Prepare for Assessments with Gray Area Thinking   Name: _____

If you've ever had an upcoming assessment and thought either "I have no idea what I'm doing. I'm just going to fail" or "No need to prepare for that one. It'll be a piece of cake," you were probably engaging in black-and-white thinking, which emerges from the belief that the options are all or nothing. In general, black-and-white thinking usually leads to inaccurate predictions about a situation. It can set us up for disappointment if we're overconfident or cause us to miss out on opportunities if we're too worried.

You can overcome black-and-white thinking when you engage in "gray area thinking," a decision skill that involves acknowledging the more realistic descriptions and outcomes that lie between the extremes. To do gray area thinking that will help you get better prepared for assessments, identify the grade between the extremes of 0% and 100% that you think you'd be likely to earn if you had to complete the assessment right now. Then, list the concepts, skills, and/or procedures you realize you need to understand better in order to get a higher grade.

Upcoming Assessment: _____

If I completed this assessment right now, I predict I would earn a:

0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%

…because I need to improve my understanding of these concepts, skills, and/or procedures:

_____
_____
_____
_____

In class, ask questions about the items on your list. Give yourself plenty of time afterward to review and/or make improvements!

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