

IOWA ASSESSMENTS GETTING THEIR BEST SCORE

What we want to accomplish in this advisory is to have a discussion with all students about the Iowa Assessments they will be taking. Our discussion will cover: 1) why do we take these tests, or how do they benefit from the tests, 2) what is test anxiety, 3) what can they do to help improve their scores. We should be facilitators of the discussion and let the students offer as much information as they can. They have had this information given to them before, I am sure, so we will see how much of it they have retained. If you can, ask the questions and write student responses on the board. They will provide most of the responses; we may need to provide some explanation of their responses.

1. Why do we take Iowa Assessments, what benefits do I get? What benefits does the school get?
 - a. We can determine your individual progress from year to year and where you have made good progress.
 - b. We can determine where you as an individual may need some help in improving your skills in a subject area.
 - c. As a school, we can see how students in each grade are progressing as a class, where your strengths are and where we might need to make changes in our classes in order to help your class improve.
 - d. We are required to report your progress to the state and federal government.

Your scores are compared to students here in Audubon, around the state of Iowa and in the nation. You will always compete with these people for college admissions, scholarships and eventually jobs. We are able to see what improvements we need to make in our classes to help you be competitive.

2. What is test anxiety?
 - a. Refer to the handout after the students have given their response.
3. How can we help improve our scores? “T WAS THE NIGHT BEFORE TESTING”
 - a. LOOK AT THE IOWA ASSESSMENT AS A CHALLENGE
 - b. Go to bed on time or earlier in order to get plenty of rest
 - c. Go about business as usual the day of testing including getting a good breakfast
 - d. Think about what you are going to do after school to take your mind off of the tests
 - e. Make sure you have several #2 pencils with you as well as calculator on math test day
 - f. Try and leave concerns or problems at home on test day so that you can concentrate solely on the tests.
 - g. Express concerns you may have about the tests to your parents, advisor and teachers
 - h. Listen carefully to all directions and if you do not understand them, ask questions
 - i. When testing, read an entire question and all of the choices before marking your answer

- j. Pace yourself, don't spend too much time on one question. If you do not know an answer, then go on to the next question and come back to those left blank
- k. Do not change your answers unless you are very uncertain about your first answer choice. REMEMBER, YOUR FIRST GUESS IS USUALLY RIGHT.
- l. Answer every question making the best guess you can. When you come back to a question, you may have more time to think about the answers
- m. On some multiple choice questions, you can eliminate the most obvious incorrect answers narrowing your choices
- n. Find key words or phrases that may give you clues to the correct answer
- o. Use the entire testing time. If you finish before time is called, go back through your tests to make sure you have answered all questions
- p. Understand what the question is asking before answering it
- q. When taking a test that is asking you to read passages, read the questions first. Then as you read the passages, you will have an idea what to look for. BE CAREFUL NOT TO TAKE TOO MUCH TIME
- r. When taking a math test and using scratch paper, make sure the answer you mark is the one you have on your scratch work
- s. If your math answer does not match one of the given, reread your problem, recopy the numbers and try to solve it again
- t. ALWAYS MAKE SURE YOU ARE ON THE RIGHT TEST ON THE ANSWER SHEET
- u. Sometimes your arm may tire, relax your grip on the pencil and flex your fingers
- v. YOU ARE NOT EXPECTED TO KNOW EVERY ANSWERst, THESE TESTS ARE DESIGNED TO ASK A VARIETY OF QUESTIONS OF VARYING DIFFICULTY LEVELS
- w. BEING A LITTLE NERVOUS ABOUT A TEST IS OKAY, THE ADRENALINE TENDS TO KEEP YOU ALERT AND FOCUSED ON THE TESTS
- x. If water is provided, use it. You may bring your own.