

In addition to thinking positively, following his shooting routine, and getting the proper amount of rest, Tyler learned the importance of regular practice. He was discouraged early in the season because he didn't play as well as some of the other boys. Mr. Frank encouraged him to spend extra time after school practicing. Tyler found that practice didn't make him a perfect player, but it sure did improve his performance and his confidence.

Tell about something you can do better after practicing regularly.



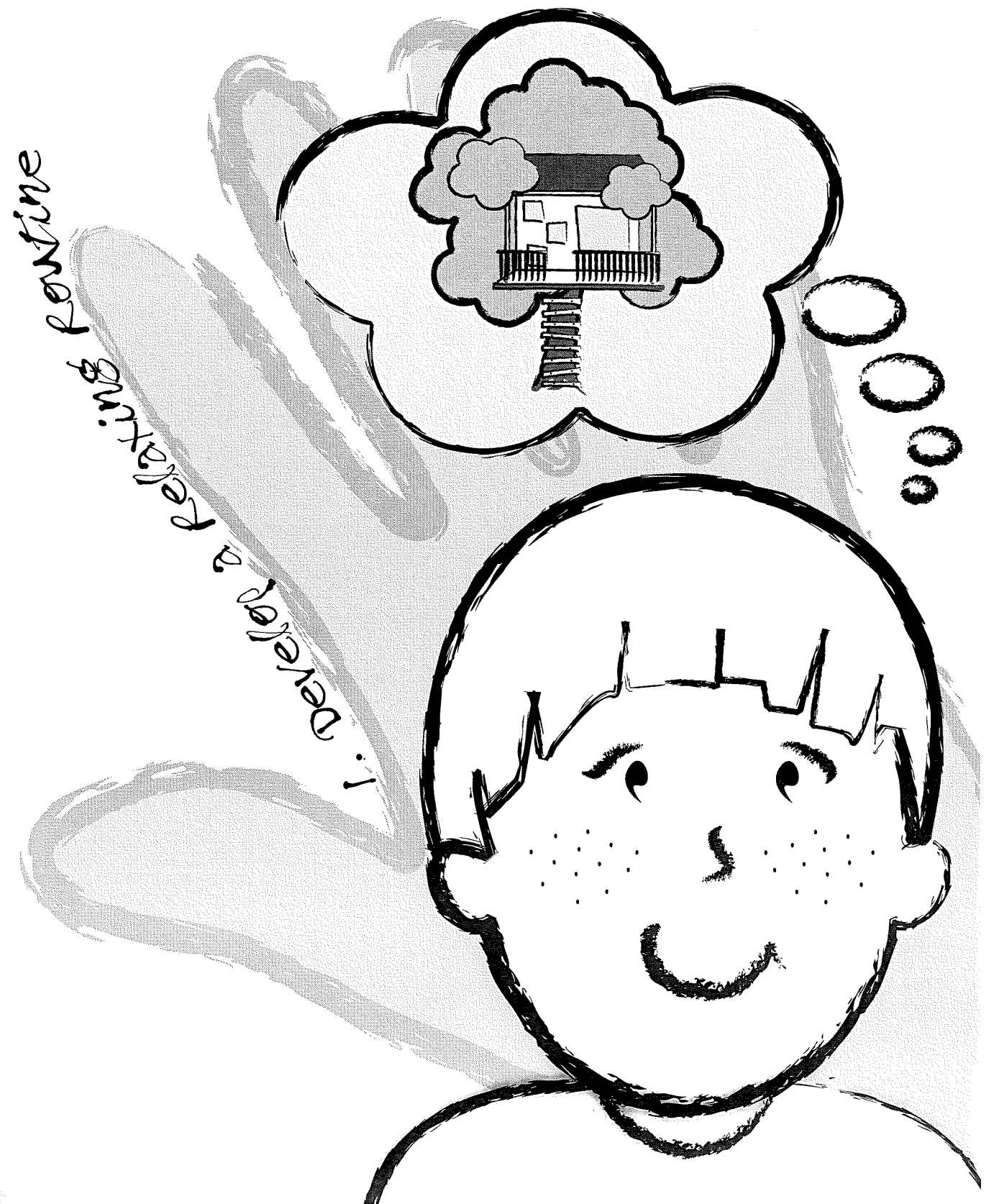
In the middle of his basketball daydream, Tyler heard Mrs. Best announce a ten-minute delay in starting the state achievement test due to a late bus. "Great!" he thought. "I'll take this time to get ready for the test."

He quickly made a mental list of "coach's tips" to help him relax and do his best on the test.

—1—

Develop a relaxing routine

Tyler put down his pencil, imagined being in his favorite place (his tree house), and slowly took three deep breaths before putting his name on his test booklet.



