Post-Exam Learning Review

Use this when: you have completed an exam and want to understand what your preparation and your result can teach you, then decide what to keep or change before the next exam.
Time: About 2 to 3 minutes immediately after the exam, then about 10 to 15 minutes after the graded exam is returned.
Moves practiced: Monitor + Adjust + Transfer.

How to use this review

Complete Part A immediately after the exam, before reviewing your grade or feedback, if possible. Return to the rest when the graded exam or detailed feedback is available.

> **Right after the exam:** Part A, on this page
>
> **After the graded exam is returned:** Part B and the sections that follow
>
> This is a learning tool, not a form. Brief notes are enough. Use the evidence you actually have.

If you cannot see the graded exam or detailed feedback, do not guess about errors you cannot inspect. Use your prediction, your preparation, any feedback you have, and what you remember finding difficult.

Short on time? Think First has a shorter Post-Exam Error Check in Part 4. Use it, then return here when you can.

Part A. Right After the Exam

Expected grade or performance range: ☐ 0 to 49 ☐ 50 to 59 ☐ 60 to 69 ☐ 70 to 79 ☐ 80 to 89 ☐ 90 to 100

What felt strongest, and what felt most difficult, uncertain, or surprising?
Record this now so you can later compare your prediction with the actual result.

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Part B. After the Graded Exam Is Returned

Date returned: _____

Actual grade or performance range: ☐ 0 to 49 ☐ 50 to 59 ☐ 60 to 69 ☐ 70 to 79 ☐ 80 to 89 ☐ 90 to 100

My prediction was: ☐ Very accurate ☐ Somewhat accurate ☐ Too optimistic ☐ Too pessimistic

What does the comparison between my prediction and my result tell me about how well I judged my readiness?

Look at How I Actually Prepared

Approximately how much time did I spend preparing? _____ hours

Did I follow the study plan I intended to use? ☐ Mostly ☐ Somewhat ☐ Not really ☐ I did not have a clear study plan

How Did I Spend My Study Time?

Rough estimates are enough. Aim for about 100 percent. Do not count the same study time twice.

Study activity	Approx. %
Rereading or reviewing notes, slides, or readings	
Retrieval or self-testing	
Application, problem-solving, or mixed practice	
Explaining or teaching concepts to someone else, including peer teaching	
Other:	

Supports I used (check all that apply):

☐ Study partner or group, for quizzing, explaining, peer teaching, comparing reasoning, or problem-solving
☐ Office hours or review session ☐ Tutor or learning support ☐ AI support ☐ Other: _____

About _____ % of my studying happened in the final 24 hours.

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Learn From the Patterns

Review the graded exam and identify up to three patterns that matter most. These may be problems to address or things you want to repeat.

If the exam went well, identify what you want to repeat deliberately next time. You do not need to invent a weakness.

Possible patterns:

1. I did not know the material.
2. I recognized it but could not retrieve or explain it.
3. I understood it but could not apply or solve with it.
4. I confused related ideas or methods.
5. I studied at the wrong level or used a strategy that did not fit.
6. I misread, rushed, or made checking errors.
7. I ran out of time.
8. I did not expect the topic.
9. A strategy, strength, or response worked well and I want to repeat it.
10. **Other:** _____

> **Pattern rule:** One exam gives you evidence, not proof of exactly what caused the result. Look for plausible connections between how you prepared, what happened on the exam, and the feedback you received.

Pattern number and what happened	What I will keep or change next time

> **Pattern reminder:** Do not only ask what went wrong. Decide what you will keep or change next time.

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Learn From the Result and Transfer It Forward

Core reflection

What seems to have helped my learning or performance?

What did not seem to help, or what did I postpone or avoid?

What will I change, start, or use earlier next time?

Go deeper if useful or assigned

What did this exam teach me about how I learn or prepare? Where else could I use this lesson, skill, or strategy?

If your instructor assigned this review, also answer: What could your instructor, TA, course, or available supports do that would help you prepare more effectively for the next exam?

If getting started or staying motivated was a problem, use the Motivation Menu in the Think First Toolkit before your next exam. If nerves interfered, see Managing Exam Nerves in Part 4.

Final transfer prompt: One concrete lesson I will carry into my next Pre-Exam Learning Plan and use in my first study session:

Related tool in Think First: Post-Exam Learning Review, in Part 4: When You Have an Exam.

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