

**TWO DAYS OR MORE BEFORE THE EXAM:**

- Review your notes.
- Review chapter headings in the book and the summaries.
- Go through any review sheets.
- Buy necessary Scan-Tran cards.
- Buy earplugs (if needed).

**THE NIGHT BEFORE THE EXAM:****Slight Anxiety**

- Review material calmly, noting missing material.
- Learn material that is unfamiliar.
- Stop studying about one or two hours before bedtime and watch TV, listen to music, etc.

**Intense Anxiety**

- Don't study the night before the test. Plan to have your studying done before then.
- Eat a good, but not spicy dinner.
- Take a walk, or do something to relax yourself.
- Go to bed at your normal time.

**THE MORNING OF THE EXAM:**

- Eat protein for breakfast. Get some exercise.
- Avoid extra amounts of caffeine, coffee, cokes, tea, etc., as well as high amounts of sugar.
- Gather supplies, including gum, Kleenex, paper, pencils, pens, etc.
- Wear comfortable clothes, preferable in layers.
- Go to the exam on time—be in the ear at least 10 minutes early, Don't go into the room until just before the exam begins.
- DO NOT take the book into the exam (exception: open book tests).
- DO NOT study while waiting for the test to begin.
- Smile and relax as much as possible.
- Choose a comfortable seat, avoiding distractions.
- Get your supplies out.

## **DURING THE EXAM:**

### Preview

1. How many pages? How many questions?
2. What type of exam is it?
3. What are the directions—read these VERY CAREFULLY. Underline the words for more complete understanding.
4. Get a more general idea of what questions are on the test.

### Answer

1. Attack the easy questions first.
2. Read the questions very carefully.
3. Circle every questions mark.
4. Check off or draw a line through each question as you finish it.
5. Do an outline for easy type questions before writing them. (Turn in the outline along with the essay.)

### Pace Yourself

1. Work steadily. DO NOT rush or stall on a question.
2. In math or a similar subject, write each step out neatly and completely.
3. Write slowly, carefully, and neatly. This can help you sort out thoughts.
4. DO NOT panic. If panic sets in, try to relaxation technique.

## CALMING THE MID-TEST PANIC

1. Put down your pencil or pen. You cannot relax unless your hands are empty.
2. Close your eyes and get comfortable. Do not worry about what your instructor will think.
3. Spread out your fingers flat on your desk. We tend to scrunch up our fingers with tension, so you want to force those finger muscles to be long and stretched out. This helps reduce the tension in them and in you.
4. Count from 1 to 10 slowly while breathing deeply. When you are tense, you tend to breathe shallowly, so you don't get the full amount of oxygen your brain needs. Slow, deep breathing will get oxygen to your brain and force you to calm down.
5. Let the peaceful image you have been practicing come into your mind. Hold it for a minute.
6. Open your eyes. You should feel relaxed and recharged and ready to resume your test. The total relaxation time you used is between 2 and 5 minutes. Although it might seem like a lot of time to use up during a test, you find that you can work more efficiently when you are calm, and you will get more done afterwards than you could have if you had tried to work straight through while in an anxious state.

### **ANOTHER TIP:**

You will find that the positive attitude will carry you through a lot of the fear of the test, that you will be able to remember more of what you have studied, and that your wits will be sharper than when you take a test with a pinched and frowning look.

# RELAXATION TECHNIQUES FOR TEST TAKING

Tension in the mind produces tension in the body and vice versa. Conversely, a relaxed body tends to allow the mind to be relaxed also. Any activity that reduces tension in the body will help you relax mentally for an exam.

The techniques for relaxing the mind are simple kinds of activities that are used in bio-feedback and hypnosis. The greater the amount of practice, the more effective these techniques are. Spending 15 minutes daily doing these mental exercises will develop your ability to relax when you need to. You may find it helpful at first to use a tape recording of the following commands. Eventually, you should be able to use the “image” that you practice every day to relax yourself instantly.

