

Helpful Test Taking Tips

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Get those No. 2 pencils ready! Test taking season is coming. Each Spring, starting in about the 2nd grade, students throughout America will take a standardized test. These tests have different names depending on the state and school district, but they all test the same skills. Although these standardized tests are important, please remember that they are only one of the tools used to assess how your child is performing academically.

Taking standardized tests annually from a young age helps prepare students for when it is time to take admissions exams like the ISEE, SAT and ACT. The testing doesn't ever stop – think about the LSAT, GMAT, MCAT and then Boards and State Bars...and then professional continuing education testing.

Learning some helpful test taking and anxiety reducing tips now can help your child learn to cope with standardized testing for the rest of their academic and professional careers. Setting up good habits will help them become more successful in their approach to any type of testing.

Settling Fears

Between homework, pop quizzes and GPAs, our kids are well-accustomed to anxiety, but they're not experts on managing their stress. Sit down and hear out their fears and insecurities, assuring them that you can empathize and expect only their best. Help them put their fears into words by asking, "What's the worst that can happen?" Answering that question out loud will enable them to focus on the content of the exam rather than the consequences of not performing well.

Settling Stomachs

Give them tools to soothe nervous stomachs. Teach visualization and deep breathing exercises in case they get panicked during the test. Give them a positive thought to focus on and if anxiety gets the best of them, tell them to take a 20 second break from the test to reset and then go back to the task at hand.

Eat, Sleep, Test

The week of the test, set an earlier bedtime and make sure to eat a balanced breakfast that includes protein to boost their energy. Pack nutritious snacks and drinks as there are often snack breaks during exams.

Preparation

Test preparation for the ISEE, ACT or SAT is a crucial component to feeling confident and ensuring success. We recommend one-on-one test prep that includes teaching of concepts, both old and new, as well as test-taking strategies and techniques. Familiarity with the test is important and it is crucial for students to take several full-length practice exams in a test-taking setting.