STUDY GUIDE

HEALTH CAREERS CENTER

TEST STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

TABE Overview

The *Tests of Adult Basic Education* are tests that measure the achievement of basic skills in reading, language, mathematics, and spelling, as they are commonly used in adult life. The outcome of your test will determine whether or not you need assistance with improving these areas before or during your courses at Metro Tech. Please relax and do your best work when testing.

Test-taking Strategies for the TABE (Tests of Adult Basic Education)

Preparing for the Test

- If you need special help with learning or reviewing skills, seek help at a community tutoring program.
- Identify how you learn best. That is, do you need to see, hear (say it), use your hands (write it), or use a combination of these in order to learn?
- Make use of study aids such as flash cards, sample questions, tip sheets, audio tapes, study guides, and drawings that organize information.
- Read somewhat challenging material daily, for at least 15 or 20 minutes. (Use the 'fist' rule to decide your level. If you miss more than five words on a page, it is probably too difficult.)
- Practice skimming. (Quickly run your eyes over a passage to look for specific information.)
- Practice using context (the parts of a sentence or paragraph that help you get the meaning of a particular word).

Prior to Testing

- Get plenty of sleep the night before the test.
- If you are hungry, eat before you test.
- Don't forget to take glasses or wear contacts to the test if you need them.
- Dress in layers so that you can adjust to the temperature in the testing area.

During the Test

- Listen carefully to directions and comments.
- Budget your time. Don't spend too much of your time on any one answer. Mentally divided your time between all your questions.
- Read test directions carefully. Make sure you understand the directions completely before beginning.
- If you have a lapse of memory, remain calm and return to the question later.
- Read questions carefully and completely. Reread if you are at all confused. In particular, reread all questions containing negative wording such as "not" or "least." Be especially alert for the use of double or even triple negatives within a sentence, as these must be read very carefully to assure full understanding.
- If you tend to lose your place, use your scratch paper to underline the correct number on your answer sheet.
- Answer easy questions first.
- If you don't know the answer, make a mark next to that question and try to complete it later. (Erase extra marks before turning in your test.)
- Change answers ONLY if you are sure they are wrong.
- Use all of the time allotted. Don't be disturbed by other students who finish early. Take your time, don't panic, and you will do much better on the test.
- If you have any time left over, check your answers. Use all the time available to eliminate careless errors and to improve your answers as much as possible.

Suggestions for Answering Multiple-Choice Questions

- Read the question and try to answer it *BEFORE* looking at the answers, so you'll be less apt to be fooled by the wrong answer.
- Look for the central idea of each question. What is the main point?
- Look for helpful key words like **always, never, none, except, most, least.**
- Make sure you look at all the answers before choosing. Don't take the first correct answer you see.
- Don't spend too much time on any one question. Budget your time. Mentally divide your time between all of your questions.
- If the question asks you something you do not know, see if you can eliminate any of the wrong answers before you guess.
- Do not keep changing your answer, unless you are absolutely sure you made a mistake.
- After you have finished the test, go back to those questions you marked as being too hard, or as having no right answer.

  If you still can't answer the question, then guess by eliminating as many wrong answers as you can.

- Whenever possible, recheck all answers in a different way from that used when you did the work. For example, add down a column of figures when rechecking if you added up the column when you first solved the problem.
- Be sure you have filled in the bubbles and that you've erased any stray pencil marks.

Solving Problems

When you work a problem, ask yourself three questions:

1. What are you being asked to find?
2. What do you need to know in order to find this?
3. What are you already given in the problem to help you with your search?

After working through the problem, look back at what it asked you to find. Does your answer cover it? If not, go through the three questions again.

Good problem solvers have these characteristics:

- Positive attitude. They believe that problems can be solved by careful, persistent (though sometimes lengthy) analysis, not by fast answers based on previous knowledge.

- Concern for accuracy. They read a problem several times trying to understand it. They review their judgments and conclusions, avoid guessing, and check their work.

- Methodical planning. They break work into parts and then solve it step by step, starting with the simplest step.

- Concentration. They use their energy to solve problems by talking to themselves about what they are doing, creating mental pictures, relating the problem to familiar experiences, counting, or drawing pictures.

General Suggestions for Reducing Anxiety

- Over-prepare.

- Avoid stressful situations before the test.

- Exercise to reduce stress.

- Eating a high carbohydrate diet the night before the test will help you think during testing.

- Drink adequate liquids.

- Avoid excessive caffeine.

- Listen to calming music.

- Focus on success. Think about what you've done in the past that resulted in success.
- Practice positive self-talk, and ignore negative talk from others.
- See yourself achieving goals.
- Be early. Find out where you're going ahead of time.
- Stay on task. Manage and organize your time.

Suggestions for Reducing Anxiety During the Test

- Seat yourself away from distractions.
- Do one task at a time.
- Do your best rather than expecting perfection.
- Try this exercise to release tension:

    1. Tighten and release tension in the muscles of your hands, arms, and jaw.
    2. Inhale, hold your breath, breathe out.
    3. Tighten and relax the muscles in your stomach, legs, and feet.
    4. Relax your entire body.