Kelly: Okay, so we're presenting on preventing test anxiety today. I'm Kelly.

Kristy: I'm Kristy.

Kelly: And, what we're going to do is separate it into two topics, really. First, it's study habits; if you're not fully prepared to take a test, you may have anxiety because your study habits aren't developed.

Kristy: And then, the other category would be those who study effectively and efficiently and then get to the test and sort of like, just blank out.
Test performance not only reflects how much you studied in the hours and days right before the test but also how well you have been studying throughout the semester.

Kelly: So, test performance not only reflects how much you study in the hours and days before the test, but also how well you study throughout the semester.
Kristy: All right. So, just to get some feedback from you guys; how do you guys often prepare for a test? Anyone want to give a little?

Audience: I look through my notes.

Kristy: No review.

Audience: [Inaudible].

Kelly: I, personally; I make flash cards because I know that's the best way for me to do it.

Kristy: It's kind of a redundant question, but what has worked best? Like, obviously practice problems, right?

Kind of copying the notes you've made.

Kristy: Okay. So, like rewriting it really helps it? Okay. They got one from me, is I'm all about attitude. I think going into a test with a positive attitude is really good. I have, like a little ritual. Even before I leave for work, I'll give everybody, like a high five when I go and take a test. That's just my thing; I've done it since high school. It's worked well for me. I don't know. I try to have fun with it. Has anybody done something that just absolutely has not worked? Anyone have an example of that?

Audience: Staying up all night cramming and no sleep.

Kristy: Good, good; yeah, that can be counterproductive sometimes.

Audience: [Inaudible].

Kristy: Yeah, yeah; not the best. Okay.
Kelly: Okay, so here's a little quiz for you guys. On average, how many hours per week is it recommended that you spend studying per hour of class? We have A, one hour; B, two hours; C, three hours; or D, four hours. Does anyone want to take a guess? Is it C? B. C or B? I'll give you guys all a piece of candy for all guessing. [Laughter]
Kristy: I know it was kind of a trick question because it was both B and C, because it’s generally recommended that on average you spend two to three hours outside of class for every hour you spend in class. But, this includes study activities such as reading your textbook, doing the homework assignments, reviewing notes and then every time you study for the test or quiz.
Kelly: Okay, so here's another question. When do you start studying for your tests? We have A, the day of the class or the first day after a test; B, two weeks before a test; C, a week before a test; D, two days before a test; or E, the night before a test.

Kristy: What do you guys think on this one?

Audience: [Inaudible].
Kristy: Well, I think there should have been, like an F; all of the above, because you should be, like studying all the time, right? So, why you might not actually label what you're doing as studying, like all of the things we listed before; you're always studying for that test every time you do your homework, going to class, taking the notes and reviewing them, completing the homework assignments and reading your textbook.
Kelly: So, this kind of shows what regular studying has shown for recall. So, if you regularly study the first day you learn it and you keep studying it throughout the nine weeks, you're almost two and a half times more likely to recall the information. This kind of goes back to the study habit inventory. It was kind of reflective for you to understand how you study and what you could do to improve your study habits. We do have a basic study tip sheet, so if you guys want to pick this up afterwards it gives some good tips on how to study and how to improve your study habits.

Audience: So, like on the graph with the top line?

