

# Test Strategies: Problem Solving Tests

HCTC Student Success Tools

## Preparing for Problem-Solving Tests

1. Focus on major ideas, concepts & formulas
  - ◆ Review all notes & text material
  - ◆ Highlight topics emphasized
2. Work out sample problems
  - ◆ Prepare by solving lots of problems, even unassigned problems
3. Explain your work
  - ◆ Next to each problem
  - ◆ Might get you more points even if you are wrong
4. Complete out sample problems out of sequence
  - ◆ Randomness prepares you for the test
5. Work within a time limit
  - ◆ Similar to when you take an actual test
6. Practice
  - ◆ Use text and problems to make practice test

## Taking Problem-Solving Tests

1. Write down formulas on back of the test
2. Look over the test, skim questions
3. Allow more time for higher point items
  - ◆ Save time to review
4. Start with easier problems
  - ◆ Reduce anxiety promotes clear thinking
5. If you get stuck:
  - ◆ Work backwards
  - ◆ Break down into smaller problems
  - ◆ Guess answer and check it
  - ◆ If all else fails, go for partial credit
6. For difficult problems:
  - ◆ Make sure you understand the problem (identify givens and unknowns, mark keywords, sketch diagram)
  - ◆ List formulas relevant to solution
7. For all problems:
  - ◆ Once you have a method, follow it
  - ◆ Check each step for consistency
  - ◆ Document all work, is it easy to read
  - ◆ Evaluate your solutions, check answer to question