

Test Taking Skills
From Lecture given by
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Family Medicine Board Review

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Overview

- **Examination Preparation**
 - *Review Courses*
 - *Study Skills*
- **Improving Examination Performance**
 - *Test-Wiseness Skills*
 - *Test-Taking Skills*
- **Improving Examination Scores**
 - *Guessing*
 - *Test Anxiety*

Question 1

What probable etiologies are associated with Piriformis dysfunction?

- A. Long term bedrest
- B. Pressure secondary to sitting on cell phone
- C. Frequent crossing of legs and driving long distances
- D. Fryette's type 1 lesion
- E. Restriction of the pelvic diaphragm

Question 2

Patients suffering from torticollis frequently have neck pain because:

- A. all patients with neck pain have cranial somatic dysfunction.
- B. torticollis always presents with extension and rotation.
- C. there are never cases of torticollis without tardive dyskinesia.
- D. patients with torticollis commonly have sidebending.
- E. no autonomic dysfunction results in torticollis.

Question 3

Regarding scoliosis

- A. It is due to poor nutrition.
- B. Genetics play a key role.
- C. the abundance of rib somatic dysfunctions.
- D. It is usually found in the thoracic spine among prepubescent females
- E. It's degree is determined by Cox angle

Question 4

The treatment of choice for patients experiencing lymphedema of the lower extremity secondary to CHF is:

- A. Miller pump
- B. Pectoral traction
- C. Pedal pump
- D. Rib raising
- E. MFR of the thoracic inlet

MCQ: Typical Question

STEM:

35 yo male presents.....

RESPONSES:

A

B

C

D

E

Multiple Choice Questions

Type A Items

Stem – Presents the problem or question

Responses – the keyed answer* & distractors^

* One Correct answer or *BEST answer*

^ Distractors (4)

i. One choice that is rather obviously *incorrect*

ii. Two choices that are *reasonable*

a. peripheral to topic

iii. One choice that is very close to the BEST answer

Test-Wiseness

A subject's capacity to score higher on an examination is based on their test-wiseness, a skill which is independent of the examinee's knowledge of the subject matter.

Evans 1984

Ways to Enhance the Process Remembering

Information



Knowledge



Retrieval



Recognition



Recall

Storage

Study Habits

Learning Style

Organization

Retrieval

Associations

Understanding

Cues

Ways to Enhance the Process Remembering

Retrieval

```
graph TD; Retrieval --> Recognition; Retrieval --> Recall;
```

Recognition

Less Active

Factual

Cues Present

Repetition

Cramming

Recall

More Active

Problem Solving

Cue Absent

Bridges

Strategies

Test-Taking & Test-Wiseness

Test Score

```
graph TD; A["Test Score"] --> B["Preparation"]; A --> C["Performance"]
```

Preparation

(Before the exam)

Performance

(During the exam)

Self-Directed Learning Methods

- **Develop a Strategy**
 - Choose strategy to meet your needs
- **Determine **your** Learning style**
 - Auditory
 - Visual
 - Kinesthetic

Study Session

Reviewing

- *30-50% of time should be spent reflecting*
- *Strengthen Comprehension*
 - *Paraphrasing (increase understanding)*
 - *Outline major points*
- *Methods*
 - *Blank paper*
 - *Teach*
 - *Read*