—2—

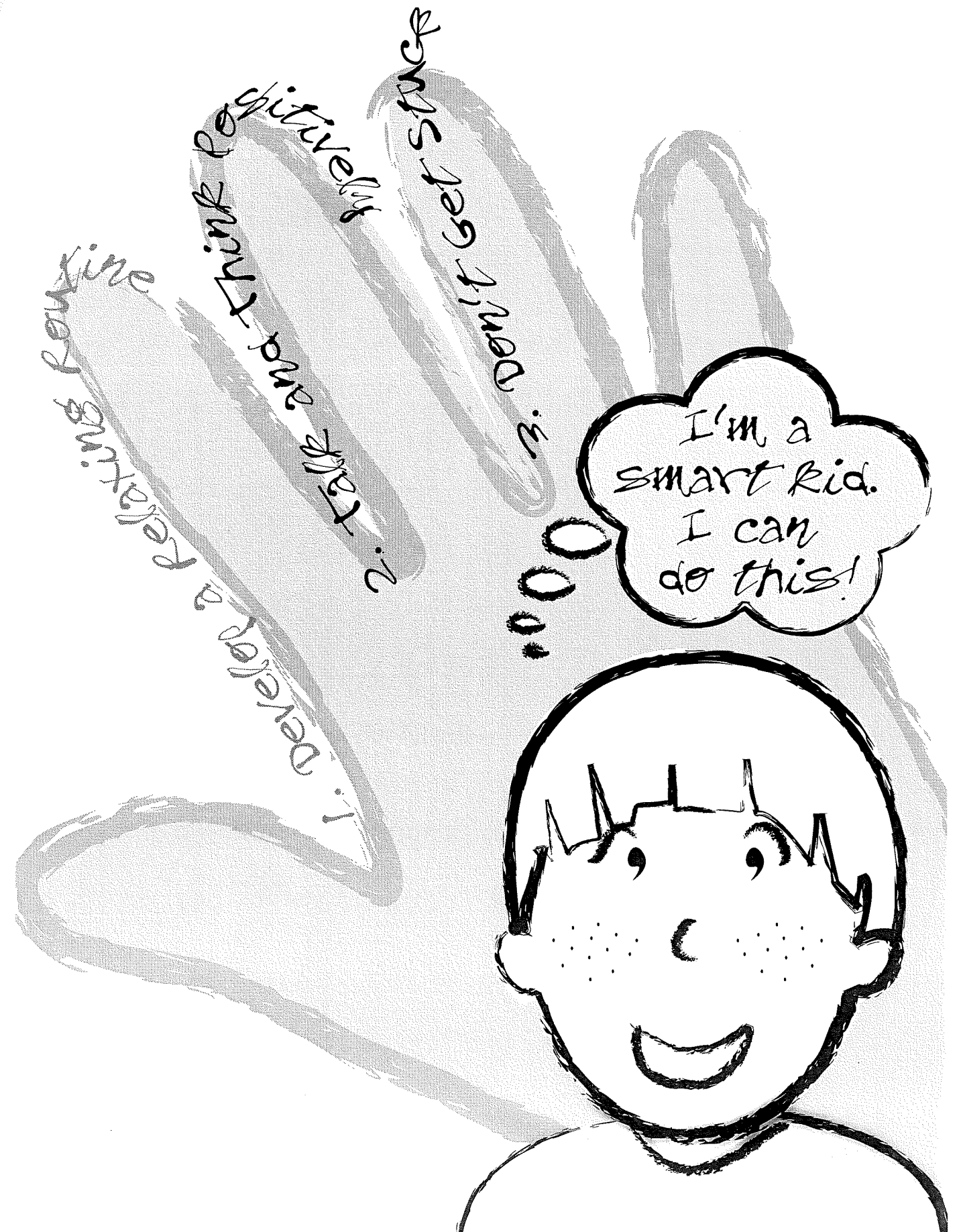
Talk and Think Positively

Tyler said to himself: "I am a smart kid and I'm going to do my best."

—3—

Don't Get Stuck

Tyler reminded himself that everybody makes mistakes. "I don't have to know all the answers. If I don't know one, I can make my best guess and go on to the next question" he thought.



—4—

Practice to Make Progress

Tyler reminded himself to read over each question carefully two times before choosing an answer. He also decided to practice reading to his mom and little sister at home to get more comfortable and confident with his reading.

—5—

Prepare Your Body Physically

Tyler promised himself to get to bed early tonight and to eat a healthy breakfast tomorrow morning before coming to school.



Just as Tyler finished his mental list of test-taking tips, he heard Mrs. Best announce that she was ready to begin the test. Much to his surprise, Tyler felt fine now. He had been so busy focusing on his basketball coach's tips that his nervous butterflies had gone away.

How did Tyler's feelings change and why?



