifics to find out what works for you
- Avoid cramming
- Avoid studying with TV, I-pod, radio, etc...



READING



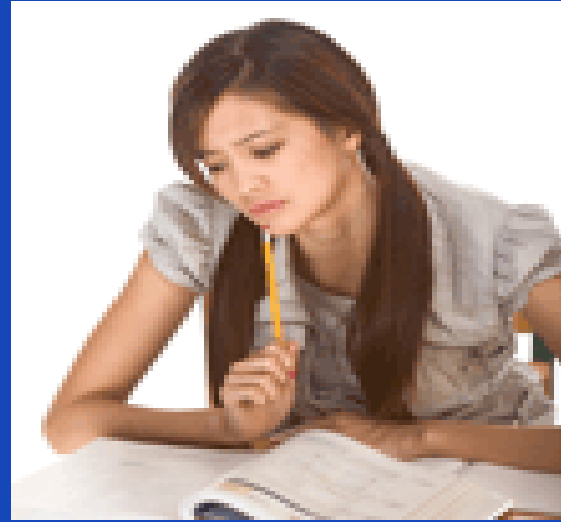
- Reading is key to success in any class
- Preview material before reading
- Keep homework questions on hand
- Read for fun!

WRITING

- Writing, like reading, is a skill no one can do without
- Being a good reader is the first step to becoming a good writer
- Practice writing by keeping a journal or diary



SCENARIO:



Laurie sat down for her English test, but her sweaty palms and pounding headache distracted her from writing an organized essay.

Sound familiar?

It's normal to be a little anxious before an exam. Getting too nervous, though, can get in the way of doing your best.

TEST TAKING



What is test anxiety?

Being so afraid or worried about a test that performance suffers...

Stomach upset

Headaches

Sweaty palms

Memory lapses

Mental blocks

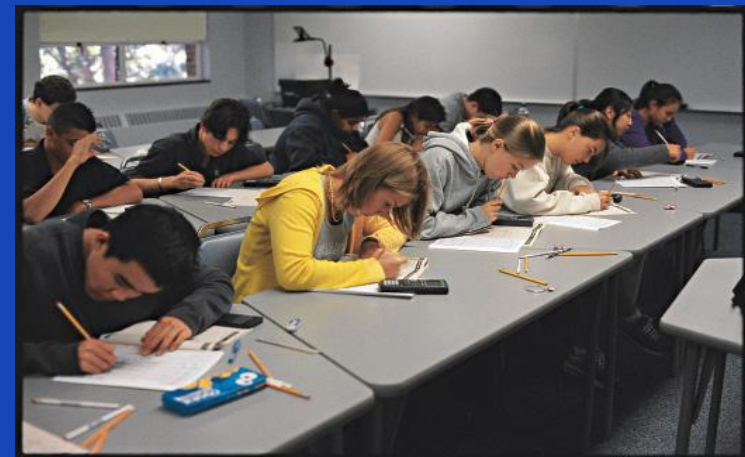
Anger or depression

Low self-esteem

Shaking or other symptoms

TEST TAKING

- **Test anxiety is caused by...**
- **Bad Experiences**
- **Poor study habits**
- **Fear of failure**
- **Low expectations**
- **Comparing yourself to others**
- **Pressure to succeed**
- **Lack of preparation**



TEST TAKING STRATEGIES

- Prepare early
 - Treat every class as preparation for tests
 - Preparing begins first day
- Study after class
 - Use a calendar or planner
 - Use Post-It Notes
 - Form a study group
- Ask teacher
 - What will be on the test?
 - What type of questions?
 - How many questions?
 - Study hints - your teacher is best resource

