



## Test Preparation Tips for Mathematics - II

The Clark County School District has adopted a plan to organize student learning and help students be more successful. Along with great instruction, this plan includes the expectation that teachers prepare a practice test (before the instruction begins) that students will use as a resource during the unit. Teachers first identify what students should know, understand, and be able to do. Then they write assessments that will demonstrate that students have learned the material. The other steps include appropriate instruction to achieve the learning targets, improved note-taking strategies, and teaching students how to use practice tests and how to be successful in the class. Each day teachers should provide effective instruction following the *Components of an Effective Lesson* and *Teacher Expectancies* ([www.rpd.net](http://www.rpd.net)). Students should participate and be actively engaged in the learning process. Another key component of the plan is an appropriate teacher/student relationship that promotes trust and expectations of a positive learning environment.

Practice math tests and notes are posted on [www.rpd.net](http://www.rpd.net) for the following middle school courses and high school courses: Math 6, Math 7, Math 8, Pre Algebra 8, Algebra I Honors, Pre Algebra HS, Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Pre-Calculus, Statistics, and Calculus. Sample questions for CRT, NHSPE, SAT, ACT, and NAEP are also posted. Practice tests and parallel unit tests are posted on InterAct.

Success on a test depends on how well students prepare along the way – how well they keep up with assignments, try practice problems, and ask questions when they don't understand something.

The following tips/reminders can be helpful in initiating great discussions with students about study skills and preparing for tests and daily homework assignments.

### Studying for the Test

- Set up a good place and specific time to study
- Get enough rest
- Study with other students
- Study by yourself - you will be taking the test by yourself

### Taking the Test

- Try to relax before the test.
- Bring all the materials you need for the test.
- Know the rules for the test.
- Look over the entire test quickly.
- Read the instructions and questions carefully.
- Try to understand what the question is asking.
- Write legibly.
- First do the problems you know how to do.
- Check your answers.

### Preparing for Multiple-Choice Tests

- Learn the content material.
- Know your opponent – the test.
- Develop a plan to use for problems you do NOT know exactly how to solve.
- Develop a plan or strategy for Constructed-Response questions.
- **(Test-Taking Strategies - Refer to [www.rpd.net](http://www.rpd.net))**
  1. Process of Elimination
  2. Measure It
  3. Backsolve
  4. Plug-In Numbers at Random
  5. Plug-In/Plot It
  6. The Wild Guess—Tame It!

Math Resources

[www.rpd.net](http://www.rpd.net)

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### Reviewing Test Material

Before students begin studying for a test, they should learn the rules. The following tips for students and teachers summarize questions, suggestions, and guides to improving test scores and overall achievement in the course.

Question	Student Tips	Teacher Tips
What will be on the test?	Ask the teacher for specifics, topics, and content.	Prepare a practice test for students.
What will the test questions be like?	Will there be short answer, computation, word problems, graphs, multiple-choice, true/false, proofs, vocabulary?	Prepare a practice test for students. Practice the types of questions on the practice test as well as the types of questions on the homework.
What should be learned?	What is the intention of the lesson, what specific skills will need to be exhibited, what types of problems will I be able to solve, how will I know if I am progressing satisfactorily?	Define learning targets (standards, concepts, skills, achievement goals, etc.) before instruction begins. Make objectives and skills evident to students and check for understanding before the test.
How do things connect?	The more you understand, the less you have to memorize. If you understand why a formula works or how it was derived, it will be easier to remember.	Link new concepts to prior knowledge and help students develop and understand the connections.
Will notes and assignments be useful?	Get any missed notes or assignments that may have been missed. Make up all homework assignments.	Teach note-taking skills and make notes and assignments readily available for absent students. Practice reviewing with students using their notes.
When is the best time to review?	Start reviewing early. Don't wait until the night before a test to study. Study a little each day. Do all homework, and redo some of the difficult problems.	Practice the review process by using the practice test throughout the unit. Check for student understanding daily. Drill facts and procedures using Long Term Memory Review strategies.
What is a good way to practice?	Redo homework and quiz problems. Try different examples to prepare for the test. Practice making variations of the questions on the practice test.	Practice skills of variation – how problems can be different. Explain how problems can vary from the “simple, normal” procedures/rules. Ask the question, “How can we make the problem different?”
What are some tips for avoiding silly mistakes? (Common errors)	Take good notes when the teacher goes over common errors that students make, and then practice identifying them as you study and complete homework.	Identify common pitfalls for various math problems. During instruction, practice procedures and specifically show and have students write in their notes where common errors occur. Have students do error analysis to identify the patterns of errors or mistakes that students make in their work.