He looked down at the test booklet on his desk and saw a harmless green booklet where the fearful tiger had been. Tyler took a deep breath, picked up his pencil, and raised his hand as he smiled at Mrs. Best.

"Yes, Tyler," Mrs. Best replied. "Don't worry, Mrs. Best. You're a great teacher and we're going to do just fine on this test," Tyler said.

"Thanks, Tyler," replied Mrs. Best with a smile. "I needed that."

Tyler smiled and thought to himself, "I guess teachers need to tame tigers sometimes, too."

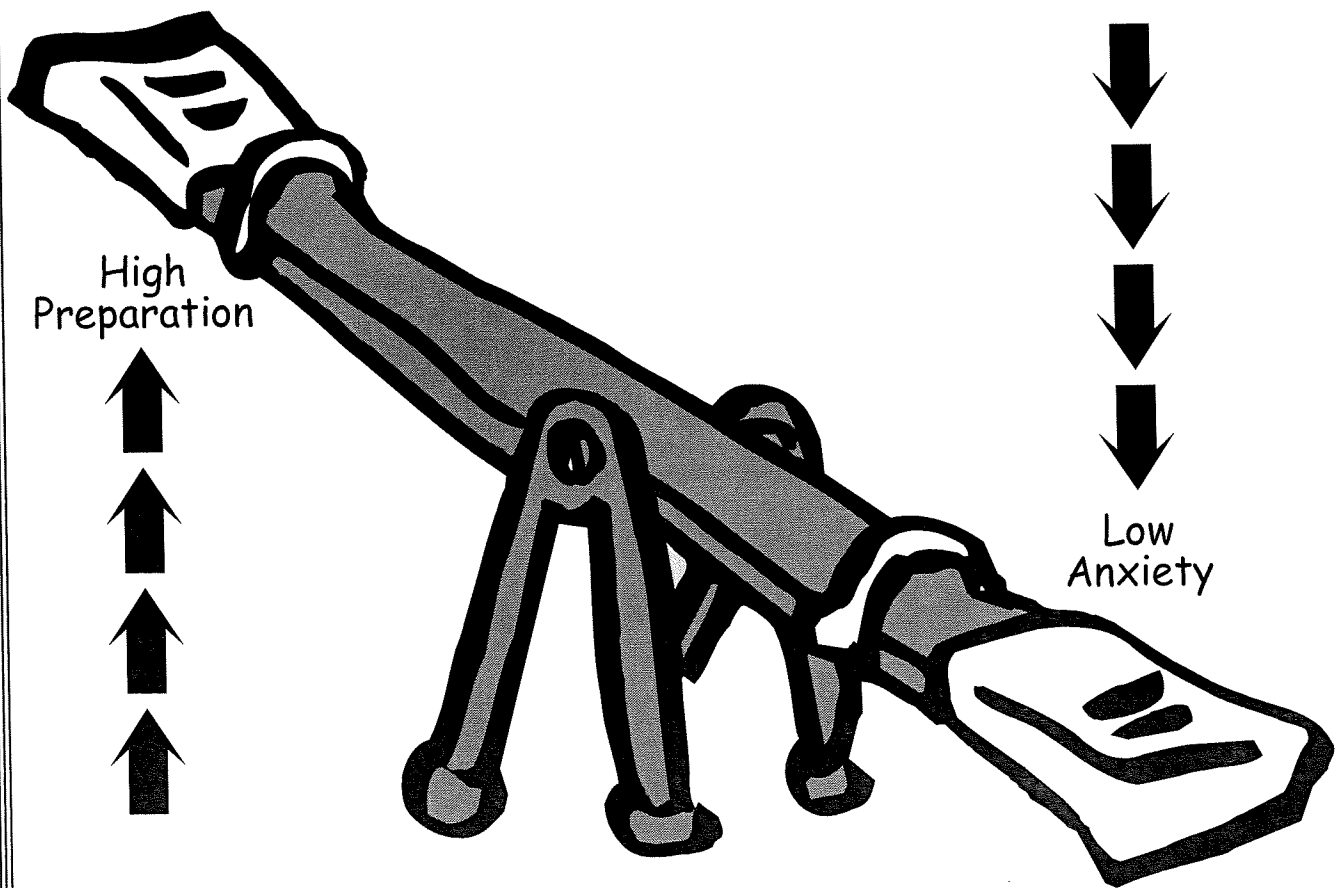


*What is the purpose of standardized tests?
Why do you think students get so nervous about tests?
Why do you think teachers also get nervous about tests?*

*Do you think you will perform better on tests if you are nervous or calm? Explain your answer.
What have you learned from this story that might help you "tame the testing tiger?"*

Test Prep Card #1

Be Prepared!



High Preparation = Low Anxiety

Be Prepared!

