PRACTICAL AND FINANCIAL LITERACY

Managing Time During Tests

Difficulty level: Easy

Practical and Financial Literacy

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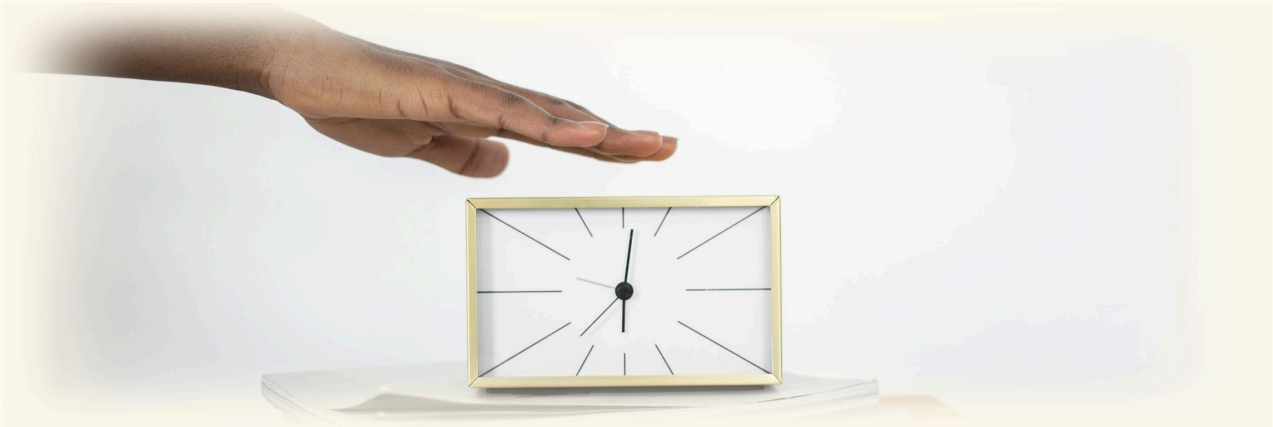
Overview of the concept

This is how you plan your minutes in a test, so every question gets attempted instead of the last page sitting blank because the first half took too long. A test is a race against the clock as much as a test of what you know, and students who plan their time usually finish more questions than students who do not. Knowing how to split your time, when to move on from a hard question, and when to come back to it can be the difference between a finished paper and one with blank pages at the end.



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Worked examples

EXAMPLE 1

Q A test lasts 60 minutes and is worth 60 marks. How much time should a 10-mark question get?

SOLUTION

This is a time-budget question, and the one rule to remember is: minutes divided by marks is minutes per mark.

60 minutes divided by 60 marks is 1 minute per mark.

A 10-mark question is worth 10 minutes. When that time is up, move on, even if the question is not finished.

EXAMPLE 2

Q A question is worth 3 marks and you have spent 3 minutes on it without a clear path to the answer. What do you do?

SOLUTION

You have spent your whole budget for that question, and a blank answer earns nothing either way.

Mark the question, make your best guess, and move on.

Come back to it at the end if time is left. One hard question is never worth the easy marks waiting further down the paper.

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Practice questions

1 A test has 90 minutes and 45 marks. How many minutes per mark is that?

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2 How long should a 6-mark question take at that rate?

A. About 6 minutes

B. About 12 minutes

C. About 18 minutes

D. About 3 minutes

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3 **You have spent 15 minutes on a 5-mark question and it is still not finished. What should you do?**

- **A** Keep working until it is finished
- **B** Move on and come back later if time is left
- **C** Leave it blank and never return
- **D** Start the whole test again

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4 **What should you do first when a test starts?**

- **A** Start the first question at once
- **B** Read the whole paper and plan time by marks
- **C** Check the clock every minute
- **D** Skip to the hardest question

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5 Why attempt every question?

- **A** Because attempted questions can earn marks, blank ones cannot
- **B** Because blank answers lose double marks
- **C** Because every question is worth the same
- **D** Because the teacher expects it

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6 What should you do in the last five minutes?

- **A** Start a new hard question
- **B** Check answers and fill any blanks
- **C** Put your pen down at once
- **D** Leave early

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7 A test lasts 60 minutes and has 30 questions. You have used 40 minutes and answered 20 questions. How many minutes do you have left for each remaining question?

- **A** About 1 minute
- **B** About 2 minutes
- **C** About 3 minutes
- **D** About 4 minutes

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8 A history final has 48 questions and lasts 60 minutes. You reserve 5 minutes for review. About how many seconds do you have per question?

- **A** About 60 seconds
- **B** About 75 seconds
- **C** About 69 seconds
- **D** About 55 seconds

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9 **You are halfway through the questions but only a quarter of the time has passed. Are you ahead or behind pace?**

- **A** Ahead: you have used less than a quarter of the time but finished half the questions
- **B** Behind: you have used more time than the questions you have finished
- **C** On pace: time and questions match exactly
- **D** Behind: you have finished half the questions

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What is the danger of no time plan?

A Finishing too early

B Running out of time with easy questions unattempted

C Answering too quickly

D Reading the paper twice

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ANSWER KEY

1. 2 minutes
2. About 12 minutes
3. Move on and come back later if time is left
4. Read the whole paper and plan time by marks
5. Because attempted questions can earn marks, blank ones cannot
6. Check answers and fill any blanks
7. About 2 minutes
8. About 69 seconds
9. Ahead: you have used less than a quarter of the time but finished half the questions
10. Running out of time with easy questions unattempted

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