

School of Medicine
& Health Sciences

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY



Office of Student Support

Steps for Step 2: Key Study Tips and Strategies

R2R Program
March 28, 2023

- Developing a study calendar and daily schedule
- Content reviews
 - Based on daily topic and/or
 - Based on PQ Error Analysis
- Self-assessments/practice tests
- Study resources
 - data from question analysis
 - popular resources

The good:

- 1) **"Off" days** are scheduled, they need to be WEEKLY
- 2) **Self-assessments** are scheduled. Consider:
 - a) UW 1 & 2
 - b) Free 120
 - c) Replicate Step 2 (8 blocks).

The bad:

- 1) No daily plans
- 2) No review days
- 3) No self-assessment analysis time

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Week 1	NBME	Study	Study	Study	Study	Study	Study
Week 2	Study	Study	Study	Study	Study	Study	NBME
Week 3	OFF	Study	Study	Study	Study	Study	Study
Week 4	NBME	OFF	Study	Study	Study	OFF	USMLE

Option A:
Follow Step Up to Step 2CK

CV Disorders
GI Disorders
Hem/Onc
EM, Critical Care & Surgery
MSK Disorders
Pulm Disorders
Genitourinary Disorders
Endo Disorders
Derm
Peds
Neuro Disorders
Gyn and Breast Disorders
Ob
Psych Disorders
Epidemiology and Ethics

Options B:
Follow your Clerkship order

*Consider moving IM to the top if
in Groups C or D (fall semester)*

*Last clerkship does not need to
be included in the list of
reviewed clerkships.*

Option C:
Use random Qbank blocks

Follow incorrects

The first half of dedicated can match Qbank questions with the topic of the day. Use less than ½ of topic specific questions in first half.

*Any study plan will have the second half of dedicated schedule using **random blocks** of questions.*

Morning - **4 hours** - UW questions and error analysis

Lunch Break

Afternoon - **4 hours** - Study based on daily topic and/or error analysis

Physical Activity

Dinner Break

Evening - **2 hours** - review the day's material

Disengage from studying

Desirable Difficulties*

*term coined by Robert A. Bjork and Elizabeth L. Bjork

Brown, P. C. , Roediger, H. L. III, McDaniel, M. A., (2014). Make it stick: The science of successful learning. The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4159/9780674419377>

Desirable Difficulties*

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Morning - UW questions and error analysis

consolidation – make connections for brain to organize and stabilize information to make it consistent with pre-existing knowledge

durable learning – recall and apply newly learned material
retrieval – when info is retrieved and enacted enough over time it is reflexive

(reflexive thinking - emphasis on how rather than what)

encoding – when short-term memory or memory traces occur

productive failure - failure that's intentionally designed and implemented in a safe context

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Desirable Difficulties*

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Afternoon - Study based on morning UWorld Qs
elaboration – take time & effort to explain information
generative learning – trial and error – apply knowledge
rather than attempting to recall correct answers

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Evening - Review the day's material

spaced practice will reduce illusion of knowing
need time to forget resulting in a struggle to
retrieve

