

Test-Taking Tips for Secondary Students

Teacher Lesson Plan

Secondary Grades: 6 - 12

Purpose: This lesson focuses on preparing students for taking high-stakes tests. Students will take a survey regarding their sleeping, eating, and attendance habits. The survey will be reviewed.

Lesson Time: 30 minutes

Activity: Teacher-directed small group or whole class discussion.

- Students should complete the *Test-taking Tips for Secondary Students SURVEY QUESTIONS* (see page 2) on their own.
- After the students complete the *Test-taking Tips for Secondary Students SURVEY QUESTIONS*, the teacher distributes *Test-taking Tips for Secondary Students – The FACTS!* (see pages 3-4).
- Students are asked to compare their original SURVEY answers with **The FACTS!**
- The teacher and students discuss each section. Some suggested probing questions are listed below.

The image shows two overlapping documents. The top document is titled "Test-Taking Tips for Secondary Students SURVEY QUESTIONS". It contains the following text:

Directions: **BEFORE** taking a test, there are many things that you should do. Complete the survey below. After you complete the survey, your teacher will give you **The FACTS!**

Please complete the SURVEY questions listed below.

I. Test takers need to eat a nutritious breakfast.
Do you usually eat breakfast?
If so, what do you eat?
Do you think that this is a good breakfast for you to eat? Why or why not?

II. Test takers need to get plenty of rest.
How many hours do you usually sleep at night?
Do you think that's enough rest? Why or why not?

III. Test takers need to wear comfortable clothes.
What do you usually wear to school?
Are you ever uncomfortable in the clothes you wear to school? Why?

IV. Test takers need to arrive at school on time.
What time do you usually get to school?
Are you ever late for school?
Why do you think it's important to be at school on time?

The bottom document is titled "Test-Taking Tips for Secondary Students Student Handout". It contains the following text:

to get through a busy morning! Those who eat breakfast in the first opportunity of the day to

pyramid: fruit, whole-grain toast or cereal, and proteins, protein and fat is released over the 4 without feeling hungry and can focus on

in some protein and some fiber. Protein can whole grains, vegetables and fruits. Another is a hard-boiled egg, an orange, and a bowl of

breakfast made up primarily of sugary foods. Blood sugar and energy about an hour after not bring on symptoms of hunger and fatigue.

a little preparation time. There are plenty that ready-to-eat cereals and instant oatmeal.

are high in antioxidants, have been linked to **berries and blueberries** are especially effective

Food Pyramid Diagrams

Meat, Poultry, Fish, Dry Beans, Eggs & Nuts
2-3 Servings

Fruit
1-2 Servings

Bread, Cereal, Rice & Pasta
6-11 Servings

Water: 8 Servings

Single School Culture © for ACADEMICS Page 3 of 4

PROBING Questions

- I. The FACTS: Test takers need to get plenty of rest.**
 - You should be getting a minimum of 8-9 hours of sleep. Do you get enough sleep?
 - Why is it critical to get enough sleep?
- II. The FACTS: Test takers need to eat a nutritious breakfast.**
 - Do you have good breakfast eating habits? Why or why not?
 - What new information did you learn about eating a nutritious breakfast?
- III. The FACTS: Test takers need to wear comfortable clothes.**
 - What does it mean "to dress in layers"?
 - It is best to plan your wardrobe the night before the test, why?
- IV. The FACTS: Test takers need to arrive at school on time.**
 - Has anyone ever been late for an important test or appointment? Explain how being late made you feel.

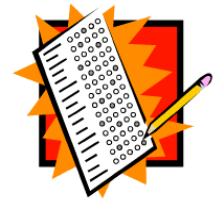
REMEMBER, the first step in doing well on any test is to be well prepared. You've been preparing academically all year; you can assist yourself further by being prepared physically and mentally. Good Luck!

References:

How Much Sleep Do Children Need? <http://www.webmd.com/>
School Nutrition: Nutrition Explorations. <http://www.webmed.com>
Test-taking Tips. http://www.zeinah.com/ashland/test_taking_tips.htm

Test-Taking Tips for Secondary Students

SURVEY QUESTIONS



Directions: **BEFORE** taking a test, there are many things that you should do. Complete the survey below. After you complete the survey, your teacher will give you **The FACTS**.

Please complete the SURVEY questions listed below.

I. Test takers need to **eat a nutritious breakfast.**

Do you usually eat breakfast? _____ If so, what do you eat?

Do you think that this is a good breakfast for you to eat? _____ Why or why not?

II. Test takers need to **get plenty of rest.**

How many hours do you usually sleep at night? _____ Do you think that's enough rest? _____
Why or why not?

III. Test takers need to **wear comfortable clothes.**

What do you usually wear to school?

Are you ever uncomfortable in the clothes you wear to school? Why?

IV. Test takers need to **arrive at school on time.**

What time do you usually get to school? _____ Are you ever late for school? _____
Why do you think it's important to be at school on time?

Test-Taking Tips for Secondary Students

THE FACTS!

I. **The FACTS:** Test takers need to eat a nutritious breakfast.

Studies show that students who eat breakfast do better in school.

Breakfast not only jumpstarts the day, it **provides the energy needed to get through a busy morning!** Those who eat breakfast have higher energy levels than those who skip breakfast. Breakfast is the first opportunity of the day to fuel the body and get the metabolism running.