Quiet!
EXAM IN PROGRESS





TIPS FOR NERVOUS TEST-TAKERS

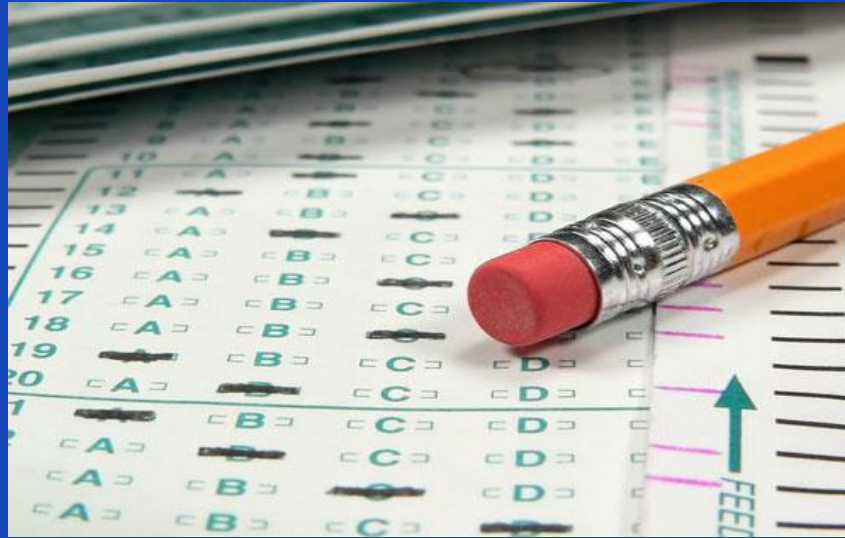
- Even if you don't know what's causing your test anxiety, these tips may help:
 - **Use good study techniques.** Prepare well in advance. Take a practice test if you can. Know the material inside and out. This will help you approach the test with self-assurance.
 - **Be positive and block bad thoughts.** Watch out for negative messages you might be sending yourself, such as "I'm no good at taking tests" or "I'm not going to remember anything." Focus on positive statements, such as "I can do this" or "I know this material cold."
 - **Go into the test well rested and well fed.** Get enough sleep the night before. Eat a light meal before the test and stay away from junk foods. Avoid caffeine if it makes you jittery



MORE TEST TAKING STRATEGIES

- **Be prepared.** Set everything out that you need the night before - directions, pencils, calculator, breakfast. The less you have to think about the "day of," the less anxious you will be.
- **Relax!** During the test, take slow, deep breaths - in through your nose and out through your mouth. Repeat your positive statements. Pause and stretch to give yourself a short break if you need one.
- **Don't worry about others finishing** the test before you. Take the time you need to do your best.
- *Whether you did well or not-reward yourself for taking and surviving the test when you're done. Use your results as a guide for what needs to be improved. Then, start studying for your next test!*

MORE TEST TAKING STRATEGIES



- Before answering a single test question, read the directions
- Beware of time limits
- Read all of the answers before selecting one
- Make sure an essay answers the question
 - Focus on quality not quantity



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"I've gotten over my fear of tests, but now I seem to have developed studying anxiety."



PROJECTS/ RESEARCH PAPERS

- If allowed, choose a topic that interests you
- List steps involved in the project, use your agenda
- Do not hesitate to ask your teachers questions or request advice
- Don't procrastinate! Use your agenda to mark dates of when outline, rough draft, final draft, presentation deadlines



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- **School Help and Tips**

- Purdue University On-line Writing Lab: handouts, links, search tools, etc{OWL} <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>
- B.J.Pinjchbeck's Homework Help: You pick a subject and the site links you to resources for help with your homework!
<http://www.discoveryeducation.com/students/index.cfm>
- Managing Time: Columbia University offers ideas on how to manage time and improve comprehension. Also provides a selection on studying foreign languages.
<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/augustine/study/>
- Student Strategies : University of Minnesota
[http://www.d.umn.edu/kmc/student/loon/acad/strat /](http://www.d.umn.edu/kmc/student/loon/acad/strat/)
- Encyclopedia Britannica on Line for Free <http://www.britannica.com/>
- Index of Learning Style: From North Carolina St. - Learn your learning style by taking a short questionnaire.
<http://www.engr.ncsu.edu/learningstyles/ilsweb.html>

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- **Study Skills**

- University of Buffalo: William Knaus, a psychologist, estimated that 90% of college students procrastinate.
- <http://ub-counseling.buffalo.edu/stressprocrast.shtml>
- Time tips Va. Tech: A pamphlet on effective time scheduling and planning of events. <http://www.ucc.vt.edu/stdysk/htimesch.html>
- Self Management System: Provides charts and examples of how to set up schedules and priorities
<http://www.csulb.edu/~tstevens/patsm96.htm>
- Study Skills Self Help Information: Virginia Tech offers great information for everyone! <http://www.ucc.vt.edu/stdysk/stdyhlp.html>
- Keene University: Keene offers pamphlets on study skills and exam preparation. <http://www.keene.edu/aspire/sskills.cfm>
- Study Guides and Strategies - University of St. Thomas
<http://www.studygs.net/>