

TRMS SCHOOL COUNSELING NEWSLETTER

Respect, Responsibility, and Right Choices

School Year 2018-2019

Trimester 3

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Standardized Testing Tips and Tricks

During Aril, Timberlane Regional Middle School will once again be participating in the New Hampshire Statewide Assessment System (SAS). For our 8th graders, this will include Science as well as Math and English. All students participate in what is referred to as “computerized adaptive testing,” an updated form of standardized testing which adapts to students’ ability level based on questions they have already answered. This adjustment of test question difficulty allows for more measurement of each student’s score. Use of computers also allows for several different versions of the same assessment. The SAS will include questions that are multiple-choice, open response single answer or short answer (a few

sentences), and essay (several paragraphs).

How can we help our students make the most of standardized testing? Below are some easy tips and tricks to review with your student before the day of testing.

*Read the question and decide what it is asking.

*Think about an answer first THEN look at available options.

*If the question is multiple choice, there is typically one obviously wrong answer and one wrong answer. Eliminate two answers and then narrow down from the remaining choices.

* If you doesn’t know the answer, “flag” the question and



come back.

* Don’t overthink and second guess your “gut” response!

* Use provided paper as a graphic organizer or to “think out” questions. Studies show that writing down your thought process helps with problem-solving!

*Reread what you wrote for open responses questions to make sure it makes sense AND answers the question asked.

Preparing for the Day of Testing

While testing might not be your student’s favorite thing to do, there are easy ways for prepare and decrease “day of” stress and anxiety.

* Have your student put ear buds/headphones, snacks, a bottled water, and a good book to read in his/her backpack every night before a day of testing.

* Have your student choose a comfortable, school appropri-

ate outfit and set it aside the night before testing, so (s)he doesn’t have to think about in the morning.

*Get a good night’s sleep! Keep devices where they won’t distract your student.

* Eat breakfast! If your student doesn’t get hungry early, pack a snack for when (s)he gets to school.

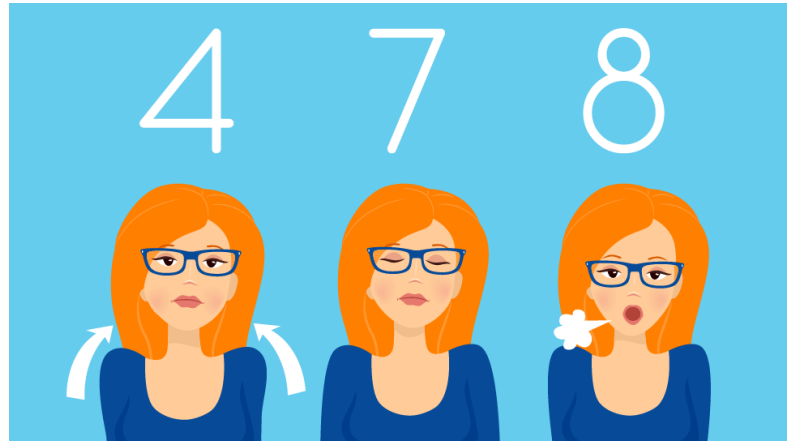
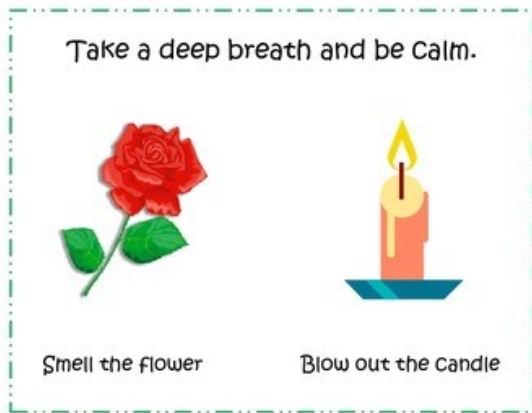
*If riding the bus can be stressful, plan a coping skill such as

sitting with a friend, sitting away from challenging peers, and listening to music.

*Right before testing, encourage your student to use the bathroom and taking a movement break as needed.

