EFFECTIVE READING TEST-TAKING STRATEGIES

STRATEGY #1 PREVIEW THE TEXT
Preview the text and its features (headings, words in bold print, and pictures/charts with captions). Give the text a quick examination for anything that jumps out at you. Get a feel for how it's organized.

STRATEGY #2 MAKE A PREDICTION AND ACTIVATE PRIOR KNOWLEDGE
Make a mental prediction. What do you think the text is about? Remember anything you have already learned about the topic.

STRATEGY #3 INTERPRET AND UNDERSTAND THE LANGUAGE OF QUESTIONS
Read over the questions. Read them one at a time without answering them. Circle key words, phrases, and/or names in the question that enable you to look for specific information in the passage.

STRATEGY #4 VISUALIZE AS YOU READ
Create a mental picture in your mind of what you have read. Try to connect the information you are reading with your own life. Mentally comment on the text as you read.

STRATEGY #5 MARK THE TEXT
Circle key words, phrases, or names that you remember from the questions you previously previewed.

STRATEGY #6 DO PERIODIC COMPREHENSION CHECKS
Stop reading every two paragraphs or so and make sure you understand what you're reading. If you do not understand what you just read, go back and read it at a slower reading rate.

STRATEGY #7 SUMMARIZE
When you have finished reading the selection, mentally summarize what you learned from the article. Try to remember the main idea and some important details that were given about it.

STRATEGY #8 ANALYZE THE QUESTION
Read the question carefully to make sure you understand what it is asking you to do. Try to determine what steps, task or thought processes the question requires in order to locate the correct answer in the text. Look back at the text and find where the correct information is located. Remember, it may be in more than one location in the text. Highlight/mark any information not previously marked that will help you answer the question.

STRATEGY #9 ANALYZE THE ANSWERS
Read all the answer choices before choosing an answer. Eliminate any answer choices that you know are wrong. Don't be fooled by distractors. Some of the types of distractors used are:
- Answer choice is too general
- Answer choice is a minor detail
- Answer choice uses the same words as in the article, but has the opposite meaning
- Answer choice cannot be supported by facts from the article (not there)