

# TESTING TIPS, HELPS, AND HINTS

## REVIEW, REVIEW, REVIEW

- Spiral reviews – [District T4 site](#), Scott-Foresman Math book, Mountain Math
- Flip-cards – Math, Vocabulary
- Computer generated – see the website list, YPP
- Jeopardy games, Center Activities
- Multiple student interactions with the material in a variety of ways.

## ***Reading Strategies***

- Cover all kinds of questions
  - *Right There Questions:* The answer to these questions is right there in the passage. To find it, students recall information from or refer back to one place in the passage. Example: Who gave the dog to John?
  - *Think and Search Questions:* Students can also find the answer to these questions by using their memories or look back at the passage. The answer is usually in more than one place. Students need to assemble information for the answer. Example: What was the same about every dog in the story?
  - *Author and You Questions:* These questions are often the toughest because they can't be answered just by reading the passage. Students need to use what they already know, plus what they learn from the passage to answer. Example: How did John probably feel when he found the dog?
- Teach Text Structures - Teachers can help students find answers more efficiently by helping them understand where you might find information

**TIP:** After reading a story passage with a clear beginning, middle, and end, have students guess which parts will contain the answers to comprehension questions. Here are some typical patterns:

- Answers about when and where the story takes place are often found at the beginning.
- Answers about the problem in the story are usually found in the middle.
- Answers about how the problem was resolved are usually found at the end.

*"We've realized that sometimes our students don't do as well on the standardized state tests as we think they should because they are not familiar with the test's vocabulary or questioning format. For example, we use predicting outcomes while the tests may ask the student to forecast an ending . . . I have a chart of the types of questioning used on the tests posted in my room to remind me."*

*~ From Patti Ralabate, a speech-language pathologist from Danbury, Connecticut*

## **Math Strategies**

- Make Word Problems a Priority* – Weave word problems into your everyday curriculum. Ask students to write their own word problems and share with a friend.
- Stress Number Sense* – Investigate where, how, and in what context numbers are reported in the newspaper. Compare the size of a tennis court to a football field. Help students find the usefulness of numbers in their world.
- Focus on Estimation* – Give students “flash quizzes”. Using an overhead projector, flash a math problem, such as  $367 + 228$  and have students estimate the answer without any written computation. Review the “quiz” outloud together by asking students to determine a reasonable range of estimates for each problem.
- Emphasize Mental Math* – This enables students to use more natural or inherent ways of solving problems. Mental Math discussion should be verbal and include students sharing their ideas. Remember that what works well for one student may not work well for another.

## **TEST PREPARATION**

- Test Format – give student multiple practice test questions so they become familiar with testing formats and questioning formats.
- Bubble sheet format (starting w/ 3<sup>rd</sup> grade)
  - Begin familiarizing students with using bubble sheets. Help them understand to start bubbles in the right place, align their answers with A B C D, transferring the answers, marking their place as they go.
- Multiple-choice test hints
  - Review these fun Test Quest Strategies with students several times a week. They can also go through them during computer lab time.  
(<http://www.eduplace.com/kids/mhm/testquest/1/index.html>)

1) *Draw a Picture* 2) *Rule Out Wrong Answers* 3) *Check Your Work* 4) *Rule Out Extra Information*

**TIP:** On practice tests, teach students to read or skim the questions before they read the question. While reading the passage they should keep the questions in mind and underline (or highlight w/ tape) words or phrases that might help them hone in on the correct answer.

- UTIPS – Setting up UTIPS practice tests will allow students to see multiple examples test format and questions. Design your own or use the sample tests put together by Title I.

**TEACHERS:** [www.myutips.org](http://www.myutips.org) Login: **jsdt1** Password: **Jordan**  
**STUDENTS:** [www.jsdt1.myutips.org](http://www.jsdt1.myutips.org) Login: **first and list name**

## **Website Links for Test Prep Ideas and Practice Tests**

No Pain, Gain High – Scholastic tips and ideas

<http://teacher.scholastic.com/professional/assessment/nopain.htm>

Houghton Mifflin – Test Quest Practice for Mathematics K - 6

<http://www.eduplace.com/kids/mhm/index.html>

Parent Practice Tips for Test Taking

<http://www.pppctr.org/maptesttaking.asp>

Florida Daily Math Questions for Test Practice

<http://elementarypgms.brevard.k12.fl.us/Math.htm>

Texas Daily Practice Questions for Test Practice

<http://teacherszine.tripod.com/teacherszine/id14.html>

Texas – Actual past tests on the Texas State Test

<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/resources/release/taks/index.html>

### **Final Note**

For those of you running after-school programs, focusing on test prep during part of the after-school program would be very effective. Students could be working with UTIPS, doing sample tests, and review activities in smaller group settings.

## Standardized Test Vocabulary and Questioning

From Patti Ralabate, a speech-language pathologist from Danbury, Connecticut:

"We've realized that sometimes our students don't do as well on the standardized state tests as we think they should because they are not familiar with the test's vocabulary or questioning format. For example, we use predicting outcomes while the tests may ask the student to forecast an ending. To make sure our students will understand the language used in our state mastery tests, everyone in our building participated in professional development sessions about how to ask questions and what language to use. I have a chart of the types of questioning used on the tests posted in my room to remind me."

Accommodations for Spec. Ed, ELL, 504

Test Week Plan

Questions to ask Clyde

- 1) since the kids can't write in the book, can the teacher have highlight tape available to highlight important words. Can be removed later?