If you practice a hobby such as piano or baseball,
you're likely to play well on recital or game day.

When you know you have prepared for a
test by studying or practicing the material,
you can relax and do your best.

High Preparation = Low Anxiety

Test Prep Card #2

Reframe Your Thinking About Tests

Test Grade \neq Me

Me $>$ Test Grade

Reframe Your Thinking

Some people think that a poor test grade makes them a failure or a loser. If you had the flu last month, does that make you a "sick" person all the time? Of course not. Try to remember that your performance on a test is just one small part of who you are.

Use this simple activity to demonstrate that a person's behavior is separate from the person himself.

*Hold a piece of paper in one hand and a book in the other. (Or a pencil and pen, any two objects will do) Hold up each object as you say:
"This is the behavior (paper).
This is the person (book)."*

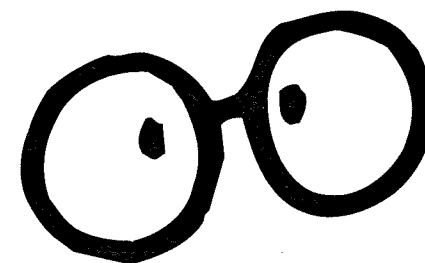
*"This is the test grade!"
"This is the person!"*

Test Prep Card #3

Good Listeners...



their hands & feet are still



Look

their eyes are on the speaker



think about what they hear

Good Listeners...

STOP what they are doing and keep hands, feet and body still.

LOOK at the speaker.

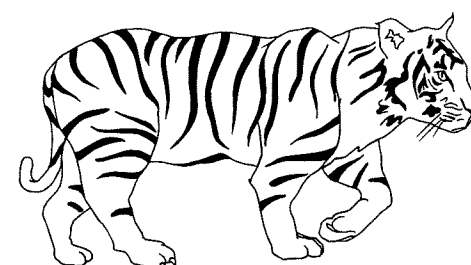
LISTEN with their ears and think about what is being said.

You listen with your eyes, ears and body.

Test Prep Card #4

Fear...

Real or Imagined?



"The only thing you have to fear is fear itself." —Franklin D. Roosevelt

Fear of Tests

Fear of tests can cause some people to get nervous and do worse than they normally would. Think about why you are afraid of tests.

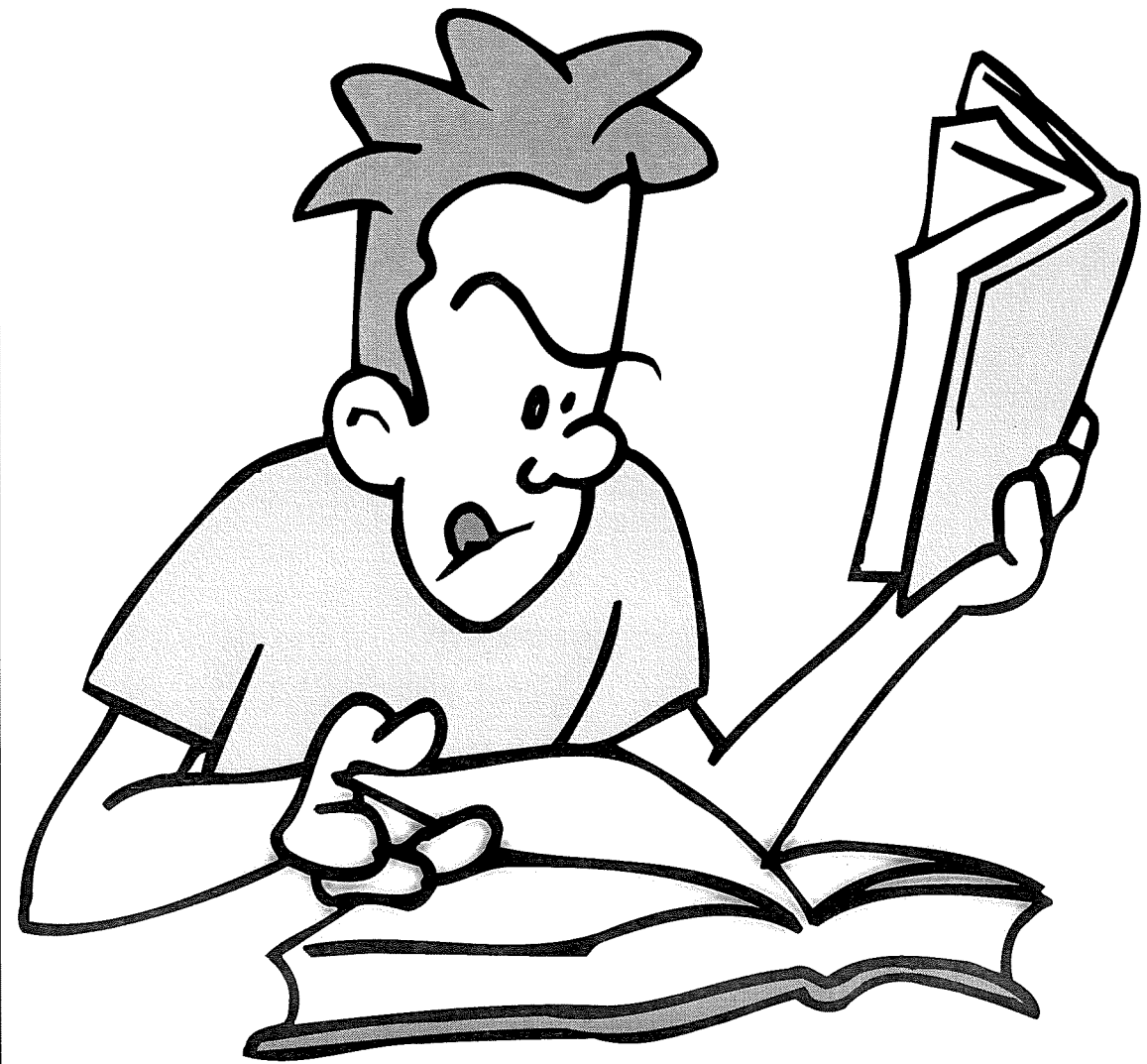
Can a test hurt you like a wild tiger could?