Kelly: Yeah, the top line here was a student who on the same day of class had constantly reviewed the information, and nine weeks later they could review it almost; 80 percent of the information, whereas this person hasn't reviewed it and they, what, 22 percent of the information they remembered? So, it just shows that constant reviewing will help you recall in the long run.
Kristy: So, some test preparation skills; it's a good idea to try and anticipate what's on the test. Use old tests if you have those. A lot of times, teachers; their style of tests are very similar, so you can usually pick up on types of patterns. There's study questions, review sheets, lecture notes and textbooks. And then, organize the information to review. So, one way to do this would be to create study charts. That's it, right? Yeah.
Kelly: Another good way to remember [inaudible], like lists. And, I know this worked really well for me when I was taking anatomy, because there's a lot of memorization. To come up with mnemonic devices; example here is the planets, so Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, Pluto. And, the mnemonic device is; My Very Earnest Mother Just Served Us Nine Pickles. Pluto isn't a planet anymore, so you wouldn't have pickles. I guess you could change it to Nachos. Another one is the colors of the rainbow; red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet. A good way to remember that is Roy G. Biv; it's a made up name, but it's the first letter of all of the colors in order, so you can remember it.
Kristy: All right. So, you can create summary notes and maps. This is basically just getting your thought process down onto paper. So, you'd map out like, your ideas and the relationships and how you see them. They should display the lists and hierarchies and then it creates this visual framework that you can take with you to the test.
An example of this would be that. It doesn't make much sense if you just, like look at it; if like an outsider came in and tried to look at it. But, because it's you actively creating your thought process and stuff, this is a good way just to organize how you're thinking about it and it'll be very helpful on a test because you'll remember making the map and be able to connect it all when you get there.
Kelly: These are some tips before the test. You should always get a good night's sleep before you have a test; that's eight to ten hours. You want to make sure you take care of your basic needs; you're eating properly, you're drinking enough water. You want to arrive early to the test so you're comfortable and you can relax, and you want to get settled and give yourself time to get everything out that you need to get out before the test.
Kristy: So, that when you get the test; like, when you physically get handed a test, take a deep breath, get the oxygen to your brain, and then do what they call a primary brain dump. This is all your mnemonic devices, any formulas you know, any outlines you've made; like, jot them down somewhere on that test so when you come to the question later and if you freeze up, you can just flip back to the front page or wherever you've written it down and remember your formulas.
Kelly: So, smart test taking behaviors; you want to listen carefully to the instructions that your instructor gives you before the test. Sometimes instructors can even give you hints to the test; they can give you important things to look at during the test. You want to read the directions carefully. Sometimes they can say which one is not and you want to make sure that you know it says not before you're picking the right answer. Review the entire test before starting. This helps to know where you're at with the test. You could pick the easy ones out. You want to breathe deeply and rest while you're taking the test; you don't want to build your stress up throughout the entire test. You want to make sure that you're taking your time; you're managing your time and you're answering the questions you know first.
Kristy: So, budget your time for the exam. When you first get that exam, take a couple; I mean, a minute. It shouldn't take you very long to just flip through it. See how many questions there are, which questions are worth more points, which ones are going to be harder, and then make sure you budget that time so that the questions that are going to be worth more and weighted more heavily, you're going to have enough time for.
Kelly: You want to answer the questions in a strategic order. Like I said, the easy questions should come first. This can help build your confidence, score points, mentally orient you to vocabulary concepts and other studies. Sometimes when you look at a question, it can help you answer another question. So, that's always useful, too. Next, you're going to want to answer the difficult questions next (or those with the most point value).
Kristy: So, breaking down a multiple choice question. There's your stem sentence or phrase; that's the question, basically. It poses the question. You also obviously have your right answer and then you're going to have your distracters, which are your wrong or misleading answers. Read the question before you look at the choices, because a lot of times people will just look at the choices and assume; oh, yeah, that's a vocabulary word, and just, like mark it. Make sure you check that question; know what it's looking for.
Mark each choice

- If you know the choice is correct, put a plus by it. +
- If you aren't sure, put a ?
- If you are sure the choice is wrong, put a minus next to it.
- At the end of the exam, if you have time, go back and check the questions marks.

Kelly: So, this is another way to help you with multiple choice questions; to go through and put a plus next to the easiest ones you know. That gives you the advantage of knowing which points you are going to get. Then you can put a question mark next to the ones you're not sure of; that you marked and that you want to go back and look at. Then, put a minus next to the ones you know that are wrong, that you know you didn't study. This can help you understand what you need to study more next time. It can help you go back and review after the test. And, at the end of the exam, you want to make sure you go back and look at which ones you marked and look them over; maybe throughout the test you found the answer on another question. It's always helpful to look at your exam before you turn it in.
True/False Questions

1. Read the answers closely

2. Be careful with double negatives
   - translate questions with double negatives into positive terms
   Example: “No birds are without feathers”
   Can be changed to: “All birds have feathers”

3. Look for multiple parts in a question
   - if true: all elements in question must be true
   - if false: only one element has to be false