## RELAXATION COMMANDS

1. Sit or lie down in a comfortable position and close your eyes.
2. Uncross your legs and arms.
3. Wiggle your toes to make sure they aren't cramped.
4. Place your hands comfortably on your thighs or the arms of your chair.
5. Wiggle your fingers to loosen them and then spread them out against the surface your hands rest on.
6. Inhale deeply and exhale slowly. Breathe as deeply and evenly as you can throughout this exercise (one of the most important parts of this exercise).
7. Beginning with your toes, relax all the muscles in each part of your body by:
  - a. Tightening all the muscles and then relaxing them.
  - b. Imagining tension draining through you into your chair and the floor.
8. Count slowly from 1 to 10, imagining yourself going down ten stairs. The bottom of the stairs is a place of complete relaxation.
9. As you reach the bottom of the stairs, imagine yourself in the most relaxing, peacefully, and beautiful place you know. Perhaps it is a special spot in the mountains or on a beach. It may be an area in your home. Imagining the place when you do this exercise will help you relax more quickly.
10. Concentrate on making your peaceful image clear to all of your senses:
  - a. Make the image clear to your sight. Try to see every detail in the scene.
  - b. Make the image clear to your hearing. What sounds do you hear? Birds, wind, leaves rustling?

- c. Make the image clear to your sense of touch. Can you feel the warmth of the sun of your face? Do you feel the warm sand of your feet?
11. Concentrate on the total image of your wonderful, peaceful place for a minute or two.
  12. Feel yourself as a relaxed, happy person as you are sitting or standing in your peaceful place. Imagine yourself doing the things you would like to do.
  13. Positive imagery:
    - a. See yourself calm and self-possessed.
    - b. See yourself talking very knowledgeable about the subject.
    - c. See yourself looking over an exam on which you have received a good score.
  14. Continue to see yourself as a successful, calm, and happy person for a minute or two. Allow yourself to smile as you do this.
  15. Imagine yourself walking back into the room you are really sitting in and returning to the real location of your body.
  16. Flex your muscles in your body, beginning your feet.
  17. Open your eyes.

## PRE-EXAM CHECKLIST

DIRECTIONS: If you can check "Yes" for all of the items below, you are ready to take your exam and do a good job.

### GRADE "C"

- | <u>YES</u> | <u>NO</u> |  |
|------------|-----------|--|
| ___        | ___       | Attend class regularly.  |
| ___        | ___       | Found out what information the test will focus on, e.g., what chapters, what kinds of knowledge, what types of skills. |
| ___        | ___       | Found out what kind of exam questions will be on the test. (Essay/objective)   |
| ___        | ___       | Read and reviewed the study guide for this test.   |
| ___        | ___       | Took lecture notes daily.  |
| ___        | ___       | Read the textbook at least once carefully.   |
| ___        | ___       | Made study notes from the lecture notes.   |
| ___        | ___       | Made up memory aides (flash cards, mental pictures, etc.) to help me remember difficult items.                         |
| ___        | ___       | Reviewed study notes until I understand most of the material.  |
| ___        | ___       | Have all the materials I need: pencils, pens, scratch paper, Kleenex, gum, etc.  |

### GRADE "B"

- | <u>YES</u> | <u>NO</u> |  |
|------------|-----------|--|
| ___        | ___       | Completed all steps for a "C."   |
| ___        | ___       | Read the text as material was covered in class lecture.                  |
| ___        | ___       | Can restate to someone else what each topic in my notes is about.        |
| ___        | ___       | Wrote out answers for all the questions on the study guide.              |
| ___        | ___       | Can answer the study guide items without looking at the written answers. |
| ___        | ___       | Did all the assigned homework.   |
| ___        | ___       | Tested myself several times on the information I must remember.          |

GRADE "A"

YES    NO

- |                          |                          |   |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Completed all steps for "C" and "B."  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Read the appropriate material prior to each lecture.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Made sure my lecture notes were complete and comprehensive after each class.                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Learned the material as the class went through it.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Can answer all the review questions in the text (without looking back in the book).         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Can explain to someone else most of the dark printed and italicized words, without looking. |

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