



Study Skills Workshop: Test-Taking Skills

Welcome to the test-taking video. We will be covering True/False and Essay types of tests in this workshop. But let's begin with a few universal testing strategies.

General Test-Taking Strategies – What to do right before you get that test

1 General Test-Taking Strategies Info

	Strategy Title	What is it?	How should you do it?	Why should you do it?
1.				
2.				
3.				

Now on to True/False types of tests. Many students think this is easier type of test (50/50). But True/False can be tricky. Let's start with a practice test.

True-False Questions

Click the radio button to the left of either “True” or “False” in regard to the following statements.

Questions 1-5 relate to the board and card games.

- | | | |
|------|-------|--|
| True | False | 1. Everyone loves to play Sorry. |
| True | False | 2. No one plays Chinese Checkers anymore. |
| True | False | 3. Old Maid is frequently played by children. |
| True | False | 4. Monopoly is not an unsuitable game for children aged six and under. |
| True | False | 5. Bridge is mostly played by adults. |

Questions 6-11 relate to general study skills.

- | | | |
|------|-------|---|
| True | False | 6. You should always answer every question on every test. |
| True | False | 7. Some tests are too lengthy to complete in the allotted time. |
| True | False | 8. All exams are comprehensive. |
| True | False | 9. A test may not be without poorly worded questions. |
| True | False | 10. Never study with a partner. |
| True | False | 11. Following directions is not unimportant. |

#1-5 Adapted from *College Study Skills; Becoming a Strategic Learner* by Dianna L. Van Blerkom (Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1997).

#6-11 taken from *College Learning and Study Skills*, 2nd Edition by Debbie Guice Longman and Rhonda Holt Atkinson (West Publishing Company, 1991).

Suggested True/False Techniques and Strategies

1. The most important factor that you need to know about T/F tests is what?

2. Another item mentioned having to do with the T/F test approach has to do with looking at for certain types of words.

What are those?

Why are they so important?

3. Sadly, you may have to deal with “double negatives”. What is the technique that was explained so you can deal with this situation?

Succeeding on Essay Exams

*For more help with your writing or any other English skill, please visit the [Writing & Reading Success Center](#).

Essay exams are subjective types of tests. Your grade is based on the instructor's judgement about how well you expressed your answer. They will be looking for certain things within your answer.

The most crucial task you have when preparing for and then taking an essay exam is to ask your teacher *EXACTLY* what he or she wants you to include in your answer, and how you are supposed to write it. This is extremely important because essay tests are subjective, and each teacher is unique in terms of what he or she wants to see and does not want to see on your paper.

In addition to what you find out from your teacher, read the following information, adapt it to your situation, and then put it all into action for greater success.

The following material is adapted from *The Confident Student* by Carol C. Kanar (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Company 1991: 346-347).

General Guidelines

1. Read the question carefully. Watch for instruction words (see next page for some examples), and make sure you understand what the question asks you to do. Ask the instructor for an explanation if necessary.
2. Think about what you will write. Plan your answer and allow yourself enough time to write thoughtfully.
3. Jot down a scratch outline of the major points you will cover so that you don't forget them.
4. Incorporate the question into your first sentence, and briefly state your answer to the question.
5. In the rest of your essay, develop the points that explain your answer, and provide enough details to show that you know the material well.
6. Save time at the end of the exam to proof-read your essay and correct errors.

Some Instruction Words Used in Essay Questions

<u>Instruction Words</u>	<u>Meanings</u>
<i>Compare</i>	Explain similarities and differences, highlighting the similarities.
<i>Contrast</i>	Explain differences only.
<i>Criticize or evaluate</i>	Make a judgment about strengths and weaknesses, worth or merit, positive or negative aspects.
<i>Define</i>	Give a precise and accurate meaning.
<i>Discuss or explain</i>	Give reasons, facts, details that show you understand
<i>Illustrate</i>	Explain by using examples.
<i>Interpret</i>	Explain in your own words and discuss significance.
<i>Summarize</i>	Condense main ideas; state briefly.

The following material is adapted from Right From the Start – Managing Your Way to College Success by Robert Holkeboer (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company 1993, p. 7:15).

What Most Teachers are Looking for in an Essay Answer:

1. Did the student understand the question and answer it completely?
2. Is the answer well organized, coherent, and logical?
3. Are general statements and main ideas supported by facts and examples?
4. Is the writing clear and understandable?
5. Is the writing mechanically, grammatically, and stylistically correct?
6. Is the writing at least fairly neat (legible)?

What is one technique for each type of test, True/False and essay, that you can immediately employ this semester?

T/F technique I will use:

Essay technique I will use:

Congratulations on finishing this video workshop! We hope you take a few tips from each type of test so that you can approach them in a more thoughtful manner. And that advancement will most likely be reflected in your final score. Good luck!