Are you afraid of disappointing others or embarrassing yourself? Try to relax and remember that a test can't hurt you, but your own fear can!

(You may want to use the Test Anxiety Assessment from page 67 with this card.)

Test Prep Card #5

Study day-by-day. Don't cram!



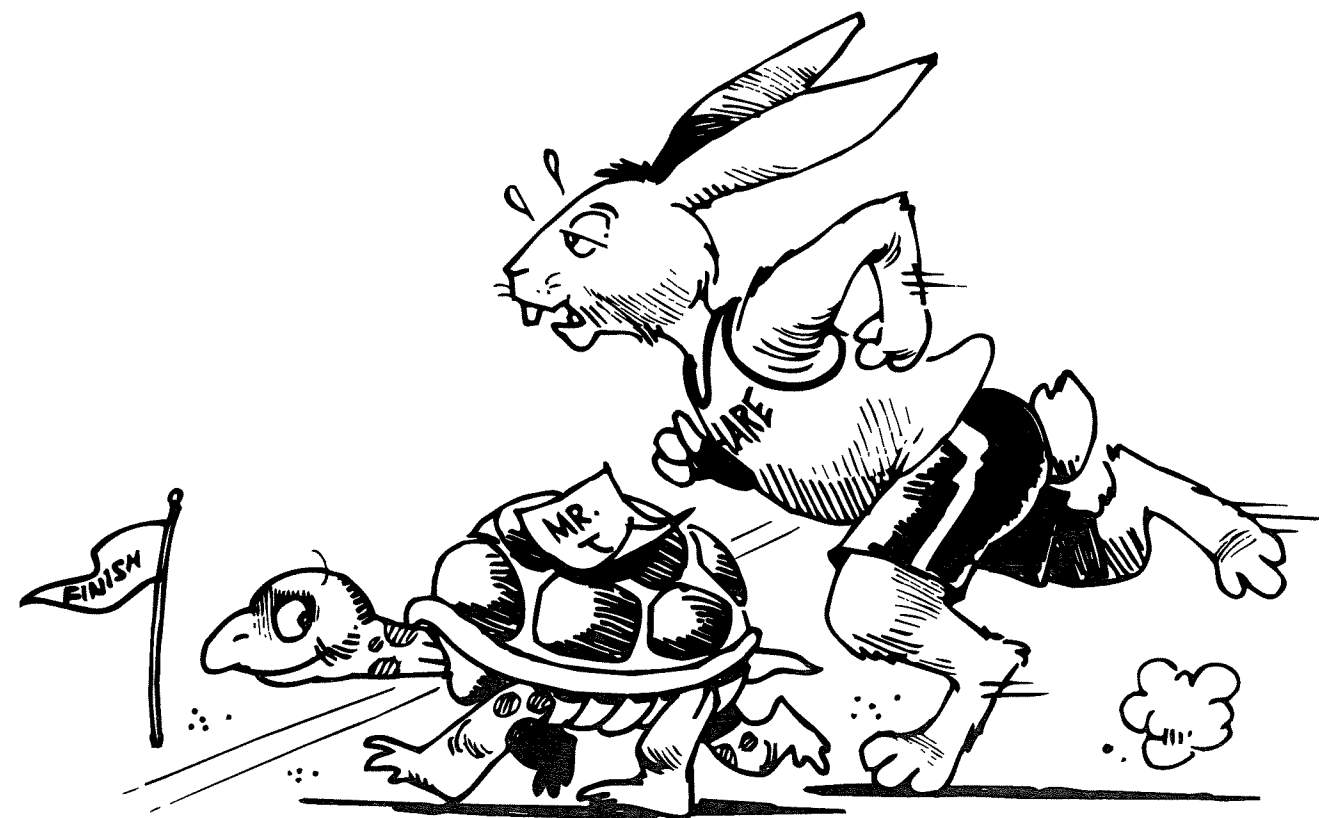
Studying Ahead

Studies show that most people remember facts better when they review and repeat them in several short sessions over time, rather than trying to cram a lot of information in one long session the day before the test

Try it, you might be surprised!

