Taking the Test

As important as knowing and studying the material of a test is, knowing how to take a test is just as- or more-important. No matter how much you know about the material, without knowing how to properly take the test it can prove quite difficult to get that perfect score. To help with this, I’ve designed an outline on how I go through tests. So- after you STUDY and READ/REVIEW THE MATERIALS (many times!), and you sit down to take that test...

I) Always, ALWAYS, read the test-
   a. Read the question
   b. Read the answers
      i. ALL of the answers.
         1. EVERY SINGLE ONE.
   c. Then mark your choice. You’ll be amazed how often ‘E’ can make you realize ‘B’ was wrong- no matter how right it seemed before you read ‘E’.
   d. Don’t assume what a question is asking- if you miss the ‘false’ at the end of a question, you’ll get the exactly wrong answer. Read the whole question!

II) Answer the easy questions first- Go through the test, read then skip hard/time consuming questions.
   a. Hard questions take time- If you don’t finish the test, you want to make sure you’ve answered all the questions you KNOW you’ll get right instead of the ones you might get right (more points for your work!).
   b. Reading a hard question, then moving on, allows your subconscious to process the question more efficiently than your conscious, test-burdened mind can.
   c. Hints – or maybe even the answer!- may be in a later question in the test. If a problem is hard, later material might help you solve it.

III) Always review if you have time!!!
   a. This is very under-appreciated in test taking. If you finish and have a minute, read the questions and answers again. Did you misread? Or- more common- did you mark the wrong answer?
   b. Go over your math again. Calculator error happens quite often (one wrong button press can really ruin an answer!). Did you accidentally divide your Chi Square by observed instead of expected?

IV) Relax- it will only help
   a. Stressing out in a test only makes it harder to think. Stop, take a breath, take a minute to think about your favorite movie/show/pet/food/anything that’ll make you smile.
   b. Once you’re in the test, there isn’t going back- you can’t study more (which I hope you have done!) and you can’t review that one thing you forgot. If you’re going to get an answer wrong, it’s going to be wrong- Stressing will probably just make it harder to answer the other questions.
   c. Be sure to keep breathing- slow, deep breaths can really help you calm down.
   d. My favorite trick- one piece of good, dark chocolate that you eat like hard candy during the test. Chocolate causes you to release de-stressing neurotransmitters- and it tastes good!