



# TEST TAKING TIPS

Are you tired of losing points on an essay exam because you did not answer the question properly? The following definitions may be useful in trying to reverse this trend.

**ANALYZE** - Break into separate parts and discuss, examine, or interpret each part.

**COMPARE** - Examine two or more things. Identify similarities and differences.

**CONTRAST** - Set in opposition. State how two or more subjects are different

**DEFINE** - Give the meaning; usually a meaning specific to the course or subject.

**DESCRIBE** - Give a detailed account. Make a picture with words. List characteristics, qualities, and parts.

**DISCUSS** - Consider and debate or argue the pros and cons of an issue. Write about any conflict. Compare and contrasts.

**DEVELOP** - Expand topic from a given starting point to a valid conclusion.

**EXPLAIN** - Make an idea clear. Show logically how a concept is developed. Give the reasons for an event.

**EVALUATE** - Give your opinion or cite the opinion of an expert. Include evidence to support the evaluation.

**ILLUSTRATE** - Explain fully by means of concrete examples. Use comparisons or examples.

**INTERPRET** - Comment upon, give examples, describe relationships. Explain the meaning. Describe, then evaluate.

**OUTLINE** - Describe main ideas, characteristics, or events. (**Does not necessarily mean “write a Roman numeral/letter outline.”**)

**STATE** - Explain precisely.

**SUMMARIZE** - Give a brief, condensed account. Include conclusions. Avoid unnecessary details.

(Taken from Becoming A Master Student by David Ellis)

