

## Test-taking strategies

### Preparation:

- Become Familiar with the format and the types of questions included. (*Practice tests, test prep books, or test preparation courses are helpful for this.*)
- Be comfortable and alert: Your basic needs must be satisfied first.
  - Don't work (*cram*) or play (*party*) too hard the night before, sleep.
  - Have a light but adequate breakfast.
  - Get a little exercise.
  - Wear loose fitting clothes (*layer to accommodate the temperature of the room*)
  - Visit the restroom before you check in.
- Bring pencils (#2), eraser, admission slip and photo ID to test.

### During the test:

- Do not let the test intimidate you, attack it instead.
- Fill in the answer spaces completely.
- Erase all stray marks and changed answers completely.
- If you skip a question, mark the margin of the book boldly to help you find it later.
- If you skip a question be sure you skip a space on the answer sheet, check the numbers!
- Review the answers if you finish early, you may find silly or careless errors.
- Time is very important; pace yourself.
- Survey the section, know the number of questions to be done in the allotted time.
- Hard questions are interspersed with easier questions, don't spend too much time on those you don't know.
- Directions are very important, know what is being asked!
- Pay attention to the key terms.
- Rephrase questions in your own words.
- Actively attack questions using all the available clues and your knowledge.
- Focus on the type of questions you know best; spend most of your time on these first to optimize the number of correct answers.

### Guessing on the PSAT/SAT:

- A formula is used to eliminate gains from random guessing on these tests (ACT does not penalize guessing).
- If you have no idea what the answer is, guessing on a four-answer choice may help; with five answers, skip it.
- Narrow the choices as much as you can, eliminate the obviously wrong choices, then choose.
- If two choices are equal, both are wrong, so choose one of the other answers.

- If you have a feeling that one of the choices is correct, think about it and if you still feel that way, choose it!