

PORPE: Five-Step Strategy For Test Preparation

Step One: PLAN

Read, underline, and annotate the assigned material. Predict possible issues on which questions might be asked. Identify sources such as:

- The instructor's syllabus. Ask the professor what to anticipate on the test if s/he does not volunteer the information.
- Chapter questions or study guides— boldface headings or italicized words.
- Ideas that the instructor stresses in his/her lectures.

Step Two: ORGANIZE

Organize information to generate questions and answers. Create study checklists. Identify all of the material on which you will be tested - - list notes, formulas, diagrams, text assignments, semantic maps, review sheets, and charts. When you organize, make sure you do the following:

- Know the format of the test and study, accordingly; multiple-choice, essay, or a combination.
- Focus on large issues, while relating detailed information to general concepts.
- Map or chart key issues first, and then write an outline to organize their answer or...
- Write outline first and chart or map ideas to help flesh out the outline.

Step Three: REHEARSE

- Begin by testing over key ideas.
- Say out loud or write down the major parts of your outline.
- Go back to the first point and learn the details that belong to it.
- Repeat the key points and ideas plus the details *out loud*.
- Test yourself!
- Move on to the second key idea and its details.
- Repeat this process until you have memorized key ideas and details of your outline.

Step Four: PRACTICE

- Generate a list of possible questions. Take the “mock test” in the classroom or a quiet room.
- FROM MEMORY, write answers to each question you expect to be difficult.
- Time yourself.
- “Grade” and compare with classmates.

Step Five: EVALUATE

- Evaluate the quality of your answer; are you ready for the exam or is there a need for further review.
- Examine organization again—did you leave out key ideas or details?
- Repair and go through PORPE steps—PLAN, ORGANIZE, REHEARSE, PRACTICE, AND EVALUATE.

Adapted from: **The Study Guides and Strategies web site, created and maintained by Joe Landsberger**, academic web site developer at the University of St. Thomas (UST), St. Paul, Minnesota. <http://www.studygs.net/lrnstudy.htm>

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REDUCING TEST ANXIETY

- Being well prepared for the test is the best way to reduce test taking anxiety.
- Space out your studying over a few days or weeks, and continually review class material, don't wait until the night before and try to learn everything the night before.
- Try to maintain a positive attitude while preparing for the test and during the test.
- Exercising for a few days before the test will help reduce stress.
- Get a good night's sleep before the test.
- Show up to class early so you won't have to worry about being late.
- Stay relaxed. If you begin to get nervous take a few deep breaths slowly to relax yourself and then get back to work.
- Read the directions slowly and carefully.
- If you don't understand the directions on the test, ask the teacher to explain it to you.
- Skim through the test so that you have a good idea how to pace yourself.
- Write down important formulas, facts, definitions and/or keywords in the margin first so you won't worry about forgetting them.
- Do the simple questions first to help build up your confidence for the harder questions.
- Don't worry about how fast other people finish their test; just concentrate on your own test.
- If you don't know a question skip it for the time being (come back to it later if you have time), and remember that you don't have to always get every question right to do well on the test.
- Focus on the question at hand; don't let your mind wander on other things.