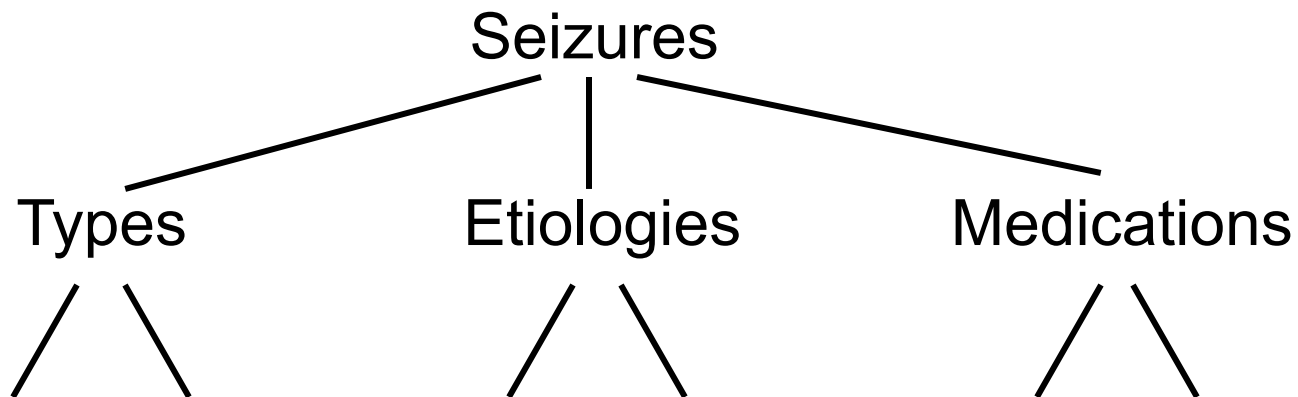
Self-Directed Learning Methods

Studying Methods

- *Revision Strategy*
 - *Writing own notes; associations*
- *Acronyms*
- *Chunking*
 - *Group related items (associations)*
- *Picture it*
- *Concept Mapping*

Self-Directed Learning Methods

- **Concept Mapping**
 - Visual representation of relationships
 - Learner's Organization (algorithm)



Self-Directed Learning Methods

- **Self-Evaluation**

- Be sure “Closing the Gap”

- *Question-and-Answer Sessions (Books)*

- Maximize potential

- Practice test taking skills

- Train your brain for timed tests

- Review the incorrect answers

Self-Directed Learning Methods

- **Escape Syndrome**

- Sitting around thinking about/talking about “*how bad it’s going to be*” ...

During the Examination

- **Focus on the Stem**
 - Find the lead-in Question
 - Read the stem
 - Avoid “reading into” the question
- **Determine 2 answers then make sure that they are options**
- **If they are not there or cannot get it down to 2 answers – go back and Read the Stem**

During the Examination

- **Go with instinctive (GUT) feeling**
 - You picked it for a reason
 - **DO NOT** change answers!

- **If you don't have a clue**
 - Tell yourself it's a pilot question
 - Do not consider it again

During the Examination

When *GUESSING* is the *ONLY* alternative

Longest Alternative

Often the exam writer wants to be sure you have enough information to recognize the correct Response.

During the Examination

When *GUESSING* is the *ONLY* alternative

General Alternative

If four of the five options are very specific and one is very general...

Often the more general option is correct response

During the Examination

When *GUESSING* is the *ONLY* alternative

Similarity & Oppositeness

If two choices are very similar, usually the correct choice is NOT one of them...

The correct response is often one of two opposites.

During the Examination

When GUESSING is the ONLY alternative

Grammar Agreement

The stem and responses should be grammatically correct...

Singular stem should not be completed by plural option

During the Examination

When *GUESSING* is the *ONLY* alternative

Specific Determiners

The implication of absoluteness (always, never, must, none, only...) is often incorrect.

Words that permit exception (seldom, usually, often, perhaps, etc) are more commonly associated with the correct response.

During the Examination

When *GUESSING* is the *ONLY* alternative

Rank Order

When a list of numbers or “rank ordering” exists, the correct response is often somewhere in the middle.

During the Examination

When GUESSING is the ONLY alternative

Deductive Approach (Convergence)

- A. W & X
- B. Y & Z
- C. X & Y
- D. V & Z
- E. X & Z

During the Examination

When *GUESSING* is the *ONLY* alternative

Deductive Approach (Convergence)

- | | | |
|----|-------|-------|
| A. | W & X | V = 1 |
| B. | Y & Z | W = 1 |
| C. | X & Y | X = 3 |
| D. | V & Z | Y = 2 |
| E. | X & Z | Z = 3 |

During the Examination

When *GUESSING* is the *ONLY* alternative

Clang Association

Similarity between a word in the stem and correct response.

Test Anxiety

Can Cause

- **Psychological Changes**
 - *GI Symptoms, Insomnia, Headaches*
- **Emotional Changes**
 - *Irritability, Moodiness, Frustration, Anger*
- **Cognitive Changes**
 - *Memory Blocks, Attention Span Limitations*

Test Anxiety

Ways to Reduce

- **Understand the Exam - Blueprint**
- **Build Confidence - % correct**
- **Plan Studying & Improve Study Skills**
- **Develop Stress Reduction Techniques**
 - *Avoid caffeine*
 - *Exercise regularly*
 - *Breathing control*
 - *Muscle relaxation*
- ***Counseling***

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