Test Prep Card #6

Watch the Time



Pace Yourself.
Not too fast... Not too slow.

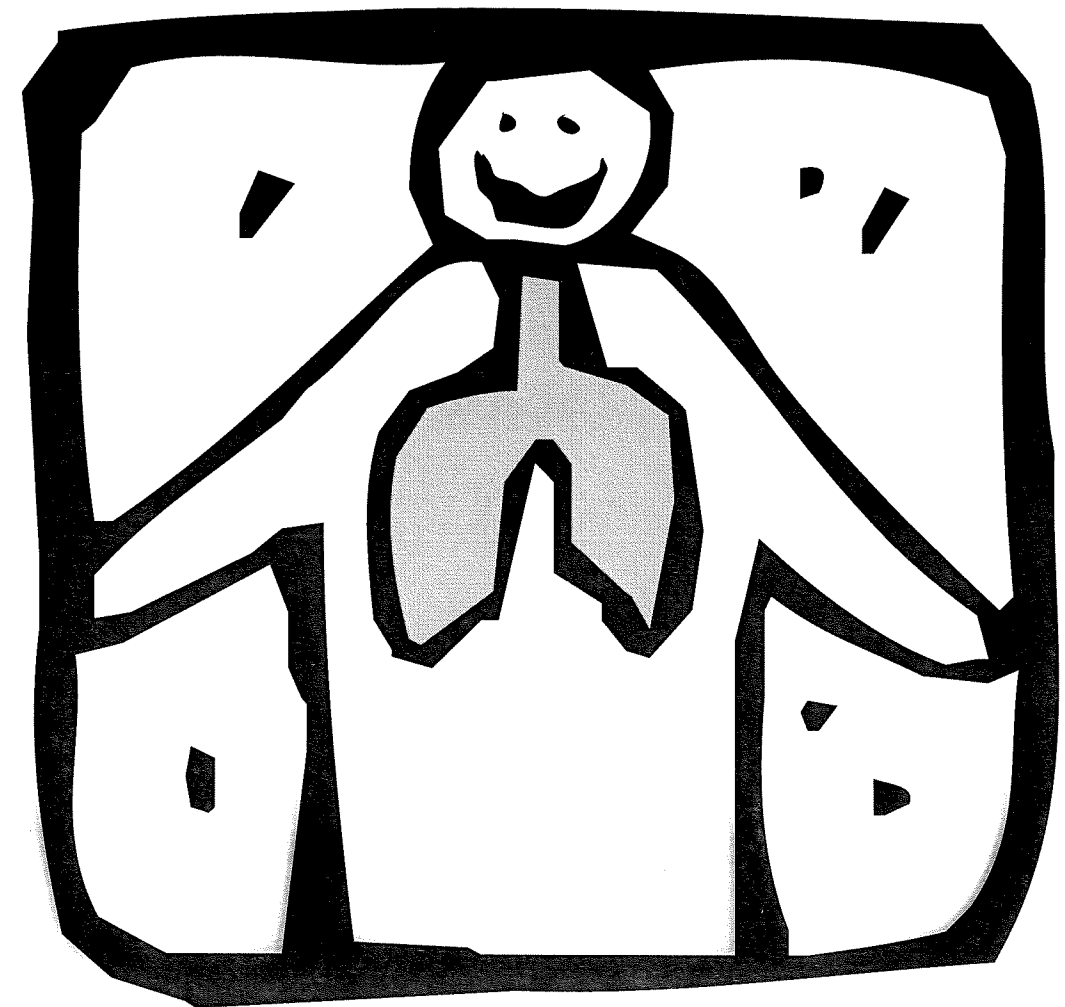
Pacing Yourself

During a test, try to work at middle speed.

If you work too quickly, you're likely to make careless mistakes. If you get stuck by working too long on one hard question, you may get frustrated or not finish the test. Skip the ones you aren't sure of, and come back to them later.

Test Prep Card #7

Relax With Deep Breathing



Learn to Relax

When you get nervous, your heart and lungs work harder and faster. Try taking several slow deep breaths while counting to yourself (inhale, 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5, exhale , 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5). When your body slows down, you'll be able to think clearly and do your best work.

