

## **The 8 Keys and Test Success**

The 8 Keys of Excellence can also give us some insight into test prep and test success. Remember the 8 Keys whenever you begin a test-taking cycle.

### **This Is It!**

This Is It! means, “Right now matters!” It’s so easy to put things off and not work on them right away. We know that waiting until the last minute does not promote learning. Instead, it creates bad study habits—and stress! Learn to focus in the moment and put in your best effort on every assignment. This leads to real learning and successful test taking. If you have this attitude all along, then taking a test can be a chance for you to show what you know and let your amazing brain shine.

### **Ownership**

Ownership in relation to test taking means taking full responsibility for your success. Who is responsible if I don't do well on a test? The teacher? The person who designed the test? Or am I responsible? When we take ownership, we don't rely on anyone but ourselves for our success. We ask questions when we don't understand, we make sure we understand directions, and we complete all assignments to the best of our ability. If it's to be it's up to me!

### **Speak with Good Purpose**

When taking a test, Speak with Good Purpose means using positive words to boost our belief in ourselves. We talk to ourselves all the time. The question is, what do we say? Saying things like, “I am stupid,” or “I will never pass,” will only hurt our chances for success. Instead, saying things like, “I can do this,” “I am going to pass,” or whatever phrase pumps us up will give us a better chance to be successful.

### **Commitment**

Commitment to good daily study habits and test preparation helps develop confidence and leads to better test results. Setting short-term and long-term goals and putting in our best effort on every assignment shows that we are committed to our success on tests. Tests become easier when we show daily commitment by studying small chunks of information every day instead of waiting until the last minute.

### **Failure Leads to Success**

Failure Leads to Success when taking tests can help us to learn from our mistakes and know we can do better next time. So often we learn that failure is a weakness and after failing a couple of math tests, for example, we may think “I’m not good in math.” If we overcome our negative thoughts about failure after doing poorly on a test, and figure out what we can learn from our mistakes, we will believe in ourselves and have a desire to try harder next time.

### **Integrity**

Integrity helps us to constantly feel challenged and ready to learn instead of just wanting to pass a test by whatever means we can, including cheating. This way of thinking supports us to be in integrity during test taking. When we are out of integrity, any success we have is not as meaningful. When we value learning, our behaviors can show this by studying hard and doing our work on our own.

### **Flexibility**

When it comes to test preparation and test taking, flexibility can reduce stress and keep our minds clear so that we are able to stay focused. If a certain way of studying or test taking is not working, we can find a different way to be successful. Maybe you can ask your teacher for help or make sure

to eat a good breakfast on the day of a test. If something unexpected happens on the day of the test, flexibility will help us to adapt to the change and move on with a new plan.

### **Balance**

When it comes to test preparation and test taking, balance is about making sure we take the necessary time to get ready for our tests. That way we can be fully prepared when the test comes and be able to focus on the task at hand without getting too stressed. When we eat the right foods, get a good night's sleep, exercise, spend time with friends and family, and allow time for study, we are more calm and confident during test taking.