LEARNING TECHNIQUES

LESSON 6-7 ▲ EFFECTIVE TEST PREPARATION

**LEARNING GOALS/OUTCOMES**

* Identify the various types of questions on a unit test or final exam.
* Identify effective and ineffective test preparation techniques.
* Demonstrate an awareness of effective test attack skills.

**MATERIALS NEEDED**

* **Student Handouts:**
* A Simple Task for You
* How Do I Learn Best? Worksheet
* Attacking the Test
* Journal Page

**CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES**

1. **Students experience the importance of reading test instructions.** Tell students that they are going to take a timed assessment today. Tell them that once they get the assessment, they have five minutes to do exactly as it says. Do not give them any other instructions for this assessment. Do not let students talk with each other during the test.

**Directions:**

* Give students the assessment, *A Simple Task for You* and place it face down on their desk and they are not to look at it until you say, “GO!” Make sure each student has a copy.
* Say, “GO!”, start your timer, and let them begin.
* Once all students catch on to the ‘trick’ of the assessment, ask them to tell you about it. What did they learn? Encourage students to understand that a full review of a test’s questions can be a great time saver, even in a normal test!

1. **Students identify the worst ways to prepare for a test.** Tell students today they are going to identify the WORST ways to prepare for a test. Place students into groups of three. Give students three minutes to create and rank a list of the five WORST ways to prepare for a test. When time is up, ask each group to come to the front of the classroom and present their top 5 WORST test preparation tips. Have them start with #5 and work up to the #1 WORST way to get ready for a test. Have a student recorder write responses on the board. If a group has the same tip, do not write it twice. Only add new “worst” tips to compile a larger list. Discuss how these study habits do not lead to success. Ask students to list the opposite of each tip, the GREAT ways to prepare for a test.
2. **Students examine how they learn best.** Ask students to return to their desks.Provide students with the two-page Handout, *How Do I Learn Best?* Have them individually take the inventory. Tell students there are no wrong or write answers on this. They need to answer honestly. After students complete the inventory, have them look at the Study Profile section of the handout. Looking back at the inventory, have students answer each of the sections.
3. **The class examines their Study Profiles.** Take an informal poll on various study preference questions. For example, how many students prefer it quiet when they study? After several sample questions that demonstrate a variety of study preferences in the classroom, make the point that each person has their own study style. Tell students that knowing their study style makes them more effective in preparing to take a test.
4. **The class discusses the customization of their test prep/study habits.** Explore with students the effectiveness of their existing study habits. Tell them that, if they are getting good results, they should probably maintain their study practice. However, if they would like to improve, they are wise to make some changes in their approach to study. Have individual students tell what works for them in test prep or homework.
5. **Students examine great study habits**. Provide students with the *Attacking the Test* Handout*.* With an elbow partner, ask students to go through the list and place a small check mark by the strategies they use today. Ask them to circle any strategy that they need to use. Ask student to look at the Top Ten Worst Study Habits list generated earlier. Look at the “GREAT” habits listed. Are any missing on the handout, *Attacking the Test?* Add “GREAT” habits that are missing from this handout.
6. **Students reflect on the type of test-taking advice they would offer.** Ask students to imagine a student from their elementary comes to them and asks for help with one of their classes. They have a test next week, and they have to do well or might not make it to 6th grade. What help would they be able to provide?
7. **Distribute the Journal Page.** Ask students to explain what advice they would give to this student. What strategies would they have him or her use to do well? What would they suggest that the student not do? Do they follow their own advice when it comes time to study?

**STUDENT PRODUCTS**

* **Completed *How Do I Learn Best?* *Worksheet***
* **Completed *Journal Page***

LEARNING TECHNIQUES

LESSON 6-7 STUDENT HANDOUT

A SIMPLE TASK FOR YOU!

**Directions:**

1. Read all directions before beginning.
2. Take out one sheet of lined paper.
3. Place it on your desk so that the holes are on the left side and the margin is at the top.
4. Skipping lines, number your paper from 1-7.
5. On the first line, write your name.
6. On the second line, write the name of the person sitting across from you.
7. On the sixth line, draw three stars.
8. In the center of the paper, draw a smiley face.
9. Write the number of siblings, brothers and sisters, you have on line 7.
10. On line 5, multiply 7 x 11 x 2 =
11. Write the capitol of the United States in the upper left hand corner.
12. In the margin, write down your favorite song and circle it.
13. Raise your left arm in the air.
14. Turn your paper upside down.
15. Write out today’s date using capital letters.
16. Turn your paper right side up again.
17. Turn your paper back to the numbered side.
18. On line three, draw a small picture of your favorite food.
19. Write your birthday on line 4.
20. Draw a star in each corner of your paper.
21. Fold your paper in half lengthwise.
22. Fold it in half the other way.
23. Shout out “Wild CAT!!”
24. Ignore directions two through twenty-three.
25. Put your pencil down and watch everyone else finish the activity.

