

M15 Preparing yourself for a test: tips and techniques

15.1

Before the test

To prepare for an examination or a test is not so difficult if one knows how. You have already learned many tips and techniques. In the following, we summarize the most important points and provide you with additional hints.

Structure your work carefully. Do not just begin with the preparations the night before the test under any circumstances! For more extensive examinations, create a program (an action plan) for your work over the next four or five days. Here, you see what this might look like:

Day 1:

Get a detailed overview of what you have to learn. Review everything, consider how to divide the material into three portions. Clarify in school anything that may not be clear.

Days 2, 3, 4:

Every day, thoroughly learn one of the portions. Briefly review the other two portions. See below how to study rigorously.

Day 5:

Repeat everything thoroughly one more time. Go to bed early so that you are well rested on the day of the test.

Your instructor can give you the following useful pages (if you don't have them already): «practicing and training – reasons and a few hot tips», «understanding contents and the ability to reproduce them» and «creating training aids yourselves». Review them and choose the techniques that match the subject of your topic!



Working in pairs is often a great help. This way you can quiz and support each other. Try to explain the material to someone else. Thus, you will find out quickly if something is not quite clear to you and what you still need to learn in depth.

When learning at home, and even during a test, a short relaxation moment can be useful. This applies particularly when you are stressed. Here are a few pertinent exercises:



- Close your eyes for a minute and only concentrate on your breathing.
- Take a DEEP breath and exhale FORCEFULLY five times!
- Extend and stretch.
- With your fingertips massage your head (forehead, temples, hairline).
- Try to fully concentrate for an entire minute on the second hand of your watch. Immediately wipe away any other thought.
- Close your eyes and imagine something beautiful, like a landscape from your vacation trips.
- Drink a sip.

15.2

Before and during the test

Avoid any negative thoughts («I know nothing», «This is too difficult for me» usw.). Such thoughts only stress and weaken you; they are definitely not useful. Instead, remember positive thoughts, like:

«I have prepared myself well, and I am going to pass this test!»

«If others can do this, so can I!»

«Today is a good day, and I am going to pass this test as well!»

«I know so many learning techniques and tips that nothing can go wrong!»

During the test, observe the following points:

- Get an overview before you start working:
 - What is the question exactly?
 - How many questions do I have to answer?
 - How much time do I approximately have for each question?
- Begin with an easy answer. This gives you a sense of achievement.
- Leave aside or skip difficult tasks for the time being. Otherwise, you might waste too much time with them.
- Carefully read through every question first. Begin solving the task only when you have understood it completely.