NWTC
ACADEMIC COACHING
AND TUTORING

Test Prep and Test Taking Strategies

Before a Test	Brain + Body Prep	During a Test
Keep up on coursework. Keep up on assignments, readings, videos, and attending class. This gives your brain time to review and cement the new material. Falling behind can add to your stress and reduce your brain's ability to recall what you've learned.	**Get enough sleep.** Don't underestimate the power of sleep. The brain needs sleep to sort and clean up learning information. Aim to get to bed on time or a little early before an exam and skip the last-minute cramming. A well-rested brain will operate better than a tired one.	**Give yourself time to get ready and to your test.** You can't control every part of your day, but you can control how you respond. If something goes wrong before an exam, take a breath, slow down, and give yourself a moment to regroup before you begin. Starting calmly can help you access what you already know.
Avoid the "Cram". Give yourself time to succeed. Instead of cramming the night before, spread your studying out over a week or two. This reduces stress, helps the information stick, and allows you to walk into the exam feeling prepared rather than just hoping it goes well.	**Eat a healthy meal.** Think of food as fuel for your brain. A protein-rich snack and plenty of water can help you stay focused, alert, and ready to access the knowledge you've worked hard to learn. With physical needs met, your body has the ability to focus on recalling information.	**Work through the test once first.** Answer familiar questions first. Don't get stuck on one question. Mark it, move on, and come back later. As you work through the exam, you may find clues in other questions that help jog your memory.
Active Studying. Don't just review information, interact with it. Read it, write it, say it out loud, draw it, and test yourself on it. The more ways you engage with the material, the more likely you are to understand it, remember it, and apply it successfully on an exam.	**Develop positive mindsets about your learning.** Create self-encouragements that speak to your potential and growth rather than perfection or performance: "I can learn tough topics" "I'm thankful for opportunities to grow" "My understanding improves every day"	**Test Strategies.** Trust yourself and avoid overthinking. Generally, your first guess is best. Pay attention to keywords such as *never, always,* and *only*. Before looking at the answer choices, come up with your own response and then choose the option that best matches it.