Test Prep Card #8

Think Positive Thoughts

I am prepared.

I can do this.

Think Positive Thoughts

Remember the classic children's story, *The Little*

Engine That Could? By repeating the positive

thought, "I think I can, I think I can..." the little train

was able to climb a big mountain. Think of a

positive statement you can think and say

to yourself at test time.

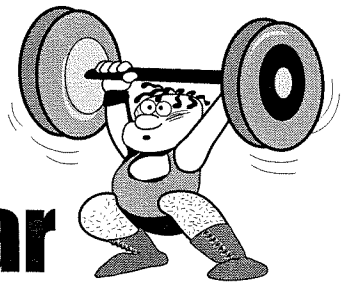
Test Prep Card #9

Prepare Your Body With...

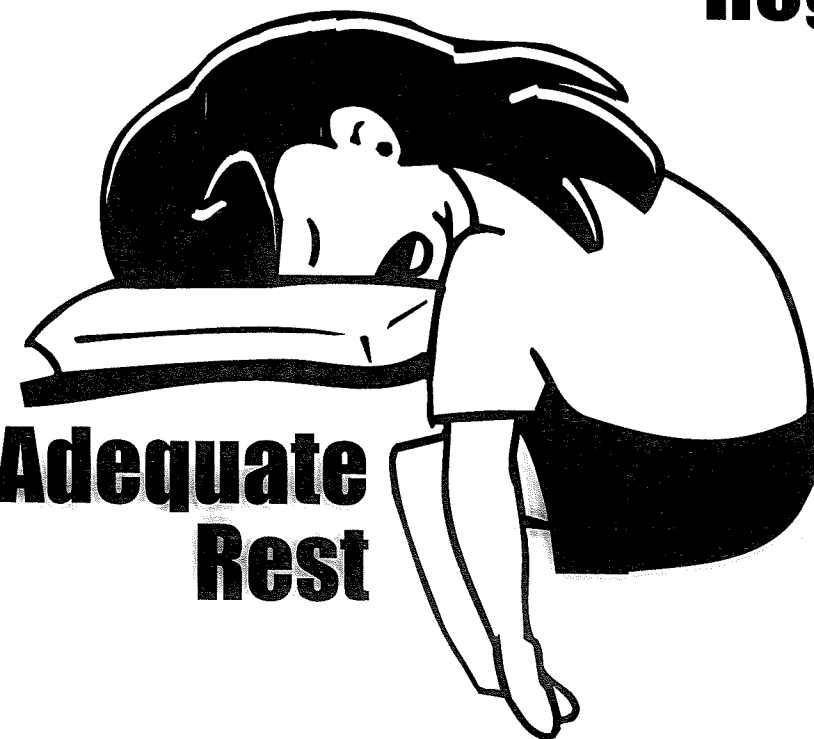
Nutritious Food



Regular Exercise



Adequate Rest

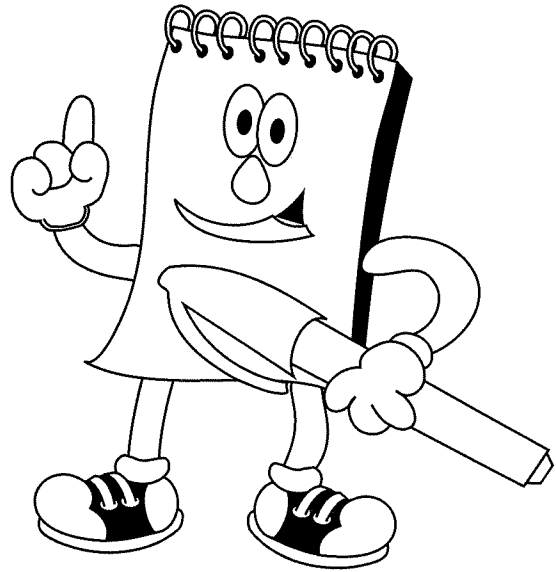


Prepare Your Body

Taking care of your body is important every day, not just on test days. But, your brain will work better if you are well fed, rested and physically fit.

This may be a good time to discuss healthy and unhealthy eating habits, appropriate amount of sleep for children this age, and types of physical activity children are involved in.

Test Prep Card #10



Read Carefully!

Answer Easy Ones First!

Check Over Your Work!

During the Test

Read directions and questions carefully. Don't rush.

Answer the ones you know first.

This makes you feel good/builds confidence.

Always proof-read your answers. Check for errors,

omissions, double bubbles or stray marks.

Test Yourself on Test Anxiety

Do you get nervous and fearful just before a test? yes no

Which of the following are true for you? I get nervous about tests because:

- I don't know enough.
- I just panic even though I usually make good grades in school.
- I haven't studied or prepared.
- I always worry about things.
- I'm afraid of disappointing others.
- I'm afraid of embarrassing myself.