LEARNING TECHNIQUES

LESSON 6-7 STUDENT HANDOUT

HOW DO I LEARN BEST? WORKSHEET

**Directions*:*** *For each section, select the description that is most like you. When you are finished, complete your study profile.*

**1.** **When I do my homework or study, I like…**

\_\_\_ it nice and quiet.

\_\_\_ background noise.

**2.** **I like my surroundings to be…**

\_\_\_ in bright light.

\_\_\_ in dim light.

**3.**  **I need the room to be…**

\_\_\_ warm.

\_\_\_ cool.

**4.** **To study, I like to …**

\_\_\_ sit at a desk or table.

\_\_\_ l ay on the bed or floor.

**5. I need…**

\_\_\_ to finish one task before I start

another.

\_\_\_ work on one task for awhile, then

work on another.

**6.** **I do better when…**

\_\_\_ I structure my learning myself.

\_\_\_ I get step-by-step guidance.

**7. I do things…**

\_\_\_ exactly the way I am instructed.

\_\_\_ the way I think might work best.

**8.** **I work hard on tasks because…**

\_\_\_ I want to succeed.

\_\_\_ it is expected that I do the work.

**9**. **I learn best…**

\_\_\_ working by myself.

\_\_\_ in a small group or team.

\_\_\_ directly from the teacher.

**10.** **The best time of day for me to study is…**

\_\_\_ morning.

\_\_\_ afternoon.

\_\_\_ evening.

**11. I need to eat…**

\_\_\_ while I am studying.

\_\_\_ before or after I study.

**12.** **When I study, I…**

\_\_\_ can sit in one spot for quite a while.

\_\_\_ must get up and move around every

once in a while.

**13. I learn best by…**

\_\_\_ seeing pictures, diagrams, and charts.

\_\_\_ listening to teachers others speaking.

\_\_\_ participating in discussions, games, or

projects—by “doing” the work.

**14. To understand my work, I need…**

\_\_\_ to see the main goal, the big picture.

\_\_\_ need the step-by-step process.

**15.** **When I am learning, I think in…**

\_\_\_ pictures and patterns.

\_\_\_ words and order of operations.

**16. I decide on an answer or a process…**

\_\_\_ without thinking about it too much.

\_\_\_ after giving it much consideration.

**STUDY PROFILE**

Describe your surroundings you like when studying (#1-4):

The things that motivate you to do your best are (#5-8):

Other things can influence my studying. I like it best when (#9-12):

My brain works best when (13-16):

Describe your study routine:

*Time of day:*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *Location:*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

My preparation strategies to attack my tests are:



LEARNING TECHNIQUES

LESSON 6-7 STUDENT HANDOUT

ATTACKING THE TEST

**Preparing for the test:**

* Take notes during class and when reading your information.
* Ask questions. Get help when you don’t understand.
* Get help from someone who understands the subject.
* Get together with others to study.
* Practice! Re-work your math problems or write a practice essay.
* Write a test yourself to take. How did you do?
* Get a good night sleep and eat breakfast.

**When it comes time to take the test:**

* Take a few minutes and look over the entire test. What types of questions does it ask: multiple choice, short answer, or essay?
* Do the headings or questions give you clues to the content?
* Read each question thoroughly. Underline or circle important concepts. Ask yourself, “What are they really asking me in this question?”
* Cross out wrong answers or unimportant sentences.
* If you don’t know an answer, skip it and move on to the questions you do know. Come back to these after you answer all the questions you know.
* Write legibly. The teacher has many tests to grade. If they can’t read your writing, they will not spend a lot of time trying to figure it out.
* Go over your work if you have time. Re-read your answers; recalculate your problems; check your spelling and grammar.

**Other study strategies:**



LEARNING TECHNIQUES

LESSON 6-7 STUDENT HANDOUT

JOURNAL PAGE

**DATE:**

**Lesson 6-7| *EFFECTIVE TEST PREPARATION***

***Q1:*** Imagine a student from your old elementary school comes to you and asks for help with one of her/his classes. They have a test next week and they have to do well or might not make it to 6th grade. What are the top three tips you would provide for test prep.

***Q2:*** Do you follow your own advice when preparing for tests? Explain your answer.

***Answers:***