



Test-Taking Strategies: Tips for Success & Overcoming Anxiety

November 8, 6PM CST



Priority Setting Guidelines

These 4 guidelines will help you prioritize responses when given a scenario and you need to choose either 1 or more responses that are correct.

- Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs
- ABCs
- Nursing Process
- Safety and Risk Reduction

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

- Follows a pyramid approach
- Base items must be supported first
 - This includes physiological needs of the client: respiratory, circulatory, neurological systems
- Higher level items can be achieved next
 - Physiological needs are followed by: safety and security, love / belonging, self-esteem, and self-actualization

ABCs

- Airway, breathing and circulation needs frequently take priority
 - Life will not be sustained with a compromised airway or difficulty breathing
- Circulatory issues follow
 - Hyper/hypotension
 - Hemorrhage
 - Clots

Nursing Process

- Further assessment data can be the priority issue
- Post-operative clients
 - Vital signs
 - Wound sites

Safety and Risk Reduction

- Safety issues should be addressed following physiological concerns
 - Fall risk
 - Potential for self-harm
 - Etc.

Default Strategies

These 5 default strategies are helpful when you can ‘narrow things down’ and now need to make a choice between two correct answers. They may help you identify a key word or phrase that directs you to the most correct option.

- Use What You Know
- Time Elapsed
- Early vs Late S&S
- Stay with the Client
- Look for the Most Complete Answer

Use What You Know

- You should know *something* about the concept or response in every question and set of options
- Focus on the information you do know
 - Do not focus on the items that you do not know
 - This will allow you to eliminate several options

Time Elapsed

- The priority nursing action will change based on the time interval
 - Hours, days, weeks
- The closer the client is to the time the risk occurred, the higher the risk of complications.
 - ie: Closer to surgery

Early vs. Late S&S

- Early clinical manifestations are generalized and nonspecific
- Late signs are more specific and serious
 - ie: With hypoglycemia, early signs might include 'hunger, jittery' while a late sign could be 'loss of consciousness'

Stay with the Client

- The presence of the nurse at the bedside of the client is very important
- Rarely will a question have the nurse leaving the client
- Choose an answer that keeps the nurse with the client

Look for the Most Complete Answer

- Choose a response that has the least room for error
- Look for responses that have more objectivity (fact) vs. subjectivity (opinion).

References

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