How anxious are you?

Put a number in each blank—1 for never, 2 for sometimes, or 3 for often.

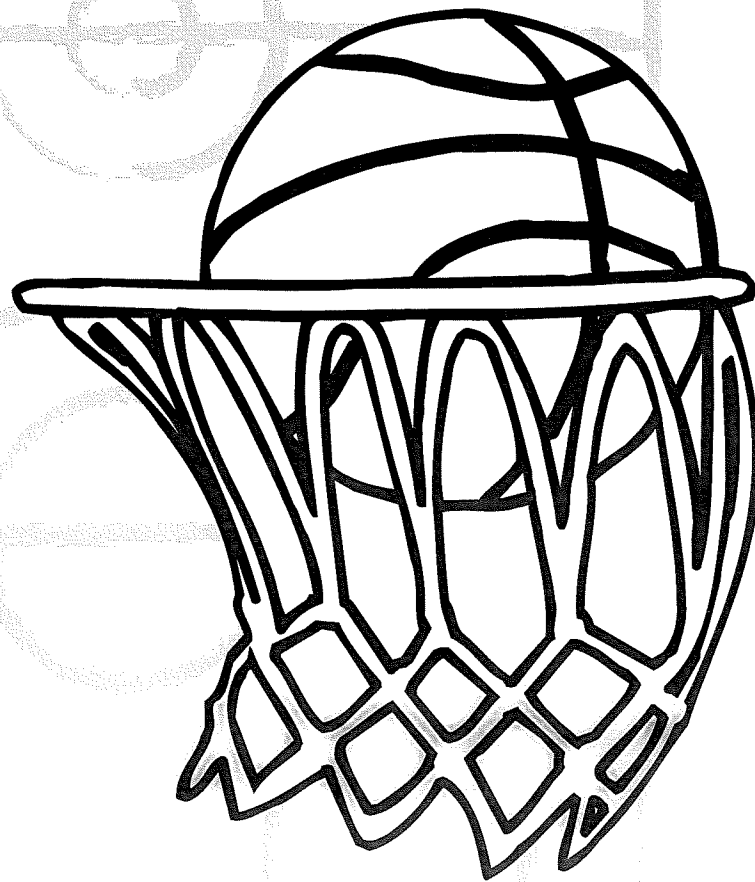
- _____ Right before a test, I have sweaty palms, shaky hands, or other visible signs of nervousness.
- _____ I get butterflies in my stomach before a test.
- _____ I feel queasy or sick to my stomach before a test.
- _____ I look at the test and feel that I don't know any of the answers.
- _____ During a test, my mind goes blank and I forget things.
- _____ I have trouble sleeping well the night before a test.
- _____ I make careless mistakes like skipping questions or putting answers in the wrong places.
- _____ I have difficulty choosing answers.
- _____ I remember the answers after the test is over.
- _____ I panic at the thought of taking a test.

Add up your score. Scores will range from 10 to 30. A low score (10-15 points) means that you do not suffer from test anxiety. In fact, if your score was close to 10, a little more anxiety may be helpful to keep you focused and get your blood flowing during a test. Scores between 16 and 21 indicate a normal level of test anxiety. Scores above 22 suggest that you have a high level of test anxiety. You may need some help with test taking.

** Adapted from questionnaire by Nist and Diehl (1990), and The Center for Advancement of Learning, Muskingum College, 1998.*

Coach Frank's Training Tips

- 1. Develop a Relaxing Routine**
- 2. Talk and Think Positively**
- 3. Don't Get Stuck**
- 4. Practice to Make Progress**
- 5. Prepare Your Body Physically**



How Parents Can Help Children Do Their Best on Tests

The best thing you as a parent can do to help your child do his/her best on standardized tests is to provide positive support by expressing confidence in your child's ability to do their best. Let that be your expectation, as well. Children should know that test scores are important, but are not the measure of your love and acceptance of them.

On test days, try to provide a calm, stress-free environment each morning as your child gets ready for school. Get up in plenty of time to avoid morning rush and anxiety. Curtail nighttime extra-curricular activities and outings that may interfere with their regular bedtime routine.

Help teach and reinforce the following test-taking tips and strategies:

- **Get Plenty of Rest Each Night**
- **Eat a Good Breakfast**
- **Have a Positive Attitude**
- **Relax... Don't Fret**
- **Try Hard... Do Your Best**
- **Listen Carefully and Follow Directions**
- **Think Before You Answer**
- **Read Directions and Questions Carefully**
- **Don't Rush... Work at Middle Speed**
- **Check Over Your Work When Finished**
- **Don't Expect to Know Every Answer**