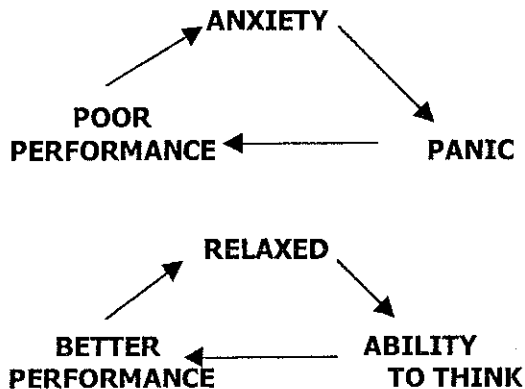


TEST ANXIETY

A certain amount of anxiety before tests is normal. Too much anxiety however, can cause you to lose concentration. Remember; a test gives you the opportunity to show what you know! Tests are important steps on your road to success. Anxiety can alter test performance, therefore it is important to control it.



GETTING IN SHAPE FOR A TEST

Athletes get in shape for sporting events. Students need to do the same thing. There are many things that can help you succeed on tests beyond studying!

- Do NOT stay up late studying-get normal hours of sleep before tests

- Occasional breaks when studying will keep you focused on test material
- Reviewing material regularly, rather than just the night before a test increases memory retention of test material. Doing this should help you remain calm on test day! Before the test, practice some relaxation techniques to help keep you calm.

RELAXATION TECHNIQUES

Practicing some relaxation techniques prior to a test should reduce test panic, allow you to focus on the material you know and result in better test performance! The techniques listed below are very simple and can be used in the classroom before tests begin-no one will know what you are doing!

- ☺ Inhale deeply through your nose with your eyes closed. Hold your breath and then slowly exhale very slowly through your mouth. Concentrate on your breathing, block out everything except the sound of your breathing. Repeat this several times.
- ☺ Sit back in your chair, getting as comfortable as possible, even loosen or remove your shoes-no one will notice! Close your eyes for a few

moments, concentrating on a beach, lying in the sun or some other favorite place, try to feel your body loosen and relax as you feel the warmth of the beach and hear the sound of the waves.

- ☺ Tighten all your muscles from head to toe, hold them, then let them loosen and relax. Repeat this several times.
- ☺ Sit back in your chair, close your eyes, push your feet against the floor to the count of five. Push them harder and harder. Then relax. Repeat several times.
- ☺ Sit back in your chair, close your eyes, and try to block out other sounds. Tighten your muscles and systematically loosen each part of your body. For example, first loosen your toes, then ankles, then legs, hands, arms, etc.

Practice these techniques before the test, try them while studying as a quick study break. They should help you relax, stay focused on material, and think more clearly. You cannot be anxious and relaxed at the same time!



OTHER RELAXATION TIPS

In addition to relaxation techniques, there are other things you can do just before and during tests to reduce anxiety:

- ◆ Get a good night's sleep-You need sleep so that you can focus for your test. Staying up all night before a test will reduce your ability to concentrate and increase your level of anxiety, making it difficult to do well.
- ◆ Eat breakfast or lunch before your test Having some food in your stomach may help calm you and give you energy, again increasing your ability to focus.
- ◆ Get to class on time If you are already nervous, rushing to get to the test site on time will increase your nervousness.
- ◆ Don't talk with others before tests-Just before your test, talking with other students, who are also anxious, will make you nervous. Instead, use those moments before a test to get settled in your seat, with pen or pencil, and practice relaxation techniques.
- ◆ Don't be upset if others finish first-Use as much time as is allowed. Review your answers. Remember some students who finish first may not be as prepared as you are!

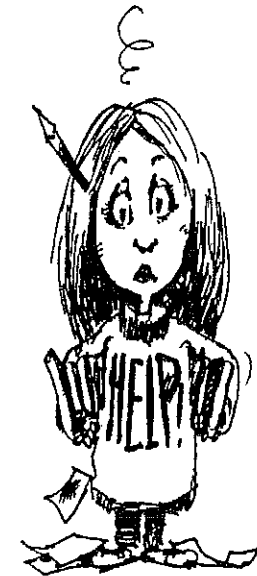


RELAX BY BEING ORGANIZED!

Being organized on the day of your test, will help keep you calm. Here are some steps to keep you organized before the test, so you don't panic!!!

1. Make sure you have necessary materials-Gather pens, pencils, paper, rulers, calculators, etc and have them in your bookbag, ready to go! You should also plan of wearing a watch on test day so you can monitor time remaining on your test.
2. Wear comfortable clothes and shoes-This will insure you are relaxed and fully concentrating on test material.
3. Review notes-Get to your test site a few minutes early to review notes, relax and get comfortable for the exam. Get materials ready you will need for the test-pens, paper, etc.
4. Listen to teacher directions-Make sure you understand all instructions before the test begins. Make sure your name is on the test page.
5. Jot down memorized facts-Once the test begins, jot down memorized facts, date, formulas, etc so you don't risk forgetting them.

TIPS FOR REDUCING TEST ANXIETY



**Compiled by Strongsville High
School Guidance Staff and Student
Staff Support Team**