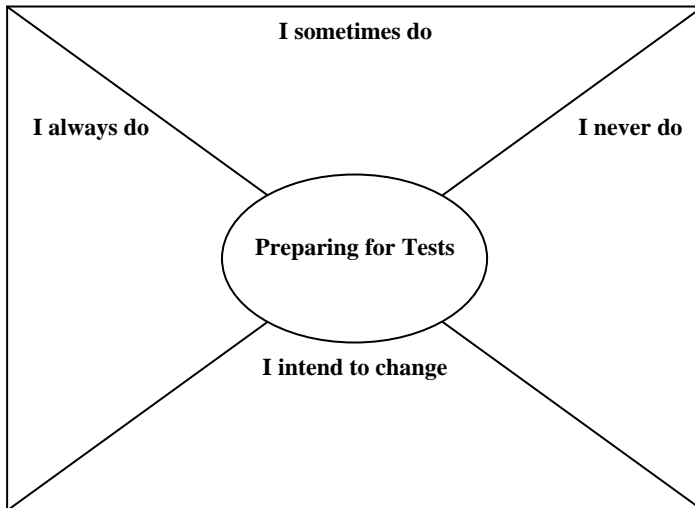


Preparing for Tests

Activity

Create a placemat. Take a blank piece of paper, and divide and label it as shown.



Write each of the following 17 test preparation steps in the appropriate sections of the placemat, according to your own habits. Do not write anything in the “I intend to change” section for now.

- 1. Start on Day One:** Preparation for a test should begin on the first day of the unit. This means that you should consistently complete homework and make sure you fully understand each lesson on a daily basis.
- 2. Listen for Hints:** The teacher may give out hints about the test throughout the unit (especially on review days). Write them in your notes and highlight them.
- 3. Ask for Hints:** Ask the teacher about the format of the test and what types of questions may be emphasized.
- 4. Budget Time:** Make sure you have enough time to study for the test.
- 5. Make a Formula Sheet:** A sheet, that can be reviewed quickly and often, makes it easier for your brain to remember key concepts.
- 6. Review Class Notes:** Remind yourself of the topics and examples that will be covered on the test.
- 7. Create a Review Sheet:** This sheet should be no longer than one page double sided. It should include important definitions, abbreviations, and key examples. You may wish to set it up as a mind map.
- 8. Practice:** Figure out a homework schedule and stick to it. Note any distractions from studying and set limits on them.



9. **Work with a Study Group:** Working with a study group can help you to understand challenging concepts, provide you with different perspectives on solutions, and help you to complete a greater number of practice problems.
10. **Redo Homework Questions:** Solidify your understanding of the teacher-assigned work.
11. **Do Extra Textbook Questions:** If time permits, this is a great way to get more practice.
12. **Complete a Practice Test:** Choose a practice test that mixes up the order of the questions from various topics.
13. **Check Your Answers:** After each practice problem, check the answer (see **BLM SS-8 Why and How to Seek Help** if you get stuck on a difficult problem).
14. **Nourish Your Brain:** Eat properly and get some exercise. Having the proper food in your stomach will give you energy and help you focus.
15. **Get Enough Sleep:** Pulling an “all nighter” is not a good idea (see **BLM SS-3 Nourishing Your Brain**). Be sure to aim for seven to eight hours of sleep before a test. Try relaxation techniques to reduce stress.
16. **Show up on Time:** Set your alarm if necessary. Try to be a few minutes early for your test.
17. **Show up Prepared:** Bring a watch, at least two writing instruments, a ruler and/or a protractor, if necessary, and a calculator that you know how to use.

Group Work

Look at your placemat. Which section is the fullest? Share your placemat with your group. What study skills have you used in the past that have been either helpful or detrimental to you? Share your thoughts with your group.

Personal Reflection

Decide which of the test preparation steps from the “I never do” section or the “I sometimes do” section you will move into the “I Intend to Change” section. You may wish to choose only the most important three, or you may wish to accomplish more than three for a future test. Write your chosen steps in a different colour in the “I intend to change” section of your placemat. File your placemat in your binder and refer back to it.

