



Test Taking Strategies

Success one step at a time

Test Taking Strategies: Mind-set

- **Numero uno!**
- **Attitude IS everything.**
- **If you think you CAN, then you'll be more successful.**
- **If you think you CAN'T, then you probably won't!**
- **Take control of your self-talk!**

Test Taking Strategies EAT

- **Fuel for the body and brain!**
- **Eat a low sugar meal**
- **Protein and complex carbohydrates: Helps with concentrations**
- **Drink...**
- **Stress can cause a subtle form of dehydration - drink water while testing and studying**

Test Taking Strategies: Common Test Errors

- Simply didn't know or couldn't remember the content.
- Read too quickly or answered without reading all choices.
- Read into the question.
- Missed the main point of the question.
- Changed original answer to wrong answer.
- Missed a KEY word.
- Mistakes on scantron.

Test Taking Strategies

1. Read question identifying key words
2. Review ALL of the possible answers giving equal consideration to each
3. Eliminate obvious wrong answers
4. Select the BEST of the remaining possibilities
5. Re-Read the question asking of your answer directly relates to the ? Being asked.

Test Taking Strategies: Example

1. Read question identifying key words
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- Pg 284 in Foundations Question #3

The Test Question

- Avoid reading into the question!
- DO NOT
 - Add information
 - Make assumptions
 - Focus only on your personal experience

AVOID reading into the question

- Avoid reading into the question!
- DO NOT
 - Add information
 - Make assumptions
 - Focus only on your personal experience
- In order to prevent muscle atrophy and contractures, the immobilized patient must have
 1. Additional calcium
 2. Additional Protein
 3. Some type of exercise
 4. A special protective bed

Test Taking Strategies

- **Do NOT change answers without sound reasoning**
 - Statistics show when students change answers, they are changed to the wrong one!
 - If you used sound reasoning and strategy then there is no need to second guess yourself.....Be confident.
 - Occasionally the meaning of an unclear word will become clear during the test...then might be a good time to change an answer.

Avoid Reading into the question

- **DO**
- Relate the answer to JUST WHAT IS BEING ASKED.
- After selecting the best answer, re-read the question and ask if it really answers what was asked!

Identify KEY WORDS in the Question

- | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| • Negative Key words: | • Negative key words: |
| ○ But | ○ Least |
| ○ Not | ○ Should avoid |
| ○ Except | ○ Never |
| ○ Contraindicated | ○ Would violate |
| ○ Unacceptable | ○ Should not be done |

Negative words in question

- A patient is on a low-sodium diet. Before discharge, the patient should be taught to avoid
1. Stewed fruit
 2. Luncheon meats
 3. Whole-grain cereal
 4. Green leafy vegetables

Key words that show priority

- Some questions want you to rank order of importance in your answer
 - First**
 - Initially**
 - Priority**
 - Best**
 - Safest**
 - Most**
- Occasionally these words may be **bolded**, underlined, or *italicized* **Pay attention**

Priority question

The PT is assigned to care for a patient who is incontinent of urine and stool. What should the nurse *apply* to best protect the patient's skin?

1. An adult brief
2. Talcum powder
3. A protective barrier
4. An incontinence pad

Central Person or theme

- Many questions have excess information that is not important to the question.
- You must identify the central person or theme.

Central Person/Theme

- A patient who has experienced a mastectomy says to the PT "My husband can't look at my incision and hasn't suggested having sex since my surgery" What should be the initial action of the PT?
1. Arrange to speak with the husband about his concerns.
 2. Plan to teach the husband that his wife needs his support.
 3. Explore the patient's feelings about her husband's behavior.
 4. Make an appointment with Reach for Recovery with the patient.

Absolutes are often incorrect!

- Only
- All
- None
- Every
- Never
- Always

Exceptions to the rule

- The patient is always a priority.
- Patient safety is always a priority
- Never miss a day of class or come late without calling Dr. Mary.
- Maintaining a patients airway is always a priority.
- All people are valuable individuals.

Basic Rules

- Identify and eliminate answers that DENY patients, feelings, concerns and needs.
- Eliminate responses that are bizarre, inappropriate and punitive.
- Avoid “pollyanna” or “goodie two shoes” like responses that are too optimistic or provide **false assurances**.

Strategy for multiple choice

1. Read question identifying key words
2. Review ALL of the possible answers giving equal consideration to each
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When you are finished

- **Review:**
Resist the urge to leave as soon as you have completed all the items
Review your test to make sure that you
 - have answered all questions
 - did not mis-mark answers
 - did not make simple mistakes
