

Tips for Taking a Test

- First **look over** the entire test. You'll get a sense of its length. Try to identify those problems you definitely know how to do right away, and those you expect to have to think about.
- Do the problems in the order that suits **you!** Start with the problems that you know for sure you can do. This builds confidence and means you don't miss any sure points just because you run out of time. Then try the problems you think you can figure out; then finally try the ones you are least sure about.
- **Online Tests** – complete them as if they are just a paper and pencil test. Carefully write the problem down and solve it – *THEN* check to see if your answer matches one of the options given. Notice key words in the question, such as “check all that apply”. **Do Not** just pick the answer you think looks right! Use the answers to be a check for YOUR work.
- **Time** is of the essence - work as **quickly** and **continuously** as you can while still writing legibly and **showing all your work**. If you get stuck on a problem, move on to another one - you can come back later.
- **Work by the clock**. On a 50 minute, 100 point test, you have about 5 minutes for a 10 point question. Starting with the easy questions will probably put you ahead of the clock. When you work on a harder problem, spend the allotted time (e.g., 5 minutes) on that question, and if you have not almost finished it, go on to another problem. Do **not** spend 20 minutes on a problem which will yield few or no points when there are other problems still to try.
- **Show all your work**: make it as easy as possible for your teacher to see how much you **do** know. Try to write a well-reasoned solution. If your answer is incorrect, the teacher can assign partial credit based on the work you show.
- In a multiple-step problem **outline** the steps before actually working the problem.
- **Don't** give up on a several-part problem just because you can't do the first part. Attempt the other part(s) - if the actual solution depends on the first part, at least explain how you **would** do it.
- Make sure you **read** the questions **carefully**, and do **all parts** of each problem.
- **Verify** your answers - does each answer make sense given the context of the problem? Can you substitute your answer into the problem to check the solution? Can you check on your graphing calculator?
- If you finish early, **check** every problem (that means **rework** everything from scratch).