

## Major problem?

A fight or flight reaction hijacks our ability to think; retrieve information; & causes us to blank out or have racing thoughts that are difficult to control



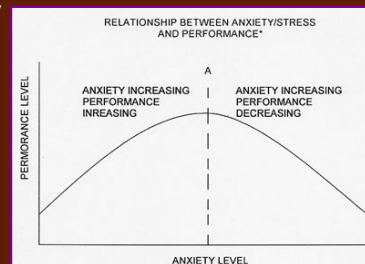
## Test anxiety

Some anxiety is good; spurs peak performance!

### Goals:

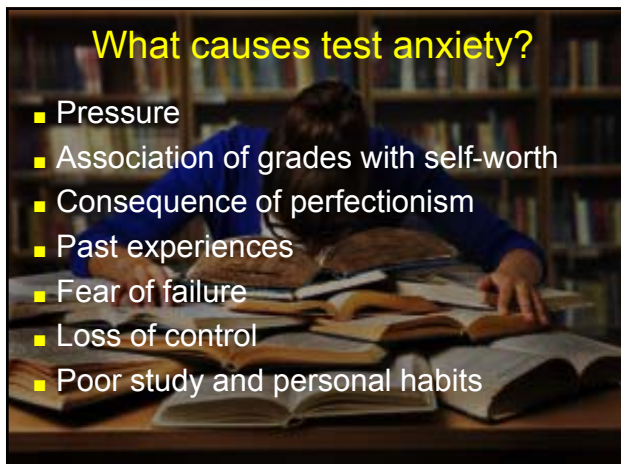
- Confidence to meet the challenge
- Harness anxiety to a controllable level

Managing Stress and Anxiety (Archer)



## What causes test anxiety?

- Pressure
- Association of grades with self-worth
- Consequence of perfectionism
- Past experiences
- Fear of failure
- Loss of control
- Poor study and personal habits



## Do I have test anxiety?

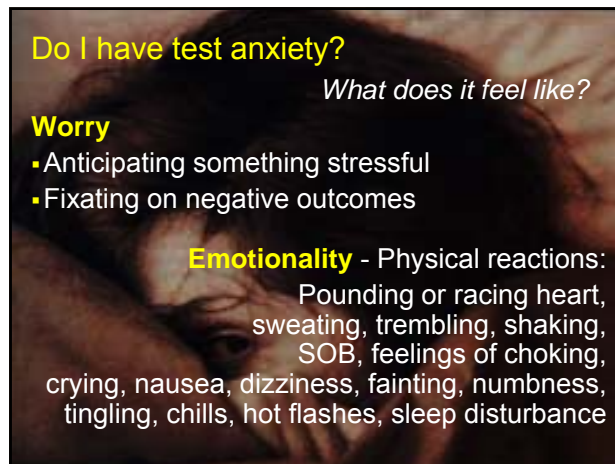
*What does it feel like?*

### Worry

- Anticipating something stressful
- Fixating on negative outcomes

### Emotionality - Physical reactions:

Pounding or racing heart, sweating, trembling, shaking, SOB, feelings of choking, crying, nausea, dizziness, fainting, numbness, tingling, chills, hot flashes, sleep disturbance



## Overcoming Test ANXIETY

### Stop negative self-talk:

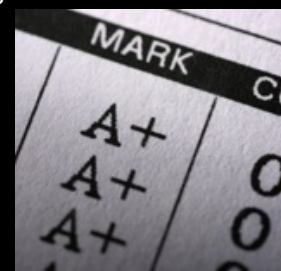
"If I don't pass this test, I will flunk the class."  
 "If I don't pass this test, I will lose my job."  
 "If I don't pass this test, I will be humiliated."  
 "I've heard this test is hard."  
 "I'm not a good test taker."

### Replace with positive messaging

"This is just one test. If I fail, I can see why and prepare better for the next one."

"I've passed difficult tests before; I can pass these as well."

"I'm well-prepared. I know my stuff!"

