

Taking exams



Taking exams will be one of the most stressful times of your life, especially when you have your parents and your teachers telling you all the time how important exams are. You will probably be under even more pressure if you have an older brother or sister who has already done well in their exams and your parents expect you to do so too. But don't worry, because it's natural to feel stressed before taking an exam. In fact, research has shown that a little stress in your life can motivate and energise you. However, when the level of stress is too high, it can cause health problems.

When preparing for exams, there are many things you can do to lower your level of stress. First of all, you should not leave revision to the last minute. When you give yourself plenty of time to revise, you will be more confident and less stressed out, since you know that you have prepared well. If you don't understand something, getting stressed out will not help. Talk to your teacher or your classmates and ask them to help you out. Now, if you find that you cannot concentrate when you are studying, it is probably because you are too tired; take a short break as this will refresh you. Other things you should make sure you do when preparing for your exams are eat healthily and exercise regularly. Eating the right kind of food will give your brain the nutrients it needs. Exercising regularly will give you more energy, clear your mind and make you feel less stressed. Most importantly, give yourself some time for fun and relaxation, otherwise you will be too tired to study.

On the day of the exam, there is no point in worrying any longer over whether you have studied hard enough. You should, therefore, try to remain calm and do your best. If you do not do well, it is not the end of the world, and remember, there is no shame in retaking an exam you have failed.

POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

- What are some of the main rules in your school?
- Why is it important to succeed at school?
- Do you think that all subjects taught at school are of equal importance?
- What would your ideal school be like?

1. What makes students feel even more stressed out about taking exams?
 - A. teachers always telling their parents how important exams are
 - B. having a brother or a sister who is taking the same exam
 - C. pressure from their parents to do even better than their brother or sister
 - D. their parents' high expectations
2. What have scientists learnt about stress?
 - A. Even a little stress can be harmful to your health.
 - B. A lot of stress makes a person more energetic.
 - C. A little stress can have a positive effect on a person.
 - D. All unhealthy people have lots of stress.
3. What is one way to avoid feeling stressed out about taking an exam?
 - A. by revising for an exam up to the last minute
 - B. by starting your revision long before your exams
 - C. by doing plenty of revision exercises
 - D. by becoming more confident
4. What should you do if you can't concentrate?
 - A. Relax for a few minutes.
 - B. Eat some healthy food.
 - C. Get some exercise.
 - D. Go to sleep as you will awake refreshed.
5. What does the writer believe?
 - A. Failing an exam is not as embarrassing as retaking an exam.
 - B. There is no point in taking an exam if you haven't studied for it.
 - C. Life goes on even if you do badly in an exam.
 - D. Being calm will not help very much.