

Final Exam Preparation Tips

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1. ***Scheduling:*** Review the final exam schedule above with your student. Set cell phones or computers with ring tones/alarms to schedule study. Use traditional written schedules to plan blocks of time for dedicated study. Make a schedule subject-by-subject. Review per item #5 below to be sure your student sticks with it!
2. ***Grade Point Ratios:*** Know *what & where* the points are. Know current score and the point scales per assignment, quizzes, class participation, etc. Ask all teachers for finals review guides indicating what material will be covered on the exams. Review the teachers' expectations with respect to final exam preparation. Extra credit points may also be available. Ask!
3. ***Study Materials, Methods & Media:*** Students should start reviews early & use traditional study methods and/or those suited to their own learning/retention style: Listen to an audio tape of terms, carry a 3x5 card with formulas, download a voice document, re-read texts, review written notes, use traditional flash cards, or download terms on a “smart phone” or PDA device, and text study times to friends. Start practicing cumulative review NOW with study guides, flashcards and whatever other tools that will best assist your students in preparing for finals. For science and social studies classes, students should also know the definitions of bold terms that appear within the text. Students should make sure they can answer questions from section reviews, chapter reviews, and chapter tests in texts. Students can write their answers on paper so that practice tests can be repeated if necessary.
4. ***Exam Anxiety & “The Breakfast Club”:*** Reduce student stress with study, scheduling, practice tests, and breakfast. The brain needs fuel & the body needs rest for optimum performance. Start finals prep early. Maintain a calm, assured and positive tone around students who are nervous about exams. It will not help your son or daughter if you are anxious about their grades or final exam performance. Have them focus on deep breathing and practice basic meditation techniques to overcome test anxiety. Design timed “practice tests” for a student to take prior to the actual final. Convert student fear to familiarity.
5. ***Be Aware & Prepared:*** Busy parents assume that a “Yes, Mom/Dad, I studied” means even a conscientious student is prepared. Know the real score. Parents needn’t know a subject to orally quiz students in subjects such as history, social studies, biology, vocabulary, verb conjugations, and even foreign language vocabulary. “Spot check” your student’s memorization of material while you are waiting in a car or listen while a brother or sister “spot checks” while you are driving. Prepare practice tests/quizzes on the subjects or have students make them for each other. Memorization is only part of an effective study plan. Study sessions will be more efficient, however, once you have converted “free” travel & waiting time to be sure your student’s basics are in place. Parents routinely think a student is 90% prepared only to find that student has 20% mastery and a short time until mid-terms or finals.

Good luck, students! Study smart & study well. Please phone if we can be of assistance.