

## **Iowa Assessments Skills and Testing Review Guide:**

### **Top Ten ITBS Testing:**

1. Pay attention to how much time you have and remember that the more complex paragraphs and questions are at the end of the test.
2. Don't skip a question. Put down an answer for every question and note on your scratch paper that you may want to go back and look at it again if you have time. This will also help prevent getting off by a number when taking the test because all bubbles will be filled in.
3. You are not penalized for guessing on the Iowa Assessments (The score is simply based on number of correct answers)
4. First think of the correct answer. Then, search the answer choices for the one that most closely matches the answer you already have in mind.
5. Read all the answer choices before deciding.
6. Iowa Assessments reading comprehension is not composed of simply one right answer and three incorrect. Many times there seems to be two good answers that could be justified. But, the question will ask you to choose the BEST answer!
7. The most efficient reading strategy on a standardized comprehension test like the Iowa Assessments is to read the question stems (not the answers) first.
8. You can use scratch paper for the Reading Comprehension test!
9. The writers of the Iowa Assessments test know that a favorite strategy of students is to skim for answers, but this only works for factual (right there questions). The majority of the test questions relate to think and search or author and me.
10. A law passed by the federal government called NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND has made the Iowa Assessments test a HIGH STAKES TEST.
  - Individual schools in the district are compared.
  - Schools not meeting standards may lose out on funding or other sanctions can be placed on a school that does not do well!

### **General Test Taking Tips:**

- Take a quick look at the questions before you read the story. They tell you what information to look for as you read.
- Preview the passage and questions before you begin by scanning the passage for length and organization.
- You may have to read sentences in the passages more than once to find the details you need to make your final decision.
- As you read eliminate choices that are incorrect.
- The passage may not tell you exactly why something happened, but it will always contain enough clues for you to figure it out.
- Engage your brain, read carefully, and choose answer based on information from the passage.
- Tests are not guessing games! Always have a reason why you chose the answer you did.

### **Test Tips for Details:**

-Details will often have specific words used in the text in the question and answer.

### **Test Tips for Contextual Meaning:**

-When answering a question about a passage, always go back and reread the passage to find the answer, chances are the meaning you are most familiar with is not the meaning they question is looking for.

-Don't be afraid of words you don't know. Use the surrounding words figure out what the word means.

For example: What is the best definition of "weigh" as used in paragraph 3?

Text says: "I want you to weigh his words carefully. He seems sincere and presents his arguments well. There is however, something that doesn't quite ring true about this candidate."

It doesn't mean necessarily what you think it means...if you didn't go back and read from the text.

### **Test Tips for Drawing Conclusions:**

-To draw a con-CLUE-sion, you must think like a detective. Find the clues in the passage that lead you to the right answer.

-Remember, just because an answer choice shows words from the passage does not mean it is correct!

-Many drawing conclusion questions ask you to tell WHY something happened.

### **Test Tips for Traits, Feelings, Motives:**

-The things that the characters do and say help you to know:

1. What they are like.
2. How they feel.
3. Why they do the things they do.

### **Test Taking Tips Main Idea:**

-The main idea is what the whole passage is about.

-Details are individual ideas that support the main idea.

-Is the question asking for the main idea of the whole passage, a few paragraphs, or just one paragraph?

### **Test Taking Tips Authors Viewpoint:**

-An author's purpose is WHY he or she wrote the story or article.

-An Authors viewpoint is HPW the author feels about the subject.

-Words in the selection often give clues about what kinds of person wrote it and why.