Top ~~Ten~~ 11 Test-Taking Tips for Students

1. Start Studying for Each Test by Reviewing Your Notes After Every Class
Studies have shown that summarizing class notes daily can increase information retention by 150%

2. Have a Positive Attitude
Approach the big test as you'd approach a giant jigsaw puzzle. It might be tough, but you can do it! A positive attitude goes a long way toward success.

3. Make a Plan
The week before the test, ask your teacher what the test is going to cover. Is it from the textbook only? Class notes? Can you use your calculator? If you've been absent, talk to friends about material you may have missed. Make a list of the most important topics to be covered and use that as a guide when you study. Circle items that you know will require extra time. Be sure to plan extra time to study the most challenging topics.

4. The Night Before
Cramming doesn't work. If you've followed a study plan, the night before the test you should do a quick review and get to bed early. Remember, your brain and body need sleep to function well, so don't stay up late!

5, The Morning of the Test
Did you know that you think better when you have a full stomach? So don't skip breakfast the morning of the test. Get to school early and do a ten-minute power study right before the test, so your brain is turned on and tuned up.

6. Test Time
Before the test begins, make sure you have everything you'll need - scratch paper, extra pencils, your calculator (if you're allowed to use it). Understand how the test is scored: Do you lose points for incorrect answers? Or is it better to make guesses when you're not sure of the answer? Read the instructions! You want to make sure you are marking answers correctly.

7. Manage Your Time
Scan through the test quickly before starting. Answering the easy questions first can be a time saver and a confidence builder. Plus, it saves more time in the end for you to focus on the hard stuff.

8. I'm Stuck!
Those tricky problems can knock you off balance. Don't get worried or frustrated. Reread the question to make sure you understand it, and then try to solve it the best way you know how. If you're still stuck, circle it and move on. You can come back to it later. What if you have no idea about the answer? Review your options and make the best guess you can, but only if you don't lose points for wrong answers.

9. Multiple-Choice Questions
The process of elimination can help you choose the correct answer in a multiple-choice question. Start by crossing off the answers that couldn't be right, then those highly unlikely (such as any that include “always” or “never” or everyone.”) Then spend your time focusing on the probably correct choices before selecting your answer.

10. Neatness Counts
If your 4s look like 9s, it could be a problem. Be sure that your writing is legible and that you erase your mistakes.

11. I'm Done!
Not so fast - when you complete the last item on the test, remember that you're not done yet. First, check the clock and go back to review your answers, making sure that you didn't make any careless mistakes (such as putting the right answer in the wrong place or skipping a question)—but don’t change any answers unless you’re certain you misread the question! Spend the last remaining minutes going over the hardest problems before you turn in your test.