

Ways Busy Parents Can Help Children Succeed On Standardized Tests



Standardized tests are used to measure student achievement and to tell schools which skills students need to improve. And with information gathered from a standardized test, your child's school can design lessons to raise your child's academic performance.

Results of standardized tests are also used to evaluate a school's performance. So, it's important to all involved for every child to do well on tests.

You can boost your child's performance on standardized tests. Here are some tips for helping your child feel confident, well-prepared and ready to succeed on these important tests.

QuickTips®

THE
PARENT
INSTITUTE®

READ FOR SUCCESS

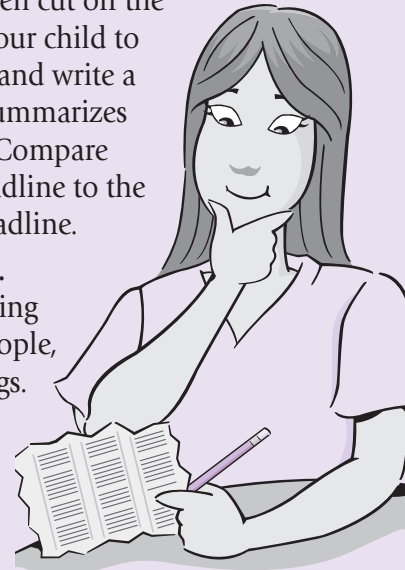
A child who can read well is more likely to do well on standardized tests and succeed in school. Here are some reading skills that are important for test success, along with ways you can help your child build them:

Comprehension

Comprehension is more than just being able to recognize and pronounce words—it's about making sense of what the words say. Standardized tests often measure comprehension by asking students to find the main idea. To help your child find the main idea:

- **Use the newspaper.** Cut out a short article. Then cut off the headline. Ask your child to read the article and write a headline that summarizes the main idea. Compare your child's headline to the newspaper's headline.

- **Use nonfiction.** Nonfiction writing is about real people, places and things. Many standardized tests use nonfiction text for reading comprehension. So ask your librarian to help your child find interesting nonfiction books to read. Then ask your child to tell you the main idea of a paragraph or a chapter.



Reading Rate

Reading rate is the speed at which a child reads. Since most standardized tests are timed, it's important for your child to be able to read quickly—and understand what she has read. Here's how you can help:

- **Schedule reading time every day.** Research shows that kids who read every day are more likely to read faster.
- **Have your child read silently.** Sometimes a child reads slowly because she is whispering the words aloud.

Vocabulary

The more words your child knows, the more likely he is to do well on standardized tests. So help your child:

- **Learn a new word every day.** Find words in the books your child is reading or ask the teacher for a list. Each morning, help your child write a word on an index card. Write the definition on the back. At dinner, have family members try using the word in a sentence. At the end of the week, review all the cards.
- **Look through the newspaper.** Ask your child to underline new words in an article. Then look them up together.



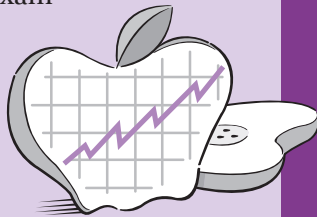
Attendance Makes a Difference

Teachers can't teach students who aren't in school. And research shows that regular school attendance can result in significant test-score gains. So remember:

- **Make sure your child** is in school every day.
- **Don't schedule medical appointments** during school hours.
- **Don't take your child** out of school for a family trip or activity.
- **Don't allow your child** to be tardy. Have your child get ready the night before so he can get to school on time.

Good Health = Good Test Scores

Getting ready for a big exam requires more than just studying. Your child must be physically fit, too. So don't forget the following as your child prepares for big exams:



- **Breakfast.** Get your child in the habit of taking time for a nutritious breakfast every day. Even toast and a piece of fruit will provide body and brain energy.
- **Sleep.** Get your child into a regular sleep routine. Then stick to it! Most children need at least nine to 10 hours of sleep each night.
- **Exercise.** Encourage your child to exercise every day. Exercise increases oxygen to the brain and helps with thinking and memory.



Overcome Test Anxiety

Nobody likes to take tests. And some kids get what's called "test anxiety." They are so worried about taking the test that they can't show what they know.

Telling your child, "Just relax" may not help. Instead, share these tips:

- **Don't cram.** A good night's sleep is more important than an extra hour of studying. Studies show that last-minute cramming doesn't work.
- **Read the directions—carefully!**
- **Look the test over quickly.** Before answering any questions, skim quickly through the test. Figure out how much time to spend on each section.
- **Don't be afraid to skip a question.** Don't waste time worrying about a question you can't answer. Instead, go on to questions you know you can answer. If there's time, go back to the items you skipped.
- **Remember past tests** where you did well. You can do well again!

Make Test Prep Easier

Studying for tests is your child's job. But you can make it easier. Here's how:

- **Make learning a priority.** Expect your child to do homework every day. Keep in touch with your child's teachers. They can recommend ways to help at home.
- **Don't put too much pressure** on your child. If you're overly worried about tests, your child probably will be, too.
- **Review test terms** with your child, such as *match*, *list*, *compare* and *contrast*. These words appear on many kinds of tests.
- **Build your child's confidence.** Say things like, "You have studied hard for this test. I know you will do a good job." And "I believe in you and I know you have the skills to succeed on this test."



THE
PARENT
INSTITUTE®

One of a series of *QuickTips*® from The Parent Institute®,
P.O. Box 7474, Fairfax Station, VA 22039-7474
(800) 756-5525 • www.parent-institute.com
Stock No. 1173 (English) • Stock No. 2173 (Spanish)
Copyright © 2020 The Parent Institute®