A nutritious breakfast may include the following foods from the food pyramid: fruit, whole-grain toast or cereal, and low-fat milk. The energy from the carbohydrates, protein and fat is released over the course of the morning. This means that students can go several hours without feeling hungry and can focus on learning until snack or lunch time.

Another thing to remember is that a **healthy breakfast should contain some protein and some fiber.** Protein can come from low-fat meats, eggs, beans or dairy. Fiber can be found in whole grains, vegetables and fruits. Another good example of a healthy breakfast might be something simple like a hard-boiled egg, an orange, and a bowl of whole grain cereal with low-fat milk.

There are certain types of breakfast food that you should avoid! A breakfast made **primarily of sugary foods**, such as doughnuts, fruit drinks, or soft drinks, causes a quick rise in blood sugar and energy. About an hour after eating this breakfast, your blood sugar and energy decline rapidly, and bring on symptoms of hunger and fatigue.

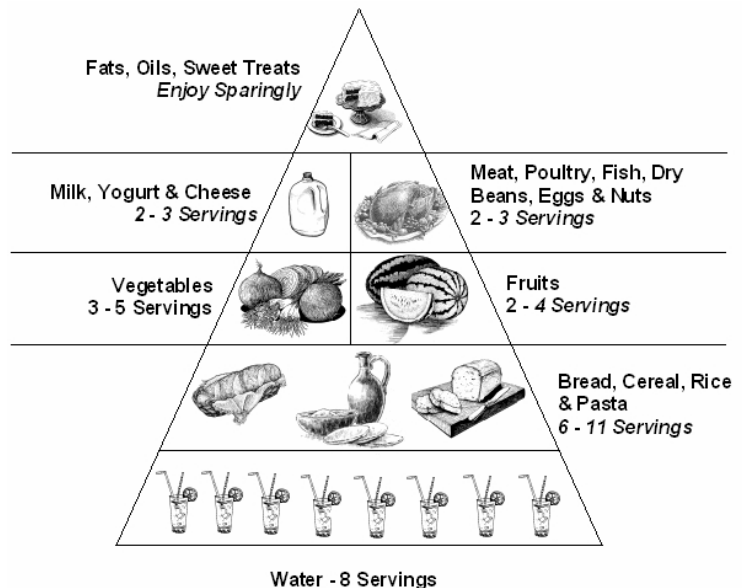
Some Breakfast tips:

No time? Build a breakfast around foods that are ready to eat or take little preparation time. There are plenty that qualify: fresh and canned fruits, milk, yogurt, cheese, cottage cheese, ready-to-eat cereals and instant breakfast mixes.

What foods are best for concentration? Fruits and vegetables, which are high in antioxidants, have been linked to improved memory and brain function. Studies have shown that **strawberries** and **blueberries** are especially effective and that eating them results in improved coordination, concentration and short-term memory.

Dried fruits keep kids alert! Dried fruits are high in iron, which improves mental alertness and energy levels. Trail mix contains raisins and dried cherries. This is an excellent snack!

Yogurt enhances learning. Studies show that children eating high calcium foods for breakfast have enhanced behavior and learning. Calcium also helps strengthen bones and helps children remain active.



Test-Taking Tips for Secondary Students

II. The FACTS: Test takers need to get plenty of rest.

The right amount of sleep is essential for anyone who wants to do well on a test, play a sport, or work after school.

Sleep requirements for teenagers fall into a range. Most teens need a minimum of **8 - 9 hours of sleep per day and some may require more than 9 hours.**

WHY do you need sleep? The average teen has a busy day. For example, there's school, taking care of younger siblings, going to sports practice, going to afterschool activities, and doing homework. These activities result in a FULL, productive day. **Sleep allows your body to rest.** When your body doesn't have enough hours to rest, you may feel tired and irritable, or you may be unable to think clearly. You might have trouble following directions, or doing a school assignment. An assignment or test that would normally be easy for you, may feel impossible to do if you are sleep deprived.

Sleep is also important for your brain. Though no one is exactly sure what work the brain does when you're asleep, many scientists think that the brain sorts through and stores information, replaces chemicals, and solves problems.

How do you know if you are getting enough sleep? Even if you think you're getting enough sleep, you may not be. Sleep deprived students may have some of the signs below:

- Difficulty waking up in the morning
- Inability to concentrate
- Falling asleep during classes
- Feelings of moodiness and even depression



III. The FACTS: Test takers need to wear comfortable clothes.

Dress for the temperature of your classroom. Does your classroom ever get too cold or too hot? You might want to **dress in layers.** For example, wear a sweater and if it gets too hot you will be able to take it off. Next, make sure that you **don't wear anything too tight or too loose** – you will feel uncomfortable all day. One last thought, I know that glasses are not clothing, but **if you are supposed to wear GLASSES, wear them!**

IV. The FACTS: Test takers need to arrive at school on time.

Being on time for school is important. If you take the bus, you will get to school at your usual time. If you eat breakfast in the cafeteria, make sure that you eat and proceed to your assigned classroom as stated in your school rules.

If you walk to school, **it is important to give yourself plenty of time so that you won't have to rush.** In fact, arrive early for school. There is nothing more stressful than arriving late for a major test. To avoid wasting any energy on "worrying about getting to school" **the recommendation is to arrive 5-10 minutes early.**