Sleep is a crucial step for consolidation

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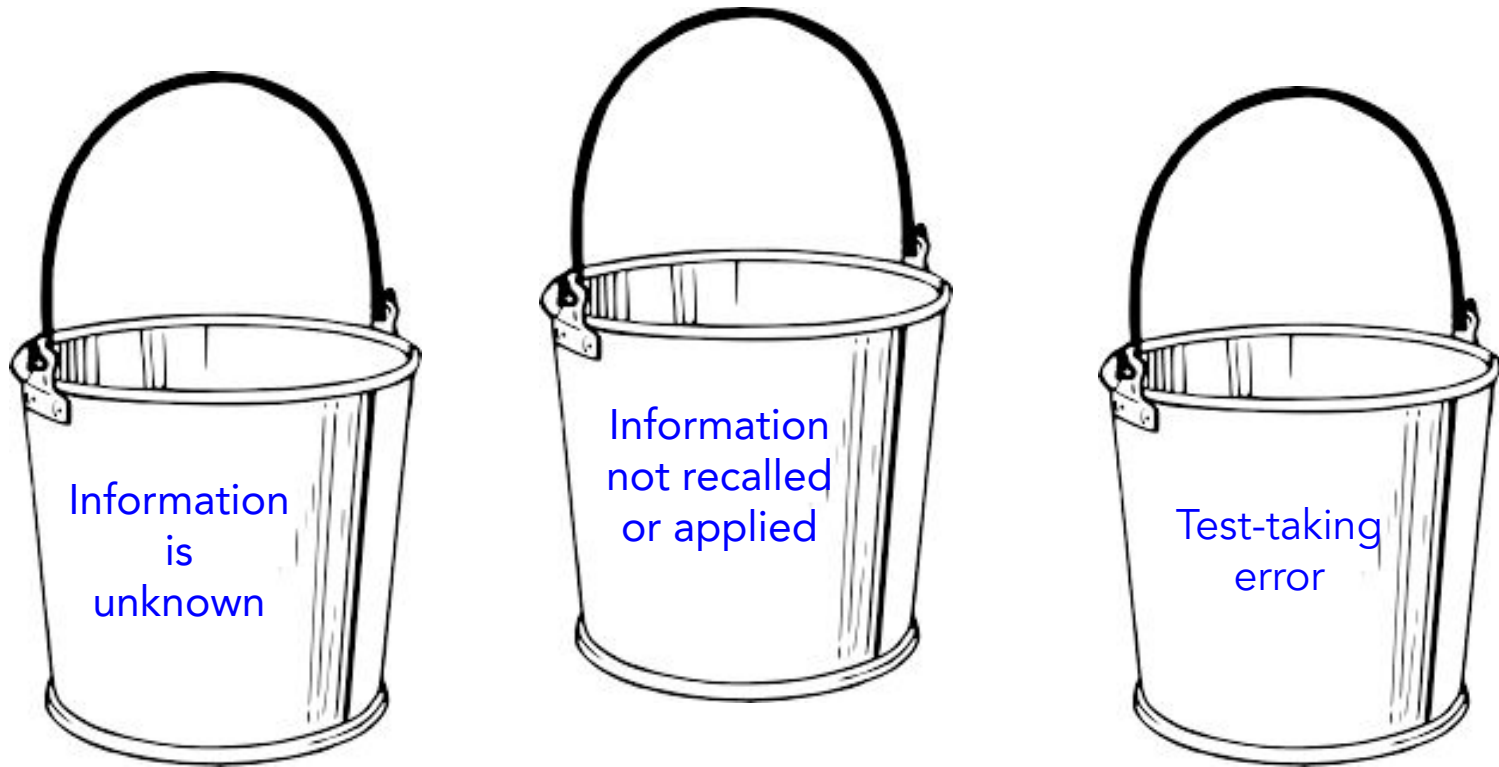
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Three buckets for question analysis





Content Review Based on PQ Error Analysis

New topic or a concept NOT UNDERSTOOD

Use resources that can EXPLAIN what you do not understand - do this narrowly and with purpose.

(Step Up series, Pathoma, [Himmelfarb link](#))

Focus on being able to explain the why.

During evening reviews – Assess if you can you still explain the why. If not, practice the explaining.



Content Review Based on PQ Error Analysis

NOT RECALLING information or recalling it correctly

Use resources that help you PRACTICE RECALLING from MEMORY

This may be a from Anki cards or notes

Select material that will help you answer related questions in the future



Errors from NOT APPLYING known information

Complete more Qbank questions on the topic

Consider small blocks of topic specific questions

TEST TAKING ERRORS - meet with Terri

Cause of Error				
Study	Learning	Recall	Comprehension	Reading

Lack of specificity	Premature closure	Underconfident	Timing	Anxiety	Dumb mistake

Analysis Charting: Why did I select the wrong answer?

