

TEST-TAKING STRATEGIES

Sometimes it may seem that school is just one test after another. But when you really think about all the tests you take now and those you will take in the future, such as PSAT, SAT, license tests, college admission tests, and job tests, you can understand the importance of tests.

What you may need to think about, though, is how you can be successful on all these different tests. There is plenty of help available. This book has been designed to help you prepare for classroom tests and standardized tests. Teachers, textbooks, and workshops are also available to help you. You should make good use of all of these resources. In addition, you can create a plan for using all the test-taking strategies you learn. Here are some steps to help you test successfully:

1 If possible, get to know the test.

- ◆ Learn the rules and your rights for every test you take. For example, depending on how a test is scored, it may or may not be advisable to guess an answer if you are not certain of the correct answer. It is best to learn the answers to questions before you take the exam.

2 Get to know yourself as a test taker.

- ◆ Ask your teacher to help you list your strengths and weaknesses on tests.

3 Make a plan.

- ◆ Ask yourself: "How will I prepare before I take the test?" Make a detailed plan for practicing or reviewing for each section of the test. For example, study lists of unfamiliar words in preparation for vocabulary portions of the test.
- ◆ Ask: "How will I work during the test?" Decide how much time should be allotted for each section of the test and which questions to answer first.
- ◆ Ask: "How will I check my work after I finish the test?" Use the "Circle—Bubble—Check" system to avoid errors: Circle the answer in the test book, bubble in all your answers at one time on the answer sheet, then check with one finger on the test book and one finger on the answer sheet.

4 Be patient and persistent.

- ◆ Although you may be frustrated at times while taking a test, don't give up. You may never learn to love taking tests—you don't have to. You can, however, take control of tests and make sure that you reach your full potential for success. Good luck!