

Special Suggestions for Essay Tests

- * Read all the questions through rapidly, jotting down beside each question any pertinent facts or ideas that occur to you. The best way to ensure that your answers do not overlap each other is to survey the entire test before answering any of the questions.
- * Estimate the time that you will have for each question according to the relative difficulty and importance of all questions. Then keep track of your time so that you don't spend too much time on any one question.
- * Answer the easiest questions first and concentrate on answering one question at a time. Getting down to work on something you can handle is the surest way to reduce your test anxiety.
- * Decide what kind of answer the question requires before you begin writing. Action verbs such as "illustrate", "list", "define", "compare", "trace", "explain", and "identify" require different approaches to answering.
- * Before you start writing, make a brief, logical outline for your answer to ensure good organization and prevent careless omissions. It's not how much you say but what you say and how well you say it that counts.
- * Get down to business in your first paragraph and avoid long-winded introductions. Your aim in answering most essay questions is to get down the maximum amount of point-earning information in the shortest possible time.
- * Where appropriate, include factual details to support your answer. These impress your instructor by giving evidence that you really know what you are talking about.
- * Write legible, complete sentences and paragraphs.
- * Leave space after each question for additional information which may occur to you later.
- * Re-read your answers -- do they say what you intended? Correct all grammar and spelling errors.
- * If you run out of time, outline the remaining information.