Dear member of my Geography classes:

Several people complained that they didn’t have time to complete test one; however one student got more than 200 out of 200 points, and another got 200 out of 200 and there were a few other As and some Bs. This is meant to be a test of what you have learned, not what you have on your study guide. Since the questions are randomized, they don’t come in the order found on the study guide. If you try to look up answers, you will probably run out of time. This is a test, not a glorified homework assignment. My advice is to **answer all the easy questions first** and then go back and work on the harder ones while watching your time – if you have 30 minutes and 30 “hard questions” don’t spend more than a minute on each one. When the minute is up, make a choice and move on. Some people are naturally good test takers, while others may not be good test takers. Anxiety can increase the chance of making errors. Here are some test talking tips I would hope you have already learned, but maybe you haven’t:

* If you are taking an online test at home, **be sure to find a quiet place** where there are **no distractions.** You may have to say, “Honey, could you watch the kids for 90 minutes so I can take this test at the library?” (60 minutes for the test and maybe 15 minutes driving each way).
* **Keep up** with the reading and the notes and the study guide. **Don’t wait until the last minute and “cram.”**
* **Get a good night’s sleep** before the test day. **Tired people make more careless mistakes.**
* **Take care of bodily needs before beginning a test.** Be sure you aren’t hungry or need to use the restroom before beginning. You don’t want part of your mind focused on your stomach or your excretory systems because then your mind isn’t 100% on the test.
* **Eliminate silly or clearly incorrect answers.** If you have four choices and you know that two of them are really not the answer **(you can eliminate them)**, then you have a 50% chance of picking the correct answer when deciding between the other two answers.
* If you have **no clue, pick the longest answer** (often that is the answer).
* Go with your **initial “gut reaction.”**
* If you are running out of time and have 10 more questions and not enough time, **answer them all with answer B or C** (usually there are more questions with B or C answers than there are with A and D answers). Out of 10 questions, there will usually be 2 or 3 with answer B or C. This increases your chances of getting some correct even though you hadn’t even read them. If you don’t do this and scatter your answers among the 4 choices, you might get none correct. **You don’t want to take wild guesses on tests where wrong answers get twice as much taken off as unanswered questions** **- I don’t do that**, but some professor might do that. Then if you have no clue, it is better to leave it unanswered than to take a wild guess.
* If you have a few essay questions on the test, **set up a time schedule** something like this:
  + 20 minutes for essays and 40 minutes for the multiple choice.
  + **Do the essays first** if you have 2 of them, allot 10 minutes for each one. At 9 minutes, wrap up that answer and move on to the next, following the same procedure.
  + Do the multiple choice after the essays, watching the time so you can get all of them answered.