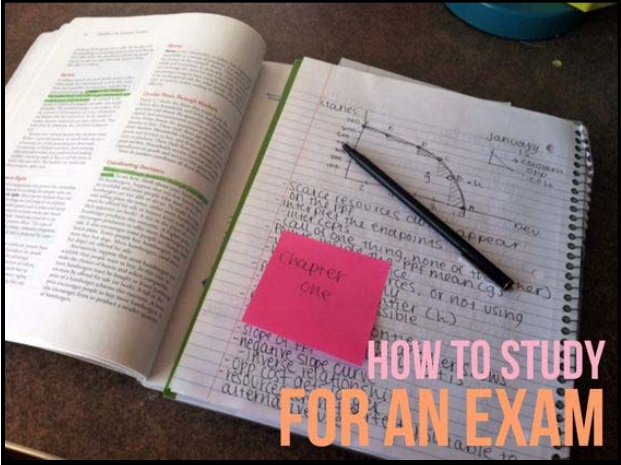





Strategies to reduce test anxiety

Relaxation techniques

- Deep breathing
- Progressive muscle relaxation
- Stretching exercises
- Visualization of your success!




HOW TO STUDY FOR AN EXAM

We know what we are interested in knowing

Identify personal biases or barriers to learning



PLAN AHEAD

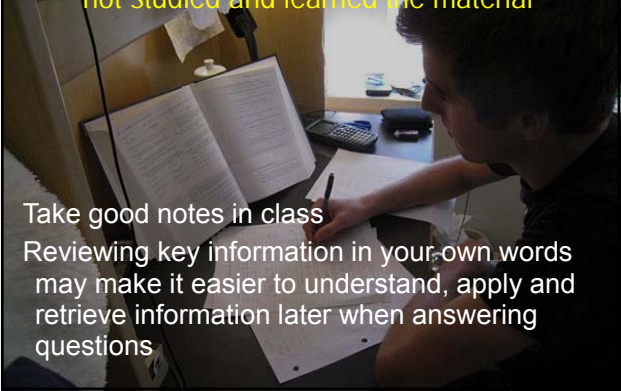


- Predetermine a course of action
- Lay out your goals; adjust priorities
- Needs assessment: What do you need to do/change to be successful?
- Allow scheduled time for work/study/life balance
- Plan the work; work the plan
- Expect problems; predetermine solutions
- Always point to success
- Daily review the plan

No testing strategy will help if you have not studied and learned the material

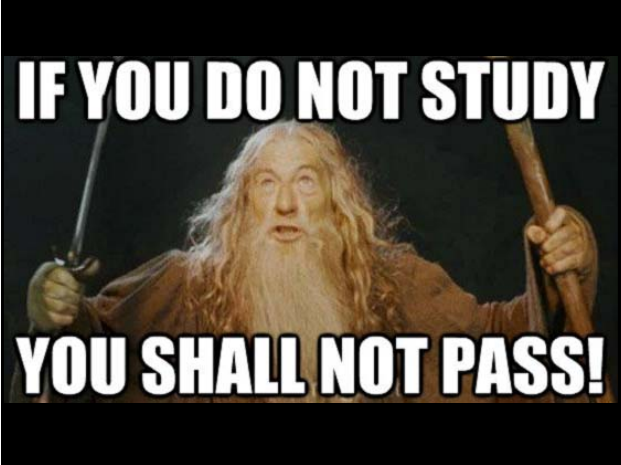
Take good notes in class

Reviewing key information in your own words may make it easier to understand, apply and retrieve information later when answering questions



IF YOU DO NOT STUDY

YOU SHALL NOT PASS!



### Study Skills

- Pay **attention** in class.
- Take **good** notes.
- Keep an **organized** notebook for each subject.
- Know the purpose of each assignment.
- Ask questions **in** class.
- **Review! Review! Review!**  
It can help you retain 80% of the information.
- Plan a **definite** time and place for studying each day.
- Study for awhile and take short breaks.
- **Don't cram** for hours the night before a test.
- **Study a little bit each day.**

• *Think Positive...Do your best!*

### Study plan

Develop a study schedule

Study with others to capitalize on collaborative learning

Read all handouts thoroughly; answer homework questions in your own words

If you don't understand a concept, look it up in another source

Reading for meaning is like...