*Encourage your student to advocate! (S)he can let teachers know if a bathroom break or other help is needed during testing.

2 Easy Breathing Techniques!



7th Grade

We're in the homestretch of seventh grade. It hardly seems possible that a lot of the year is behind us. Seventh graders are well on their way to becoming students in the true sense of the word, and are starting to think about taking their place as the eighth graders in school. They've covered a lot of tough curriculum, and there is more to come in this last trimester. Keeping motivated and finishing strong are

important. Here's how you can help:

- *Stick with a routine, but allow time for your student to take in the sun and fun of spring
- *Keep the same high expectations
- *Continue to emphasize good attendance
- *Check in....with your student and your student's teachers

*Emphasize that summer activities (trips, time with friends) can be earned by giving it their best this trimester

*Let your student know that you understand how difficult it can be to concentrate at the end of the year

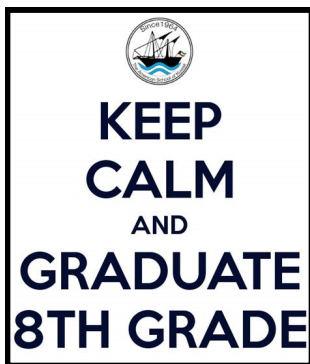


8th Grade

The transition to High School is upon us! Eighth graders have submitted their course selection sheets and are looking forward to finishing out their Middle School experience strong. This trimester they will meet with the Freshman Ambassadors, a group of last year's 8th graders who visit Reading classes to share

their experiences and answer questions. They will also participate in the Senior Panel, a forum with High School seniors that provides insight into the lives of TRHS students and opportunities available. In June, students will be invited to attend tours at the High School with fellow students. Each team will enjoy end of

year activities such as field trips and an end of year celebration! Please encourage your student to continue to focus on Middle School academics and access extra help during Advisory, Opportunity Block, and afterschool as needed. As always, contact Mrs. Huyler with any questions!



Handling Test Anxiety

Most students experience some nervousness before quizzes and tests. Feeling a bit stressed when facing a test or quiz is normal and expected. How do you know if your student is experiencing something more serious?

- *upset stomach
- *sweaty palms
- *trouble recalling information that they knew when studying for the test
- *trying to avoid school the day of the test

*telling you that they “blanked” the day of the test and couldn’t remember any answers

Strategies for battling test anxiety are basically just good test taking techniques. So, what can you do at home to ease test anxiety?

- *help your student think positively by visualizing success
- *study in smaller chunks over a few days before the test
- *help your student prepare a practice test from their study guide

*don’t try to cram all studying the night before the test

*make sure your student gets a good night’s sleep and has breakfast

*emphasize that it’s normal to feel nervous before a quiz or test

Strategies for students to use the day of the test:

- *choose a quiet seat in which to test
- *stretch/move your body during testing
- *keep yourself hydrated

*don’t focus on what other students are doing during the test

*remind yourself that you know the material....you’ve got this!



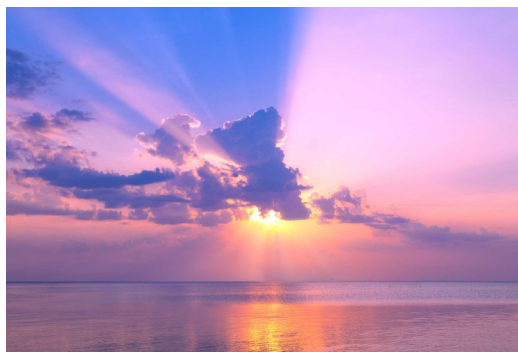
Pre-Test Meditations for Teens

What’s an easy way to calm down and center before an assessment? Meditate! Teaching our students mindfulness techniques can go a long way to decrease overall anxiety and increase test performance. Teenagers are at a good developmental age to learn to think about their thoughts and presence in the moment. Encourage your student to try a couple of these easy meditations found on www.doyouyoga.com! A brief one to two minutes is enough.

