

# Suinn Test Anxiety Behavior Scale



(STABS)

STUDENT DEVELOPMENT CENTER



123 Row Hall

678-839-6428

<http://www.westga.edu/studentDev/>

Directions: Questionnaire items portray experiences that cause some students anxiety. For each item below, decide which of the following answers best applies to you. Place the number of the answer in the space at the left of the item. Please be as honest as you can.

1. Not at all      2. A little      3. A fair amount      4. Much      5. Very much

\_\_\_ 1. Rereading the answers I gave on the test before turning it in.

\_\_\_ 2. Sitting down to study before a regularly scheduled class.

\_\_\_ 3. Turning in my completed test paper.

\_\_\_ 4. Hearing the announcement of a coming test.

\_\_\_ 5. Having a test returned.

\_\_\_ 6. Reading the first question on a final exam.

\_\_\_ 7. Being in class waiting for my corrected test to be returned.

\_\_\_ 8. Seeing a test question and not being sure of the answer.

\_\_\_ 9. Studying for a test the night before.

\_\_\_ 10. Waiting to enter a room where a test is to be given.

\_\_\_ 11. Waiting for a test to be handed out.

\_\_\_ 12. Waiting for the day my corrected test will be returned.

\_\_\_ 13. Discussing with the instructor an answer I believe to be right but which was marked wrong.

\_\_\_ 14. Seeing my standing on the exam relative to other people's standing,

\_\_\_ 15. Waiting to see my letter grade on the test.

\_\_\_ 16. Studying for a quiz.

\_\_\_ 17. Studying for a midterm.

\_\_\_ 18. Studying for a final.

\_\_\_ 19. Discussing my approaching test with friends a few weeks before test is due.

\_\_\_ 20. After the test, listening to the answers my friends selected.

## Scoring Key for the Suinn Test Anxiety Behavior Scale (STABS)

To figure out your STABS score, assign the following points to your responses:

Not at all = 1

A little = 2

A fair amount = 3

Much = 4

Very much = 5

Now add up all the numbers.

Raw STABS Score	Percentile
68	95
61	80
57	75
52	60
49	50
45	35
41	25
38	20
32	10

# Learning to Manage Test Anxiety

## Things that Can Create Test Anxiety

1. Not preparing well in advance or keeping up daily (cramming).
2. Imagining one exam is going to determine your future (catastrophizing)
3. Listening to others who tell you how hard the test is going to be
4. Studying with nervous people
5. Telling yourself you're not as smart as other students (negative self-talk)
6. Asking other students how long they have studied (and believing them)
7. Assuming the professor will make up the exam entirely with trick questions

## Things to Do (or Don't) the Day of the Exam

1. Avoid caffeine if you're prone to caffeine jitters
2. Try to eat something for breakfast, preferably easily digestible
3. Don't go to class too early or late (panic is contagious)
4. Get to a stopping point in your studying....don't study up to the last minute
5. Don't quiz each other just before the exam
6. Distract self while in class waiting for the test to begin ( magazine, newspaper)
7. Develop a test day routine.

## How to Stay Calm During the Exam

1. Prepare well in advance...use your exquisite, finely honed study skills
2. Know the time and place for the test
3. Review the entire test, read all instructions twice, and listen carefully for any oral instructions
4. Jot down any memory cues
5. Plan your approach...work on something easier or that feels more comfortable first. Be aware of what part of the exam counts the most
6. Allow yourself time to "warm up"
7. Pay attention to the test...not to yourself or others
8. Have a plan to address anxiety if it occurs. Take a break, ask the professor a question, get a drink of water, use breathing exercises, sharpen your pencil, visualize how you'll feel after the exam, or use self-talk
9. Keep learning test taking skills and test taking techniques
10. Change your attitude. Test taking is an opportunity to perform and show the professor what you know. Test taking is not a reflection of self-worth...a test is only a test
11. Don't forget the basic (nutrition, exercise, sleep)
12. Work like everything depends on you

# Signs and Symptoms of Test Anxiety

## Before the Exam

- Block or freeze when studying
- Worry about exam days in advance
- Never feel prepared even after studying
- Changes in sleep (< or >)
- Changes in appetite (< or >)
- Irritability
- Sense of hopelessness
- Boredom
- Headaches
- Inability to concentrate



## During the Exam

- Forget what you studied
- Go blank or have mental blocks
- Confusion or panic
- Watching others, professor, or the clock
- Nausea...dry heaves
- Sweaty palms
- Trembling or shaking
- Fainting

## After the Exam

- Remember material after leaving
- Find careless mistakes after exam returned
- Mock indifference
- Guilt
- Anger
- Blame
- Depression