...installing new software in your brain!

Visual learners may benefit from making flow charts, mind maps, diagrams or algorithms instead of taking notes only

### Identify other resources

Books, skill check lists, journals, phone apps; on-line videos



Test summary – exam blueprint

Part II Test Content Outline

This examination was developed in collaboration with a committee of TNS course coordinators from and staff from the Illinois Department of Public Health. Content areas on the test are outlined below. Each subtopic is a module in the TNS curriculum.

**Trauma Nurse Certification (TNS)**

<b>I. Professional Issues and Pathophysiology</b>	<b>(24 questions)</b>
A. EMS/Trauma system development	3 questions
B. Cardiac anatomy and physiology	5 questions

**Frequency of Practice Questions**

A. Trauma in pregnancy	4 questions
B. Pediatric trauma	2 questions

Read test summary provided by the instructor/exam vendor to familiarize yourself with the test structure

Should outline the following components for each test:

- Content areas covered
- ~ # of questions
- Types of questions
- % total test score derived from each content domain

Before the test - PREPARATION

Part III Sample Questions


All questions on this examination are multiple-choice, with one correct answer. Each question is supported by the Trauma Nurse Specialist Program that is used to train TNS candidates. The answer key appears after these questions.

1. Based on the Illinois trauma center rules, which provider met the Level II requirements?

An adult presents with an epidural hematoma and open femur fracture. The trauma surgeon declares these to be isolated injuries, consults orthopedics and neurosurgery for immediate operative intervention and signs off the case. Orthopedics arrives 55 minutes after being notified.

To improve your test-taking skills, answer practice test questions provided on the vendor's website or use books of questions, phone apps for your type of exam...

This will prepare you for the nature of the questions and how they may be phrased on the actual test




Set aside significant time for this study

If possible, work in a quiet room with no distractions to simulate the testing environment

Time yourself as you complete the sample test questions to estimate the amount of time you will need

Practice computer testing



Paramedic Training and EMT Questions: Take an EMT Practice Test On the Internet

Test anxiety prevention



Studytip: How To Stay Relaxed Before An Exam!

Good self-care



Sleep (at least 6 hrs prior to test)


Balanced diet; exercise

Exam morning

Set alarm early if you tend to oversleep - give yourself plenty of time

Eat a good, nutritious breakfast; don't drink a large (caffeinated) beverage before hand...Duh!!

Know exam location and bring required materials with you




Exam day

Arrive early (15-20 min)

Calm yourself (slow deep breaths)

Visualize yourself answering questions with confidence!

Think of what you will do to celebrate afterwards - **Think positive!**




Test-Taking Tips

- 1. Read all directions carefully.
- 2. Read all questions carefully.
- 3. Be sure you know what is being asked.
- 4. Look at all choices before you answer.
- 5. Eliminate answers you know are wrong. XXX
- 6. Paraphrase the questions.
- 7. Think carefully.
- 8. ✓ Check your work.

Do your Best!

Read all instructions about computer keyboard and answering each question



**Yellow Answer Keys**

The candidate will use only the following colored keys to answer the test items. Select the key and select ENTER.

- Yellow key marked 1 for response 1.
- Yellow key marked 2 for response 2.
- Yellow key marked 3 for response 3.
- Yellow key marked 4 for response 4.
- Yellow key marked 5 for response 5.

**NOTE: Use only Answer Keys 1-4 in this**

**Green ENTER Key**      **Green NEXT Key**


The green ENTER (or NEXT) key enters your responses and moves you through the test.

You MUST press ENTER (or NEXT) to "record" your response.

Pace yourself

Exams will be timed

Don't linger too long on any one question




Build confidence. Answer the easiest questions first, then go back to those you skipped.

