TEST TAKING TIPS

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OBJECTIVES

1. To discuss strategies for multiple choice application questions on exams.

2. To develop skill in applying knowledge to practice related to multiple choice and multiple selection questions.

RESOURCES

Textbook Resources:

- NCLEX Practice Questions: End of chapter & online resources for text books

Online Resources:

- NCLEX Tips Online at http://www.nclexonline.com/tips/

- 6 Tips for Nursing Students to Pass Exams at http://www.nursetogether.com/tips-for-nursing-students-to-pass-the-exam

- ****Test Taking Techniques at http://www.austincc.edu/health/ttt/ ****

WHY, OH WHY?
AND WHAT IS THE PURPOSE?

Well designed multiple choice questions allow for engagement and evaluation in application of knowledge to nursing practice

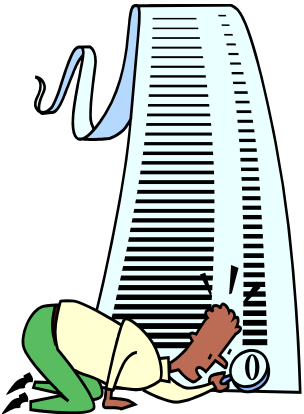Multiple choice questions enhance and evaluate critical thinking

Optimal patient outcomes are effected by the ability of nurses' to critically think

#1- ALL IN THE PREP

Learn the content to understand relevancy to practice versus memorizing, which requires

* Reading the assigned material
* Practicing test questions
* Discussion with others, e.g., group work
* Questioning and seeking more information - By asking why, when, where, who, how?

#2 – THE BIG QUESTION

NCLEX Style Question Components:

1. <u>Stem</u>: scenario and presentation of issue (key words)

2. <u>Question</u>: what the question is asking

3. <u>Distractors</u>: incorrect but possible answers

4. <u>Key Words</u>: set the direction of care or response

#2 – Sample Questions

Stem: In passing the physician for your patient in the hospital hall, he smiles and mentions he will be ordering an x-ray. You enter the patient's room to find her crying. She states "Dr. X was so abrupt and rude. I have never been treated so badly. I want to talk to a supervisor."
Question: As the nurse, your best initial response is?

Distractors:
1. "What level of supervisor do you want to talk to?"
2. "Dr. X is always rude to everyone. Don't take it personally."
3. "What do you want to talk to a supervisor about? Perhaps I can help."
4. **Correct Answer: "You seem upset."**

#2 – Sample Questions

Stem: Patient presents with severe dyspnea with a history of COPD. ABGs show the patient is in respiratory acidosis with and O2 sat of 87%. The patient appears to be gasping for air. The patient's family asks what is going to be done for the patient.

Question: As the nurse, your best initial response that shows understanding of the appropriate plan of care is ?

Distractors:
1. "We are going to start an IV and increase the oxygen."
2. "The doctor is reading the chest x-ray and should be in shortly."
3. "We need the patient to take slow deep breaths, and cough up secretions to clear the airway."
4. **Correct Answer: "I've called respiratory therapy who are coming to give the patient a breathing treatment."**

#3 –Cues in Answers

INCORRECT	CORRECT
• Do not promote communication • Discounts patient's feelings • May make patient feel inadequate or defensive	• Promotes open communication • Use of paraphrasing • Acknowledges patient's feelings

#3 – Cues in Key Words

- **Always**
- **Most likely or least likely**
- **Initial**
- **Priority or best**
- **Every**
- **Entire**
- **Only**
- **Never or rarely**

#4 – Tips

Test Taking Strategies: B.R.E.A.T.H.E

- Read test question carefully.
- What is the question asking? Do not read into the scenario or question.
- Read the responses carefully.
- Re-read the scenario, question, and responses.
- Delete the obvious incorrect responses.
- Move onto the next question, and come back to the question if stuck.

#4 – Tips

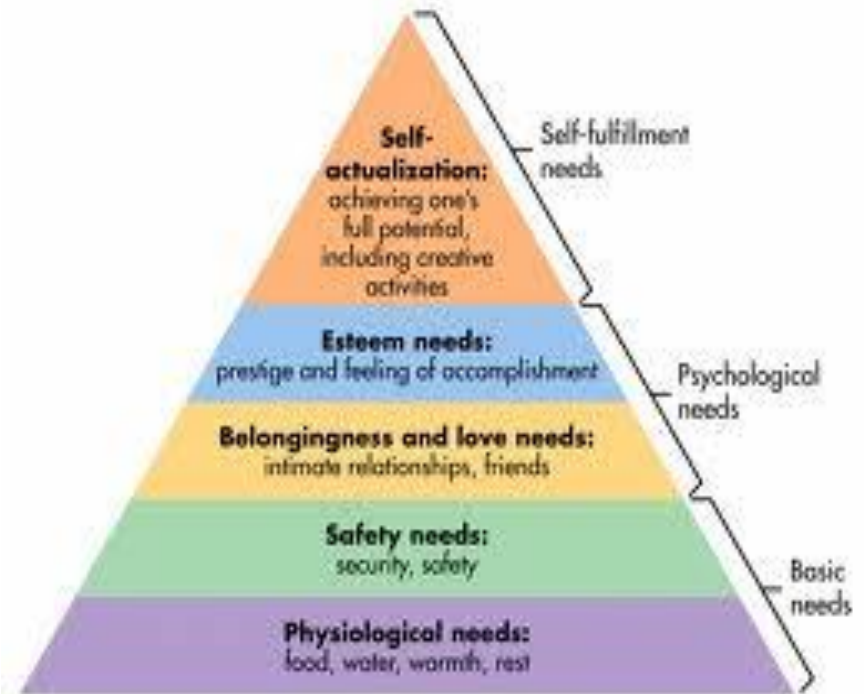## Think Maslow!

#1. Airway – Breathing – Circulation

#2. Safety/Disability

#3. Communication

#4. Nursing Process

Maslow's hierarchy of needs pyramid:
- **Self-actualization:** achieving one's full potential, including creative activities — Self-fulfillment needs
- **Esteem needs:** prestige and feeling of accomplishment — Psychological needs
- **Belongingness and love needs:** intimate relationships, friends
- **Safety needs:** security, safety — Basic needs
- **Physiological needs:** food, water, warmth, rest

#5 – QUESTION/ANSWER SAMPLE

Question: As a nurse, which of the following is your **first priority** of providing care?

Answers:

1.   Patient needs a dressing change

2.   Patient needs suctioning

3.   Patient is in pain

4.   Patient is incontinent

After answering, now place each in order of priority…

#5 – QUESTION/ANSWER SAMPLE

Question: As a nurse, which of the following is your **first priority** of providing care?

Answers in order of priority:

#4. Patient needs a dressing change

#1. Patient needs suctioning

#2. Patient is in pain

#3. Patient is incontinent

#5 – Question/Answer Options

Important elements: patient (age, gender, race); issue or medical problem (patho); details (signs/symptoms, medications, surgery); time (early or late, pre- or post-op surgery)

If unsure, make an educated guess by

- Eliminating distractors, which can increase your correct choice of options by @ 25 - 30%
- If choice is between 2 answers, choose the most logical or common sense response; 50 – 50 chance of being correct

#6 – FOCUS ON SUCCESS