For true/false questions, you want to read the answers closely. Be careful of double negatives. An example of that is; no birds are without wings, which would translate to all birds have wings; or have feathers, sorry. Look for multiple parts in the question. A true/false question could have one sentence that's wrong and the whole thing is wrong and it would be marked false. So, you want to make sure you're breaking the question down and looking at each sentence as true or false.
Kristy: Now, with essay questions, this is a little pre-test. You guys studied the material in depth, obviously, if you're writing an essay on it. You're going to want to know your broad concepts, but then know details, because teachers always are impressed when you put details into those essay questions. So, know details for each concept. Outlining your answers beforehand is a good way to organize your thoughts and come up with, like an attack plan for the essay question when you get into the class. Know vocabulary words. A good way to do it is also talk about the test material out loud; like, tell your friend about it. Teaching is the best way to learn. And then, if you have the time, practice actually writing out the answer; like, just do the essay question. I know like my freshman year in college, I was so nervous about an essay question I actually wrote it out and, like memorized it word for word. I learned not to do that later and got more comfortable with outlines, but definitely practicing writing it out was a helpful way.
Kristy: So then, during the test make sure you know the question; read it carefully. Circle your directive words, such as the analyze, compare and contrast, describe, define, explain, discuss, so you're hitting the elements that the teacher is looking for in the question. Underline key concepts; it's really important to just go through that question and just highlight it or underline. And then on scratch paper, outline again; outlining is a good way to set up your attack plan. And then, of course, fourth; write the essay.
Kelly: So, this is an overview of the suggestions we mean to help improve test taking. You want to review the entire exam first, so you can manage your time. You want to record your answers neatly, especially on the Scantron. You want to work through the test slowly, so you're hitting all of the material and reading it all right. You want to answer the easy questions first so you know you have those points. You want to use the process of elimination on multiple choice questions to help you eliminate answers. You want to look for inter-question clues; like she said, the stem to one question may help you with another. Ask the instructor if you're confused on anything; they're there to answer your questions. And, review your answer sheet when you're done. This is a good way to go back and look at your check marks, or your question marks, your plus marks and your minus marks.
So, these are some words; like Kristy said, she likes giving high fives before the test to help her bring up her positive morale. These are little things that you can say to help bring up your morale before you take a test, so. Success is inevitable.

Kelly: I am confident.

Kristy: [inaudible] another one for [inaudible]? Do you want to say the next one?

Kelly: Anyone? No?

Kristy: I have everything I need right now to achieve everything I want.

Audiance: I'm ready [inaudible].

Kristy: Good, yes. [Laughter] Anyone else want to say one?

Kelly: Am I in your way?

Audience: I've studied and know the material well.

Kelly: Okay, anyone else want to do one? I am a great test taker.
Kelly: All right. So, relaxation and visualization for test taking. This kind of goes back to if you're a person that has anxiety going into the test and if you've done all of the studying you can possibly do. It's always good to sit down, relax; understand that this isn't the end of the world. Breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth. There is different relaxation techniques you can do that works for you. Maybe listen to your iPod before you take the test, if that's what helps you. Just make sure you know that it's not the end of the world; there will be other tests, and don't let the anxiety beat you. And, that is the end of our presentation. Any questions that anyone has about test taking? Any specific problems that they have? Anyone? No?

Audience: [Inaudible]; I don't know if it's anxiety or just [inaudible].

Kelly: Yeah, that's why we like to focus on the study tips, because; I mean, it is. I have the same problem, too. And, it's just one of those things where you have to find a good spot where you can study, that you're going to get the work done. I know I can't do it at home, so I know I have to go somewhere to do it. And, if I don't go somewhere to do it, then I won't do it and I'll wait until the last minute. So, you want to make sure that you find something that works with you and that can help you not stress out the day of the test.

Audience: If you're given a lot of material, like to read before a test and you don't know exactly what it will be on, how do you; you know, because then I did that one time. I chose like what I thought would be on it and then only a few of those [inaudible] were on it. So, I don't know how to, like make sure all of that information stays or what I should really be looking at.
Kelly: What I would suggest is if the professor does go over notes with you, I would first review the notes and pinpoint what seems important in the notes. And, if you have reading that goes along with those, go back into the book and look at what the professor talked about in class. If the professor talked about one chapter in depth, but then the next chapter they mentioned three things, you know you want to make sure you go back and look at that first chapter and you want to take a lot of time doing that. But, the three things; you can go back and just look at those three things, because mainly teachers are going to go off what their lecture notes are. I'm not saying that you should discount the book at all, but mainly teachers are teaching what they want to have on the test. So, that would be my suggestion.

Audience: [Inaudible] places like, will have but they're still like bigger quizzes, so we have our, like three chapters we read, then take a quiz, then he'll lecture. So, that's [inaudible].

[ Laughter ]

Kelly: I would suggest for reading, maybe breaking it into questions; telling yourself, I'm going to read five pages tonight. And then, doing a good job; taking notes, highlighting, whatever works for you in reviewing. And, then you do the next five pages the next night, and just make sure you plan it out well enough that you're going to get all of your reading done in time for that class, but you're also not overloading yourself in one night. So, that's a lot of it, is making sure you manage your time well, so you can get it all done and so it doesn't build up and give you that anxiety before the test. Yeah. This tip sheet does a lot; it helps a lot, too. It says, like take occasional breaks from your studying; you don't want to overload yourself. Keep class notes short, well spaced and to the point. So, like I said, you could go back to your book and if you [inaudible] to the point, then you know exactly what they're asking out of that chapter. So, yeah.