

# Lesson Plan for Addressing Test Anxiety

## Goals:

- Students will understand how to deal with test anxiety.

## Materials Needed:

Copies of "Test Anxiety Survey" (1 for each student)

Copies of the "What to do about Test Anxiety" (1 for each student)

## Procedure:

### Step #1

Ask the students "what is test anxiety?"

Remind students that a little anxiety is normal - it is when that anxiety overtakes their ability to perform well on the test that there is a concern.

### Step #2

Give students the Test Anxiety Survey - if they answer yes to four or more of the questions they experience an unhealthy amount of anxiety over tests. You can give the quiz orally with the questions visually on the overhead or you can make copies and have them take the survey that way.

### Step #3

Discuss some strategies for dealing with Test Anxiety...

- Use good study techniques to gain cognitive mastery of the material that will be covered on the test. This mastery will help you to approach the test with confidence rather than have excessive anxiety.
- Maintain a positive attitude as you study. Think about doing well, not failing. Think of the test as an opportunity to show how much you have learned.
- Go into the test well rested and well fed. Get enough sleep the night before the test. Eat a light and nutritious meal before the test. Stay away from junk foods.
- Stay relaxed during the test. Taking slow, deep breaths can help. Focus on positive self-esteem statements such as "I can do this."
- Follow a plan for taking the test such as the DETER strategy. Don't panic even if you find the test difficult. Stay with your plan!
- Don't worry about other students finishing the test before you do. Take the time that you need to do your best.
- Once you finish the test and hand it in, forget about it temporarily. There is nothing more you can do until the graded test is returned to you. Turn your attention and effort to new assignments and tests.

## Reflection Questions:

How can you practice some of the skills you learned here? How will this change your test taking experience?

(Teachers: Please feel free to add to or change the reflection questions.)

# TEST ANXIETY SURVEY

Directions: Answer the following questions with a “yes” or “no.”

1. I have a hard time getting started studying for a test.
2. When studying for a test, I find many things that distract me.
3. I expect to do poorly on a test no matter how much or how hard I study.
4. When taking a test, I experience physical discomfort such as sweaty palms, an upset stomach, a headache, difficulty breathing or tension in my muscles.
5. When taking a test, I find it difficult to understand the directions and questions.
6. When taking a test, I have difficulty organizing my thoughts.
7. When taking a test, I often “draw a blank.”
8. When taking a test, I find my mind wandering to other things.
9. I usually score lower on a test than I do on assignments and papers.
10. After a test, I remember information I couldn’t recall during the test.

# TEST ANXIETY SURVEY

Directions: Answer the following questions with a “yes” or “no.”

1. I have a hard time getting started studying for a test.
2. When studying for a test, I find many things that distract me.
3. I expect to do poorly on a test no matter how much or how hard I study.
4. When taking a test, I experience physical discomfort such as sweaty palms, an upset stomach, a headache, difficulty breathing or tension in my muscles.
5. When taking a test, I find it difficult to understand the directions and questions.
6. When taking a test, I have difficulty organizing my thoughts.
7. When taking a test, I often “draw a blank.”
8. When taking a test, I find my mind wandering to other things.
9. I usually score lower on a test than I do on assignments and papers.
10. After a test, I remember information I couldn’t recall during the test.

# WHAT TO DO ABOUT TEST ANXIETY

Here are some things you can do before, during and after a test to reduce your test anxiety.

- Use good study techniques. Being prepared helps you approach the test with confidence.
- Maintain a positive attitude as you study. Think about doing well, not failing. Think of the test as an opportunity to show how much you have learned.
- Go into the test well rested and well fed. Get enough sleep the night before the test. Eat a light and nutritious meal before the test - stay away from junk foods.
- Stay relaxed during the test. Taking slow, deep breaths can help. Focus on positive self-statements such as "I can do this."
- Follow a plan for taking the test such as the DETER strategy. Don't panic even if you find the test difficult.
- Don't worry about other students finishing the test before you do. Take the time that you need to do your best.
- Once you finish the test and hand it in, forget about it temporarily. There is nothing more you can do until the graded test is returned to you. Turn your attention and effort to new assignments and tests.
- When the graded test is returned to you, analyze it to see how you could have done better. Learn from your mistakes and from what you did well. Apply this knowledge when you take the next test.

You have to know the material to do well on a test.  
You have to control test anxiety to show what you know.