

**Wiley Keys to Success**

# **HOW TO ACE ANY TEST**

**Beverly Ann Chin, Ph.D.**

Series Consultant



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***Wiley Keys to Success***

# **HOW TO ACE ANY TEST**

**Beverly Ann Chin** is Professor of English, Director of the English Teaching Program, former Director of the Montana Writing Project, and a former President of the National Council of Teachers of English.

Dr. Chin is a nationally recognized leader in English language arts standards, curriculum instruction, and assessment. Many schools and states call upon her to help them develop programs in reading and writing across the curriculum. Dr. Chin has edited and written numerous books and articles in the field of English language arts. She is the author of *On Your Own: Writing* and *On Your Own: Grammar*.

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# DEAR STUDENTS

Welcome to the **WILEY KEYS TO SUCCESS** series! The books in this series are practical guides designed to help you be a better student. Each book focuses on an important area of schoolwork, including building your vocabulary, studying and doing homework, writing research papers, taking tests, and more.

Each book contains seven chapters—the keys to helping you improve your skills as a student. As you understand and use each key, you'll find that you will enjoy learning more than ever before. As a result, you'll feel more confident in your classes and be better prepared to demonstrate your knowledge.

I invite you to use the **WILEY KEYS TO SUCCESS** series at school and at home. As you apply each key, you will open the doors to success in school as well as to many other areas of your life. Good luck, and enjoy the journey!

Beverly Ann Chin, Series Consultant  
Professor of English  
University of Montana, Missoula



# NOTE TO TEACHERS, LIBRARIANS, AND PARENTS

The **WILEY KEYS TO SUCCESS** series is a series of handbooks designed to help students improve their academic performance. Happily, the keys can open doors for everyone—at home, in school, at work.

Each book is an invaluable resource that offers seven simple, practical steps to mastering an important aspect of schoolwork, such as building vocabulary, studying and doing homework, taking tests, and writing research papers. We hand readers seven keys—or chapters—that show them how to increase their success as learners—a plan intended to build lifelong learning skills. Reader-friendly graphics, self-assessment questions, and comprehensive appendices provide additional information.

Helpful features scattered throughout the books include “Writing it Right,” which expands on the text with charts, graphs, and models; “Inside Secret,” which reveals all-important hints, rules, definitions, and even warnings; and “Ready, Set, Review,” which makes it easy for students to remember key points.

**WILEY KEYS TO SUCCESS** *are designed to ensure that all students have the opportunity to experience success.* Once students know achievement, they are more likely to become independent learners, effective communicators, and critical thinkers. Many readers will want to use each guidebook by beginning with the first key and progressing systematically to the last key. Some readers will select the keys they need most and integrate what they learn with their own routines.

As educators and parents, you can encourage students to use the books in this series to assess their own strengths and weaknesses as learners. Using students' responses and your own observations of their study skills and habits, you can help students develop positive attitudes, set realistic goals, form successful schedules, organize materials, and monitor their own academic progress. In addition, you can discuss how adults use similar study strategies and communication skills in their personal and professional lives.

We hope you and your students will enjoy the **WILEY KEYS TO SUCCESS** series. We think readers will turn to these resources time and time again. By showing students how to achieve everyday success, we help children grow into responsible, independent young adults who value their education—and into adults who value learning throughout their lives.

Beverly Ann Chin, Series Consultant  
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# INTRODUCTION

## Tests—Do We Need Them?

A test is coming into your life. It may be next month, or it may be next Tuesday. It might even be tomorrow! How will you do?

You might feel completely prepared, and ready to take on the toughest questions. Or you may worry that you'll get so nervous, you can't come up with any answers. Suppose you stayed up all night trying to cram? You might be so tired, you'd fall asleep right on the test paper. What if you find questions about things you've never heard of? Or worse, suppose you almost know the answers. If only you'd studied a little harder, or took better notes in class. What if your head explodes from trying to fill it with too many facts?

Maybe that's going a little too far. The truth is that although very few people seem to enjoy taking tests, they can actually do better on them if they try to make them a little bit fun. When you think of taking a test, try to picture yourself as a guest on a game show. Or try to compete with yourself to do better on each new test than you did on the last one. Taking a test involves more than just answering specific questions to give you a certain number of points to pass a course.