



Preparing for Objective Tests

An excellent way to prepare for objective tests is to regularly ask yourself questions about the material you're learning. This should (ideally) be an *ongoing* process and can be done with both lecture notes and reading assignments. Asking the right questions is as important as finding the right answers, and helps to develop critical reading and thinking skills, which improves comprehension and recall.

In his book *How to Study in College*, Walter Pauk recommends the "Question-in-the-Margin" system for reading and studying in preparation for objective tests:

Question

- Read (paragraph or section) carefully and thoughtfully, thinking about the main idea
- Write questions in the margin (or on a sticky note)
- Highlight or underline just enough to answer the question

Recite/Reflect

- Before moving on to the next paragraph/section, cover the text and ask yourself the questions in the margin
- Recite the answers – out loud is best, and in your own words
- Check your answer—if incorrect, re-read/cover/try again

Review

- After about an hour of reading/studying, take a 10-minute break. Review your questions/answers following this break for another 10 minutes
- Review periodically to keep ideas and information fresh in your mind (this can include answering your margin questions, but also other study strategies like making flash cards, mapping, making outlines, visualizing, and doing practice tests)

Remember: a test is made up of questions, so practice the performance.