Pace yourself

Return to questions that are hard for you. Don't spend too much time on them and risk not finishing the exam

Don't worry about how fast others finish

Work at a pace that averages 1 minute/question; there is no prize for finishing first!



### If anxiety creeps in during the test...

- STOP; FOCUS; RESET
- Avoid a neural high jacking!
- Close your eyes; take 3 deep breaths
- Deal with 1 task at a time
- Visualize that content in handout or slide
- Recall where content was covered...put question into a context
- Reason with logic, not fear!

**DON'T  
PANIC**

### Test anxiety coping strategies

Be aware of muscle tension. Periodically, relax; open and close fingers, stretch out arms; give those muscles a break!

### Multiple choice questions

Read each **stem** completely before reading all possible answers thoroughly

*(Those with reading disabilities may benefit from reading answers BEFORE reading stem)*

Look for key words, data, or info to determine what the question is asking

Form an answer in your mind before reading answers



### Multiple Choice Questions

Don't read into the question

The right answer must be totally correct based on information given



### Key words

Find **key words** or **phrases** in the stem that may be repeated in the correct answer

Don't select an answer too quickly because you didn't read all options thoroughly



### Answering questions

Work through each question with the choices covered up, and then compare your answer with the choices

Don't guess blindly, think about the **BEST** answer choice from those offered and make it!

Multiple choice questions

Watch for qualifying or absolute words (best-worst; first-priority)

If two options are opposite each other, chances are one of them is the correct answer

If two choices seem correct, compare for differences, then refer to stem to find the best answer



Multiple choice questions

Reread all questions containing **negative words** such as “not”, “least”, “unable”, or “except” so you understand how it is framed

If a question has an “All of the above” choice and there are at least two correct statements in the options, then “All of the above” is probably the correct answer



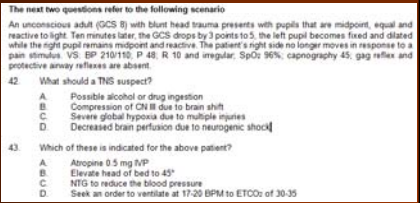
Scenarios with multiple questions

If test requires you to read a scenario and then answer sequential questions...

**Read all the question(s) first**

You will know what to look for as you read

Helps you go faster on the test



What if I don't know the answer?

**Guess strategically!**

Choose the answer that is longest or most specific unless you know it to be wrong

If answers cover ranges of numbers, choose one in the middle

Do NOT choose options that are totally unfamiliar to you



Process of elimination

After reading the entire question and each possible answer, eliminate choices that you know are incorrect and then look for key points that may make a plausible answer wrong



Cluing

Look for *clues* in other questions that may help you answer those items about which you are unsure





Remember, *it's OK not to know everything* - exams will have questions at all levels of difficulty, some designed to challenge higher level thinking skills!



## Math computations

Line up place values correctly on your scratch paper (thousands, hundreds, tens, ones) or the answer will be incorrect



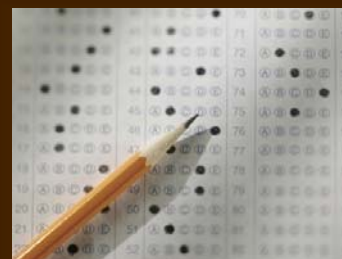
## Math computations

If your answer does not match one of the choices, reread the problem, recopy the numbers, relook at previously calculated conversions, dose alignment; drops or microdrops per min, etc, and try solving it again



## Skip, Return, Check

If you finish early, check to make sure you have answered all the questions



## One last check...

Return to questions where you drew a blank or were unsure of the answer

See if your memory has been triggered

Do NOT change answers unless you are positive the new answer is correct

*Your first guess is usually right*



## Final tips – paper and pencil tests

Fill in bubbles fully

Erase stray marks or math computations

Double-check the question number in your test booklet against the answer sheet every few questions to be sure you haven't gotten on the wrong number



