



A Parent's Guide to:

A Parents Guide: Helping Your Child with TEST-TAKING

Parents and schools
working together for
student achievement.

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Tests — They are a fact of school life! Your child will take many tests while in school. Most of these tests are developed by your child's teachers. These tests measure the learning of each child on a specific subject.

Your child will also take standardized tests. A standardized test is designed to show how students from one school or class compare to other students across the state and country. Standardized tests also evaluate student learning on the reading and math content standards. In South Dakota, students in grades 3 through 8 and 11 take the Dakota STEP.

Parents, You Can Help Your Child Develop the Ability to Be a Better Test-Taker!

Tips for Parents

- Don't judge your child on the basis of a single test score. Remember there are many factors and one test is simply one test.
- Make sure your child attends school regularly.
- Show interest and ask questions about the subjects and information your child is studying throughout the year.
- Have a regular place for them to do their homework – someplace quiet and out of range of the TV.
- Share some of your successful study habits with your child.
- Establish a **daily** homework routine – same place and time. If your child does not have homework every night – have them read a book!
- Encourage your child to proofread homework assignments. Proofreading and correcting one's errors is a great test-taking skill.
- Encourage recreational reading at home. Provide books that appeal to your child's interest. Let them see YOU read!
- Share ideas for effective note-taking strategies.
- The night before a test, make sure your child gets a good night sleep, followed by a healthy breakfast the next morning.
- Give plenty of pre-tests hugs!
- Keep a positive attitude about tests. If you are anxious about your child's test, keep your cool around your child.
- Encourage your child to do well, but don't pressure them.
Speak positively and help them believe the best.

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- Find out when the tests are to be given. Write the date and time on your calendar. Avoid scheduling appointments or trips during these times.
 - Talk to your child about taking standardized tests. Explain that it is important for them to give their best effort. Maintain a positive attitude. However, point out that it is okay if they are unsure of some answers.
 - Keep standardized test results in perspective. They are a “snapshot” of your child’s performance on a particular day. Your child’s progress over time is equally important.

REMEMBER – Tests are a celebration of your child’s learning!

Test-Taking Tips to Share with Your Child

- Concentrate – do not let noises distract you.
- Read directions carefully before marking any answers.
- Read the entire question and ALL of the answer choices.
- Eliminate wrong answers on multiple choice questions.
- Make sure the question number and number on answer sheet match.
- Pace yourself and don’t spend too much time on questions you don’t know.
- If time permits, check answers at the end.
- Have extra pencils and erasers handy.
- Remember, there is no pattern to correct answers. If the last three answers were C, the next answer could be A, B, C, or D.
- Answer the easier questions first. Return to the harder ones later.
- Think positively and breathe deeply.

Remember, tests are ONE part of the learning and educational experience. Concentrating and valuing the whole experience helps to put testing in proper perspective.

South Dakota Resource Network

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