

Test Taking Skills & Strategies: Juniors

May 8, 2018

	Lessons	Standards
Last Week Apr 30-May 4	Early Release – No AG (Mon) Internet Safety Lesson 2 (Tues) SBAC Assembly - tentative (Wed) Spirit Games Sign-up Assembly (Fri)	SEL 1: Self-Regulation SEL 2: Social Belonging
This Week May 7-11	Test Taking Skills & Strategies (Tues)	SEL 1: Self-Regulation
Next Week May 14-18	Internet Safety Lesson 3 (Tues) Spring Awards Ceremony - RIE (Thurs)	SEL 1: Self-Regulation SEL 2: Social Belonging
Next Week May 21-25	Early Release – No AG (Mon) SBAC (Tues) SBAC (Wed) Special Schedule for SBAC (Thurs) Link Crew (Fri)	SEL 1: Self-Regulation

Materials: Test Taking Strategies Handout (In box, See Below)

Procedure:

1. Begin advisory according to personal preference.
2. Take attendance
3. Read Announcements
4. Objective: Students outline effective methods for SBAC test-taking as well as other standardized tests.
5. READ: In order to graduate from high school, you must meet the essential skills requirements in Math and English Language Arts. This is demonstrated on the SBAC test that you will be taking next week. If you are planning to go to a four-year college, you will likely need to take either the SAT or the ACT. If you're planning to enlist in the military or attend a two-year or technical college, there are other standardized tests you will need to take. We will be discussing general strategies to help you with all of these standardized tests you may have to take during the next few years.
6. Divide students into groups of three or four and ask them to brainstorm ideas for how they can be successful on the SBAC CAT or computer adaptive portion of the test. Tell them they can use their experience with other standardized exams to come up with ideas. Ask each group to share one or two of their ideas and write them on the board, noting common themes. Then distribute the test-taking Handout (see below), and review it with students. Compare their ideas with the strategies listed on the handout and note the similarities and differences. Ask each student to write one or two additional strategies at the bottom of their handout, based on their group's discussion.
7. End AG according to personal preference.

STUDENT HANDOUT - Standardized Tests – TEST TAKING STRATEGIES

STRATEGY 1: KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT

Spend a little time doing research before you take a standardized test. For the SBAC, talk to your Math and English Teachers about the test and available resources. Use the Internet or your school's career or counseling center to learn about each of the sections the test will contain and what types of questions will be in each section. Make sure you understand the rules for each section: for instance, whether a specific section will require multiple choice answers or an essay. Even better, download or go online and take a practice test so that you get a feel for the types of questions you will encounter. **NOTE: Becoming familiar with the SBAC test before you take it, will minimize your anxiety, familiarize you with the look of the test, give you a chance to practice using all the tools and computer-based manipulatives, and familiarize you with the various types of questions you will see on the test.**

STRATEGY 2: READ THE INSTRUCTIONS

Even if you've done your research, make sure you read the instructions for each section of the test. Make sure you know what the section is asking you to do, what types of answers are expected, how many questions are in that section, and how much time you have. Don't assume that a section on an exam is just like a practice test. Read the instructions before you begin!

STRATEGY 3: PACE YOURSELF

On most standardized tests, there is a time limit for each section. Before you begin each section, make sure you know how much time you are allowed. Check your watch or the clock in the exam room to determine when you will have to finish. Then, calculate how many questions you must answer and determine how quickly you must work (for instance, two minutes per question or ten minutes per essay). **NOTE: SBAC does NOT have a time limit. It is still wise to have a strategy/ goal for each class period. Having a strategy will help you to maintain your focus and stamina while taking the test. Talk to your Math or English teacher about what would work best for you.**

STRATEGY 4: ANSWER EASY QUESTIONS FIRST

Because the test is timed, it's important to move through it as quickly as you can. If you don't know the answer to a question right away, move on and come back to it later, though remember to skip that question on your answer sheet as well. **NOTE: SBAC CAT is a computer adaptive test. This means the questions adapt to your performance. This requires a slightly different strategy. Remember, the test is NOT timed. You DO want to take time to answer questions that you know, but don't spend all your time trying to figure out the answers to questions that you do not know. You may be able to figure them out, but this will affect your stamina and focus for the whole test. If you have no idea on a question, simply select an answer, flag the question and move on. Take the time to answer the questions you do know, and then go back to the ones you have flagged during the last 10 to 20 minutes of class. Once you are done for the day, you cannot go back to any of those questions during the next day of testing.**

STRATEGY 5: USE THE PROCESS OF ELIMINATION FOR DIFFICULT QUESTIONS OR WORK BACKWARDS

If you don't know the answer to a question, see if you can eliminate any answers that are obviously wrong. If you are able to eliminate several of the possible answers, you can then make an educated guess from those that remain. Working backwards from the answer to the question is also useful with math problems. This is a process of elimination strategy as well.

Can you think of any other test-taking strategies? Write them here: