Taking Standardized Tests

Whether it is the PSSAs, Keystones, SAT or ACT, standardized tests have become part of the current academic world. No matter what test you are taking, preparation is key. One of the best ways to prepare and reduce test anxiety is to familiarize yourself with the type of questions and content on the test. Another key is lots and lots of practice. If you always do your homework, you will be ahead of the game. This will help to boost your confidence and earn a higher score. Below are some tips for taking standardized tests.

- Use free practice tests and sample questions available online or from your teacher.
- Studying over an extended period of time is more effective than cramming at the last minute.
- Find out if there is a penalty for guessing. If not, never leave a question unanswered.
- Get a good night's sleep the evening before the test.
- Relax your mind before the test begins.
- Read the instructions carefully.
- Read each question carefully and pay attention to details.
- Don't get distracted by others in the room.
- Answer the easy questions first.
- Don't spend all your time on a difficult question. Move on and come back to it at the end.
- Try answering the question before reading the answers provided. If one of the choices is similar to the answer you came up with then you know you are right.
- Eliminate obviously wrong choices to increase your odds of getting the answer right if you are relying on guessing.
- Check your work. Make sure you haven't left any questions unanswered. Periodically check to make sure your answer lines up with the question numbers.

Finally, mindset matters! Effort and attitude determines your abilities. The test is an opportunity to show what you know and have learned.