

Studying for Success - Part 2 Facing Exams

by Lynette Sampson

OUTPUT – Experts suggest that output is more effective if the conditions are similar to those of retention. Perhaps this is why teachers say, study at a desk, don't study on the bed and try to study in a quiet place.

In school you are required to take examinations as the definitive test of your knowledge and so much weight is given to the results of those examinations that it is easy to see why so many students feel the burden of anxiety, fear and uncertainty when they sit down to do an exam.

Some of that anxiety is also due to the physical conditions of the examination environment. This you cannot do much about, but preparation before hand will go a long way to reduce the feeling of fear, anxiety and uncertainty you may feel.

You can . . .

- Prepare mentally, by envisioning yourself taking the test, and being calm and collected
- Practice with past papers or tests you created beforehand

On the day of the exam:

- Focus on relaxing before you leave home; listen to soothing music, say a prayer, meditate, exercise
- Eat a balanced meal – your brain needs fuel to perform at its best, even though the butterflies in your stomach might make you think otherwise
- Spend a minute quieting the mind before you begin to write so that you can become more focused
- Read the instructions carefully
- Take time to plan what you are going to write instead of jumping right into it
- Recall situations or examples as a cue to remembering the points to which they were related
- Allocate a specific amount of time for each question and try to stick to it
- Do not get distracted by what the other students are doing or how quickly they are leaving the exam room

There is no real secret to academic success; it's simply good old-fashioned work, preparation, discipline, diligence and faith.