

Big Test Survival Island

Welcome to the Big Test Survival Island Teacher's Guide!

This guide is designed to help you get the most out of the
Big Test Survival Island Classroom Comics.



While your students will enjoy the “non-textbookness” of the comics, they will unknowingly observe good and bad test-taking skills and preparation. With this guide, you will be able to help your students form the connection between the challenges in the comic book and the challenges of a real-life test. By analyzing the actions of the Palmetto Tribe and the Idunno Tribe, your students will learn good and bad approaches to test-taking.

How to Use this Guide

This guide is designed to be flexible to your personal teaching schedule and preference. The main goal is to help your students form the connections between the challenges in the comics and the challenge of taking a test in real life.

The Big Test Survival Island comics are broken up into sections, which can easily be taught one at a time or several in a row. Allowing 20 to 30 minutes per “tip” will provide adequate time for both reading and discussion.

This guide contains a number of features to help teachers. There is a challenge **summary** for each “tip,” a section on **making connections**, and a *Drive it Home* section to provide some practical applications for your students. There is also a **question sheet** for students at the end of the guide.

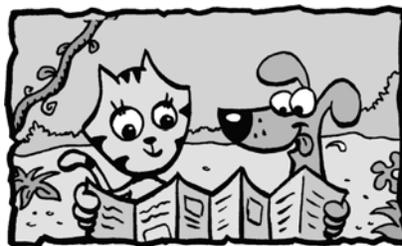
TIP #1

Know the Standards

Highlighted on page 4 of the comic book

Summary - *Charting a Course*

The first challenge that the competitors come across is finding the location of their camp. Louise and Clark from the Palmetto Tribe decide to study the map so they know exactly where they need to go. Because they prepare themselves, the Palmetto Tribe successfully makes it to the camp. Idunno Tribe members Claude and Clyde, on the other hand, decide they don't need the map and end up "in the bushes."



Make the Connection

As teachers, you know that the state standards are like maps in themselves. They are guides -- a list of steps that outline the expected destination. If proper attention has been given to the standards throughout the year, a big test shouldn't scare the students -- their standard-based schooling has prepared them.

Drive It Home

- Give standard-based practice tests or quizzes.
- While textbooks may be state-approved, make sure that the material you teach and assess is first standard-based rather than textbook-based.
- Remind your students that they aren't learning anything new for the big test -- it's stuff they've already learned (and they probably remember more than they expect).
- When discussing a major topic from the standards, make sure to mention its importance.

Basically... do the students know what they need to know?

TIP #2

Read Directions Carefully

Highlighted on **page 5** of the comic book

Summary - *Tree Mail*

In the second challenge, the tribes get a “Tree Mail” message, which asks them to do three things: 1) blow up a raft, 2) pack gear, and 3) bring gear to the beach at noon. Because the Palmetto Tribe reviews the Tree Mail carefully, they complete the steps and show up at the beach on time. Claude and Clyde skip reading the directions, which leaves them disorganized and in the dark.



Make the Connection

Carefully reading directions is a small task that can spare us from major complications. We've all had experiences in which we made major mistakes by simply overlooking something minor, like a student forgetting to put his name on a test. Can your students think of real-life examples where skipping the directions could cause trouble? How about assembling a bookshelf or a TV stand? Or taking a road-trip for the family vacation to Disney World?

Drive It Home

- Ask your students how skipping directions on a test might cause problems.
- If possible, share any available directions or released information about the test prior to test time.
- Suggest that your students repeat directions to themselves after reading them a first time.

Remember - you can never be too clear, but you *can* be too fuzzy

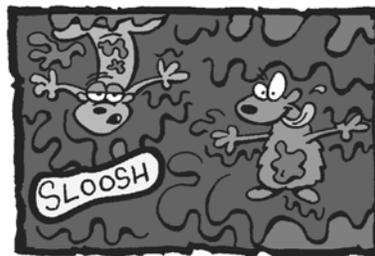
TIP #3

Read Entire Question Before Choosing

Highlighted on pages 6-7 of the comic book

Summary - *The Grape Wall*

For the third challenge, the tribes have to pick a “launch kit” that will thrust them over a giant wall covered in grape jelly. The Idunno Tribe picks the first kit (the “Light Speed” kit), which sends them soaring straight into the sticky grape wall. When it’s Louise and Clark’s turn, they wait to see the other launching option before deciding. They pick option #2 – a trampoline – which sends them safely up and over the wall without getting stuck.



Make the Connection

As former students, we know that some test questions can be very tricky (despite any assurances otherwise). One simple way to prevent being misled is by reading a question in its entirety. In addition, every *answer choice* should be carefully considered. Weighing all the available options before filling in the bubble sheet will prevent careless choices, and sometimes the question will be much easier than it first appeared.

Drive It Home

- Ask your students what might happen if they don’t read the whole question. How might that prompt them to seek out the wrong answer? What if they don’t read all of the answers options? Could they settle on an incorrect one?
- Tell your students to read a question in its entirety (maybe even twice), and take the extra seconds to view every answer option. Finally, when they decide on an answer, remind them to ask: *“Is this the best fit?”*