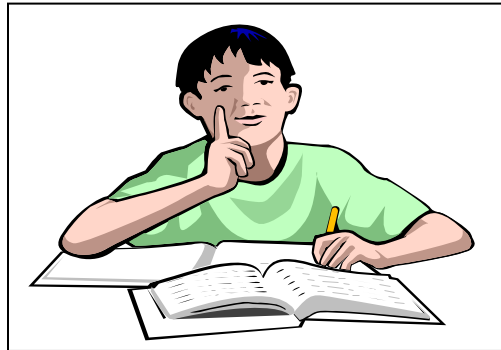


Tips for Students (At Home)



- Get plenty of rest the week before a test. Go to bed early the night before a test and get a good night's sleep.
- Pick out your clothes the night before.
- Dress in comfortable clothes (according to school policy). New clothes that are tight or shoes that pinch can be distracting.
- Get up early to avoid hurrying. Being on time is important.
- Eat a good breakfast—but not a heavy one.

Tips for Teachers



- Teach the students test taking strategies.
- Teach the students relaxation techniques.
- Have a ***positive attitude*** about the SOLs and the tests.
- Be familiar with the SOL Blueprints and Resource Guides for your subject area.
- Know what the SOL tests/questions look like and model *some* of your test items after the SOL questions.
- Make sure the students know the purpose of the tests and when they will be given.
- Have supplies handy for the students:
 - Pencils
 - Scratch paper
 - Calculators
 - Erasers
- Create an uncluttered testing environment. Take down curricular materials from the walls. However, don't clean your room the night before the test. Do it a couple of weeks ahead of time so the students will have time to adjust.
- Create a safe physical and social environment.

Nutrition

Carbohydrates contain glucose, a sugar that research shows can temporarily sharpen thinking. However, we must be cognizant not to provide high-sugar junk food that is discouraged the rest of the year. Nutritionists suggest providing a balance of carbohydrates and protein. Also be aware that some research indicates that fat slows the absorption of calories.

Some good breakfast suggestions are as follows:

- Pancakes, sausage, and scrambled eggs
- Cereal with milk and fruit
- Yogurt, bagel, and fruit
- French toast

Some good snack ideas between tests are as follows:

- Trail mix
- Muffins
- Cheese cubes/sticks and fruit juice
- Saltines with cheese slices or peanut butter
- Vanilla wafers and milk
- Raisins
- Low-fat Granola bars

Be aware of the “plateau and then the crash” effect from carbohydrates. If you are having more than one testing session in a day, be sure to provide snacks in between the two tests so students don’t “crash” in between.



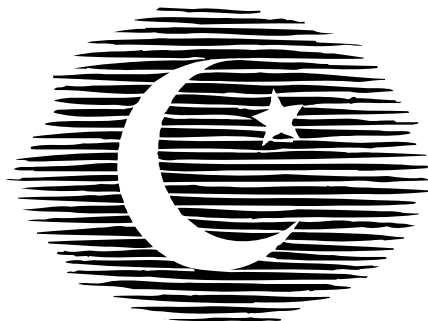
Tips for Students (During Testing)



- Read the directions carefully and be sure you understand what you are supposed to do.
- Look over the test before you answer any questions.
- Read each question carefully. Think about what you think the answer might be.
- Use a highlighter to mark key words or phrases.
- Read **all** the answer choices before you make a choice.
- Eliminate any answer choices that you know are incorrect.
- Do the easy items first.
- Look for questions that give information on previous questions.
- Skip an item if you can't figure out the answer; mark the item you skipped; and come back to it later.
- Take a mental break if you need to.
- Check your work at the end of the test. Before you change an answer, know why you are changing the answer. Your first choice is often the correct choice.

THE NIGHT BEFORE THE SOL TESTS

- Make sure your child doesn't go to bed angry.
- **Plan ahead to stay away from problems before the test.** For example, it would help to avoid talking about a child's overuse of the phone or avoidance of chores. Your child could stay upset about the argument and not do as well on the test.
- Keep the rules of the house. Stopping normal discipline or upsetting the usual routine of the home may confuse your child. This may affect how well your child can perform the next day.
- Talk about the test to reassure and encourage your child. At the same time, don't dwell on the subject, as you may cause your child to worry unnecessarily.
- Be encouraging. If you say, "You'll probably blow this one," your child will expect failure.
- Encourage your child to take time and do his/her best. The tests are not timed.



AFTER THE TEST

- Reward your child for trying hard on the test. You might treat him or her to a special dinner or allow an extra half hour for playtime. Punishment for doing poorly will only hurt, because the test itself was punishment enough if he or she had a hard time.
- Talk with your child about what was learned from the test. What would he or she do differently if the test could be taken over?
- Talk with your child about what can be done between now and the next time a test is given, such as trying harder with homework or listening more closely in class.
- When you get the test results for your child later in the summer, don't compare his or her performance with that of your friend's or neighbor's children. Saying something like, "Why aren't you as smart as Billy next door?" can only hurt.
- Please don't hesitate to discuss with the teacher any question that you or your child have about testing.
- Think about how you can help your child do better next time! Keep these "tips" handy for future use!

