



October

## Studying For Tests

Throughout high school, students will engage in a number of tests. Whether they be classroom tests or standardized tests (ex. SAT college entrance exam, Michigan Merit Exam), these tests are intended to measure a student's knowledge and abilities in a variety of subject areas. Below are some general test-taking strategies to help students do their best. Please review these strategies in order to best prepare for the tests that will be taken throughout high school.

### Before the Test

1. Be sure to find out ahead of time...
  - o what material the test will cover
  - o what type of test it will be (multiple choice, true/false, short answer, essay)
  - o how the test will be graded
  - o how much the test is worth
2. Study in a place that is free of distractions. Have ready all the things you will need, such as paper, pens, computer, iPad, or a calculator.
3. Study at a time when you are alert and not hungry or sleepy.
4. Don't wait until the last minute to study! Short daily study sessions are better than one long session the night before the test.
5. Set a goal for each study period. If you are being tested on three chapters, set up four study sessions, one for each chapter and one for a review of the main ideas in all three chapters.
6. Repetition is key! Read and reread your class notes and the relevant chapters in the textbook.
7. While you are reviewing your notes, cover them up periodically and summarize them out loud. Pretend that you are explaining the material to someone else.
8. Create your own study aids.
  - o Make an outline from your notes of just the main ideas.
  - o Make a timeline of important dates or the order of events.
  - o Make flashcards for studying vocabulary or events and important dates (there is a great free app for this on students' iPads)
  - o Make up your own quiz or test based on your notes, and have a friend, parent, or sibling test you.
  - o "Vocabulary sketch" the material. Draw pictures that represent the terms or concept you are trying to learn and remember.
9. Make personal connections to the material.
10. Do any practice exams or study sheets provided by the teacher. These will help you focus your study session and give you confidence.
11. Get help from the teacher if you do not understand something.

### Tips for Taking Tests

1. Read the instructions carefully. Never assume you will know what they will say! Ask the teacher if you are unsure about anything.
2. Read the entire test through before starting. Notice the point value of each section. This will help you to pace yourself.

3. Answer the easiest questions first, then the ones with the highest point value. You don't want to spend 20 minutes trying to figure out a two-point problem!
4. Keep busy! If you get stuck on a question, come back to it later. The answer might come to you while you are working on another part of the test.
5. If you aren't sure how to answer a question fully, try to answer at least part of it. You might get partial credit.
6. Need to guess on a multiple-choice test? First, eliminate the answers that you know are wrong. Then take a guess. Because your first guess is most likely to be correct, you shouldn't go back and change an answer later unless you are certain you were wrong.
7. On an essay test, take a moment to plan your writing. First, jot down the important points you want to make. Then number these points in the order you will cover them.
8. Keep it neat! If your teacher can't read your writing, you might lose points.
9. Don't waste time doing things for which you will not receive credit, such as rewriting test questions.
10. Leave time at the end to look over your work. Did you answer every question? Did you proofread for errors? It is easy to make careless mistakes while taking a test.

### After the Test

1. When the test is returned, read the teacher's comments carefully and try to learn from your mistakes.
2. Save tests for later review for end-of-term tests.

## Need Help with Homework or Studying for Tests?

Study sessions and homework help will be provided by National Honors Society members for students who need extra support with their school work. This is a great opportunity to receive free assistance!

Tuesdays	2:50-3:50 p.m.	East Counseling Office or West Main Office
Thursdays	2:50 - 3:50 p.m.	East Counseling Office or West Main Office

Math help is also available from one of our math teachers.

