

## Testing Smarter

### A Guide for Doing Well on the English Regents

#### December

1. Write on your essays in your English class each and every day.
2. Attend English Regents prep classes given after school and on Saturdays. Come with your essays and get tips from your teacher/s on how to improve them.
3. Create a log or flash cards with the titles of books, short stories and poetry with the names of the author. Also write down the theme, plot, characters and literary elements for each selection. This is necessary and will greatly help you with Tasks 3 and 4. If you need to read more selections see your teacher immediately.
4. Work on the task/s that give you the most difficulty. The key to success is to keep writing essays.
5. Commit yourself to preparing for this exam. You have several weeks until the exam. Keep writing.

#### Monday January 21 No School - Martin Luther King's Birthday

1. During the day look over your "Literature Log" to refresh your memory. Also, take a good look over your "literary elements" flash cards.
2. Organize the supplies you will bring to the exam- black/blue pens, white out and highlighters.
3. If you are supposed to wear glasses then bring them.
4. Stay off the telephone and relax.
5. Go to bed early. Get at least 8 hours of sleep.

Tuesday, January 22<sup>nd</sup> English Regents Exam Day

1. Wake up early enough to have a healthy breakfast: fruit, cereal, milk, orange juice, water, eggs, bread. Stay home and look over your supplies. Relax and stay focused.
2. Eat a substantial lunch.
3. Plan to be at school by 1:00 p.m.
4. Don't come any later. In Part 1 you have to listen to a selection.  
You can't afford to miss the beginning of the read aloud.
5. Go directly to the testing room. No hanging around. Take your designated seat, take off your coat and get comfortable.
6. Visualize success.

Tuesday January 22 During the Exam 1:15- 4:15 p.m.

Task 1 Listening and taking Notes, Multiple Choice and an Essay

1. Listen to the teacher's directions and concentrate.
2. Read the directions carefully and clearly understand the topic you will be writing about.
3. Clear your mind of extraneous thoughts-prepare to listen to the speech and only the listening passage- this requires CONCENTRATION.
4. Begin to take notes on the first reading-take notes only on the information that will help you write on the topic requested.
5. DO NOT GET DISCOURAGED OR GIVE UP - KEEP GOING. STAY FOCUSED.
6. During the second reading continue to take notes on the information you missed. (Who, What, When, Where, How, Events, Details)

7. Reread the directions. Pay close attention to the multiple choice.
8. Read the Situation and plan your writing. Know who your audience will be and the purpose of your writing.
9. Look over the multiple choice for essay ideas.
10. Watch the time. You have one more task to complete today.

### Day 1 Task 2 Reading and Writing for Information and Understanding

1. Continue to concentrate.
2. You will begin Task 2 – Reading a nonfiction article. You will analyze charts or tables, complete multiple choice questions, and complete a four paragraph essay.
3. Now is the time to read and highlight the directions.  
**PAY CLOSE ATTENTION TO ALL WORDS THAT APPEAR IN BOLD LETTERING.**
4. Be sure you clearly understand what the topic of the essay is.
  - A. Highlight that topic.
  - B. Read the article.
  - C. Pay close attention to the visuals (graphs, charts, tables, or cartoons) with that topic in mind.
  - D. Highlight information that pertains to the specific topic.
  - E. Read all choices on the multiple choice before deciding on your final answer for each questions.
  - F. Use information from the multiple choice to help you plan your essay.
  - G. Make a brief plan before writing - what topics will each paragraph contain.
  - H. Read all choices on the multiple choice before deciding on your answer each question.

5. Use information from the multiple choice to help you write your essay.
6. Be sure that you understand what you are supposed to writing about (main idea) and who you are writing to (audience). Read the directions again and again if you need to.
7. Make a brief plan before beginning to write. Remember to include the introduction and conclusion.
8. You need to include evidence from the passage and to use the information from the chart (graph) to support your ideas in order to pass this part. Use "quotes" when you take phrases from the reading selection.
9. Watch how much time you have left.  
Do not even thin about leaving the exam before 4:15.  
Read and reread your essays, and your multiple choice answers.
10. Go straight home to relax and eat. Take the time to look over your LI TERATURE LOG and review YOUR LI TERARY ELEMENTS.
11. Get your supplies ready for the next day's exam.
12. Go to sleep early.
13. Visualize success.

Remember you must take Part 2 of the Regents in order to pass the exam.  
Do not think about Part 1. Get your mind focused on doing your very best on  
Day 2.

## The Next Day

### Part 2

DAY 2 Wednesday January 23 1:15 - 4:15 p.m.

Task 3 - Reading two works of literature, creating a "controlling idea" (big idea) based on the topic provided in the test directions, multiple choice, and an essay.

1. In the test directions, you will find the general idea that you are asked to write about. Highlight important ideas presented. Pay attention to all directions that appear in bold letters.
2. Read the 2 passages with a "controlling idea" in (topic, big idea, theme) in mind.
3. Highlight any words, lines, ideas that you want to include in your essay.
4. Read all choices on the multiple choice before deciding on your final on your final answer for each question.
5. Use information from the multiple choice to help you write your essay.
6. Decide what connection there is between these two passages; Create a controlling idea (thesis statement, big idea) which states specifically how these two passages are related to the general idea given in the test directions.
7. In your introduction, provide the title, author and genre of the two passages, as well as your controlling idea.
8. Discuss each passage in a separate paragraph and fully explain how it relates to the controlling idea.

REMEMBER - You MUST discuss literary elements for EACH passage and how they support your controlling idea.

9. This essay must be at least 4 paragraphs, including an introduction and a conclusion.

Take a deep breath. Eat a piece of candy you have handy.

Now you're off to the last part of the exam.

TASK 4 - Interpreting a quotation, using two works of literature you have read to support your interpretation discussing literary elements.

1. Write down all of the literary elements and techniques you know.
2. Paragraph 1
  - A. According to the quote (George Orwell once said, " \_\_\_\_\_", it has been said,...)
  - B. Interpret the quote (in your own words).
  - C. Agree or disagree with the statement.
  - D. Give titles and authors of 2 works of literature (novels, plays, short stories, poems) that you are going to discuss which support your interpretation.
  - E. Underline titles of novels and plays, use quotation marks " \_\_\_" for short stories and poems.
3. Paragraph 2 - Discuss the first work of literature in relationship to your interpretation - be sure to mention by name a literary element: plot, point of view, conflict, theme, setting.
4. Paragraph 3 - Discuss the second work of literature in relationship to be sure to mention by NAME a literary

Element: plot, conflict, theme, setting, characterization, etc.

5. Paragraph 4 – Conclusion in which you restate your Interpretation.

6. Reread your exam over and over again.

Do not even think about leaving the exam before 4:15.

7. Go home and relax knowing that you did a good job on this six hour English exam.

**Pay close attention to:**

1. The Time

Look at your watch and pace your essay writing. Give yourself time to write your essays and revise them in the exam booklet. You may get short of time if you write too much on scrap paper.

2. Nutrition

Wake up early and definitely eat breakfast.

3. All Directions

Anything written in **bold letters** is super important. Pay attention to words like: or, and, genres.

4. Attitude

No matter what happens during Day 1 of the exam you must come back the next day with a fresh, positive attitude.

Make this the last time you will ever take the ELA Regents exam.

**West Side High School  
Jean McTavish, principal  
Fall 2007**

# **TESTING SMARTER**

**A Student Guide for Achieving Success on the English Regents**

**Denise Ribeiro  
English Specialist**