Thought Hunter

Sit still with your eyes closed, and count slowly from 1 to 10. If any thought comes into your mind, immediately go back to 1. Watch for even the smallest thought. It is a practice of sincerity between you and yourself, so even the smallest thought, even a sound, even the thought “I’m already at number 3”... you

need to go back to 1.



Meditation On the Sky

Close your eyes and visualize inner silence, inner joy, and peace as the clear blue sky.

In this clear blue sky, clouds of thoughts pass by. But whether there are clouds or not, the sky is always there. Clouds come and clouds go, but the clear blue sky remains unchanged. In the same way, clouds of thoughts pass through the sky of our mind.

Breath Meditation

Sit up tall and close your eyes.

Begin breathing deep enough that you can hear your breath. Feel how the breath moves your body, and notice the flow of the breath through your nostrils, in and out of your body.

Try to feel the contact of the air with the inside your nose, or how the air touches your upper lip.

Now gradually make the breath much gentler and let it flow naturally but keep listening to its sound. Try not to listen to your thoughts; listen only to your breath.

Whenever you find yourself thinking of other things, come back to your breath.

Counting Meditation

Sit or lie on your back and

count slowly in your mind from 100 to 1. Counting backward requires more concentration and will help you stay more focused. Try not to think about other things and just stay with the numbers. If you lose your count, start again from 100. If you reached 1, stay in silence for a few more moments.

Counting Your Thoughts

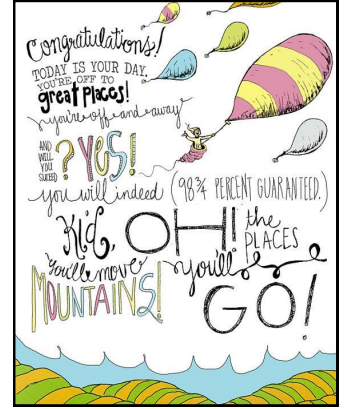
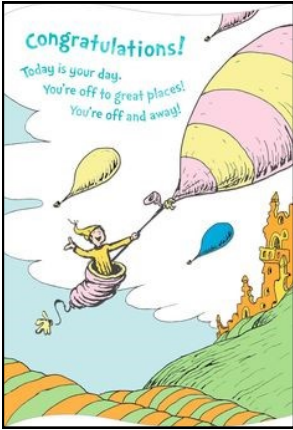
Measure one minute, and watch your mind with heightened awareness for that time period. Count on your fingers or mark on a piece of paper each thought that passes through your mind.

At the end of the minute, count your thoughts. Repeat a few times, trying to have fewer thoughts at every round.

You’ll be surprised to discover that all thoughts tend to run away and disappear when you consciously watch them in this way.

Important Upcoming Trimester 3 Dates

March 28th	Professional Development Day (No School)
April 1st-12th	SAS testing for Grades 6-8
April 22nd-26th	Vacation (No School)
May 9th	T3 Progress Reports
May 27th	Memorial Day (No School)
Early June	PTSA Welcome Wagon Tours 8th Grade
June 6th	Distance Learning 5th Grade
June 11th	Move-up Day 5th Grade
June 13th	8th Grade Graduation Night (anticipated)
June 17th	Last day of School (anticipated) T3 Report Cards



Congratulations 8th Graders!

It's been SUCH a fun ride! From those first days of 6th grade, nervous and unsure, to the last days of 8th grade, confident and looking forward to next big adventure, you have conquered challenges great and small. You have figured out your way around the building, how to open a locker, and how to ask for help. You have made new friends, let other friends go, changed teams, and learned to adapt. You have met new teachers, learned new schedules, and began to ask for help. As an 8th grader, you know more about yourself, your interests, your strengths, and how your brain works than you did in 6th grade.

You are becoming more comfortable with self-advocating at school, at home, and in the community. As you look forward to High School, also look back and remind yourself how far you've come! Remember move up day? Remember Camp Lincoln? High School and all of its opportunities and challenges await you, but you are better prepared for it knowing that you have navigated the last three years. It has been a joy and a privilege to be able to get to know, and hang out with, all of you. Please come back and visit me! I'm so proud of the young adults you have become!

~Mrs. Huyler