Wednesdays	3:00 - 4:00 p.m.	Room 203
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## Standardized Tests

A **standardized test** is a test administered and scored in a consistent manner. The tests are designed in such a way that the "questions, conditions for administering, scoring procedures, and interpretations are consistent" and are "administered and scored in a predetermined, standard manner." (definition from [www.collegeprep101.com](http://www.collegeprep101.com))

### Michigan Merit Exam (MME)

The Michigan Merit Examination (MME) assesses students in grade 11 based on Michigan high school standards. It is administered each spring, and consists of three components:

- SAT College Admission Test
- WorkKeys job skills assessments in reading, mathematics, and "locating information"
- Michigan-developed assessments in science and social studies (called the M-Step)

## SAT

The SAT is a test given to high school juniors in order to test their knowledge base in Reading, Writing and Language, and Math. There is also an optional essay. It is given free of charge as part of the Michigan Merit Exam, but many students opt to take it more than once, as colleges generally take a student's highest score. It's given several times a year, all over the nation. Scores on the SAT test range from 400-1600.

It's a timed test. Students are not penalized for wrong answers.

Because the SAT test is important, it is imperative that students take the test seriously and adequately prepare for it. The College Board has partnered with the Khan Academy to provide students with free test prep services. Visit [www.khanacademy.org](http://www.khanacademy.org) to set up an account, get an overview of the test, and participate in practice tests.

In the spring, all of our sophomores will be taking the **PSAT 10**. This test provides students practice for the SAT test they will be taking in the spring of the junior year. Additionally, students who want additional practice will have the opportunity to take the **PSAT** in the fall of 11th grade. More information concerning both tests can be found at <https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/psat-nmsqt-psat-10>.

## ACT

One other standardized test, in addition to the SAT, that is widely used by college and universities for admission is the ACT. If students desire to take this test for college admission, in addition to the SAT they take in the spring of the junior year, registration information can be found at [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org).

## Careerline Tech Center

The Careerline Tech Center services more than 1500 11th and 12th grade students in 28 career and technical education programs. Careerline Tech Center (CTC) classes are free (except Cosmetology). Programs are offered Monday through Friday and students attend for a half day either in the morning or the afternoon. Interested students and parents can get more information and detailed course descriptions by visiting their website at [www.oaisd.org/ctc](http://www.oaisd.org/ctc). Each fall CTC offers an open house to interested students and parents. This year's open house will be held on **Tuesday, October 24 from 5:30-7:30 p.m.** The open house is a great opportunity for students and parents to learn more about programs of interest, walk around the building, meet with instructors, and network with local businesses.

## College Timetable

Listed below are some basic guidelines for what students should do at each grade level if they desire to prepare for college upon high school graduation. Counselors will be working with students each year to provide guidance and information concerning how to navigate through the college planning process. As always, please do not hesitate to contact your counselor if you have any questions. The college planning process can be a tedious one, and it is better to ask questions than to not understand something.

### Sophomore Year

Students should continue to focus on their studies, as all classes taken and grades earned in high school appear on a student's transcript and get sent to colleges for help in determining admission. In addition to working hard and being involved in a variety of activities, students should try to identify their abilities and interests, as well as looking for opportunities to further develop their skills and talents. Be sure to visit our counseling office websites at <http://counseling.zps.org> for college and career planning resources. Students will also be taking the PSAT 10 in April to prepare for the SAT test they will be taking in the spring of the junior year.

### **Junior Year**

In 11<sup>th</sup> grade, the “rubber hits the road.” Students should be investigating careers, researching and visiting colleges, preparing for and taking college admission and state required exams (SAT and MME), taking part in college fairs, participating in job shadows, investigating financial aid opportunities, exploring college athletic eligibility (if desiring to play sports in college), and making sure they sign up for senior year classes that colleges recommend.

### **Senior Year**

Senior year is when hard work and planning pay off. Students should have college applications completed by the middle of October, at the latest. If desiring to improve SAT and/or ACT test scores for admission or scholarship opportunities, this should be taken care of in the fall as well. Students should apply for scholarships throughout the year. If in search of financial aid, parents will need to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as soon after October 1 as possible. In the spring, 12<sup>th</sup> graders will need to decide what college they plan to attend and submit their deposit and final high school transcript. If planning on employment after high school, students should have updated resumes and researched job opportunities.

*\*\*Some information adapted from “How to Get the Most out of High School.”*