Base Analysis Chart

Columns B-F: Can be used with a Qbank; Uworld provides this information

Column G: Comment/Insight: Record specifics of question or test-testing strategy concerns

Column H: Specific reason(s) for getting the question wrong

Column I: Notes and Reminders: Record knowledge concerns

Column J: This can be yes or no, number of reviews, or color-coded for rating current knowledge level

Column K: List location for resource to close the knowledge gap

A	B	C	D	E	F
Date	Q ID#	System	Subject	Topic	Gen Pop % (% can be used to rate difficulty level)
2/5	18690	Biochemistry	Biochemistry	White blood cell disorders	74%

G	H	I	J	K	L
Specific detail, Comment, or Insight (i.e. time spent on Q, did not use x strategy)	Reason for getting question wrong	Notes and Reminders	Reviewed? (stop light color coding can be used)	Resource for review/learning (First Aid page #, Pathoma chapter and page # video, Anki deck, etc)	
Chronic myeloid	Forgot disease	PCR isnt used to detect	yes	First Aid cellular biochem	EXAMPLE

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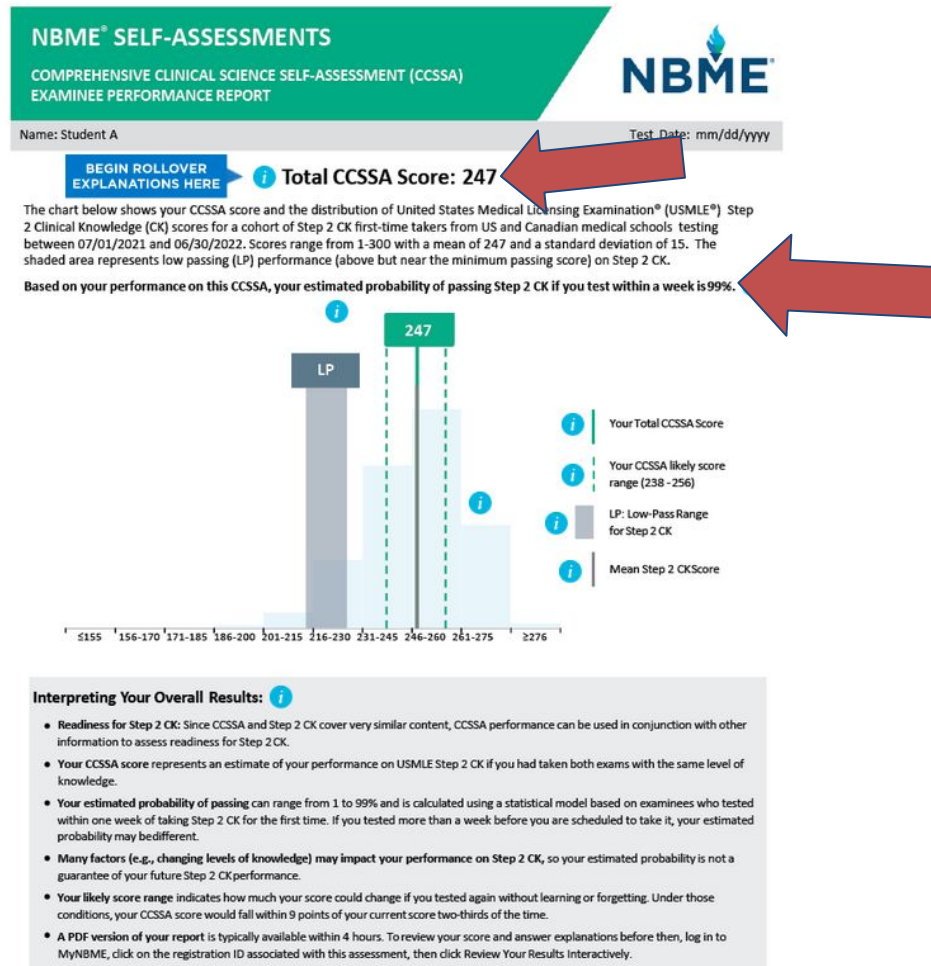
Column J: This can be yes or no, number of reviews, or color-coded for rating current knowledge level

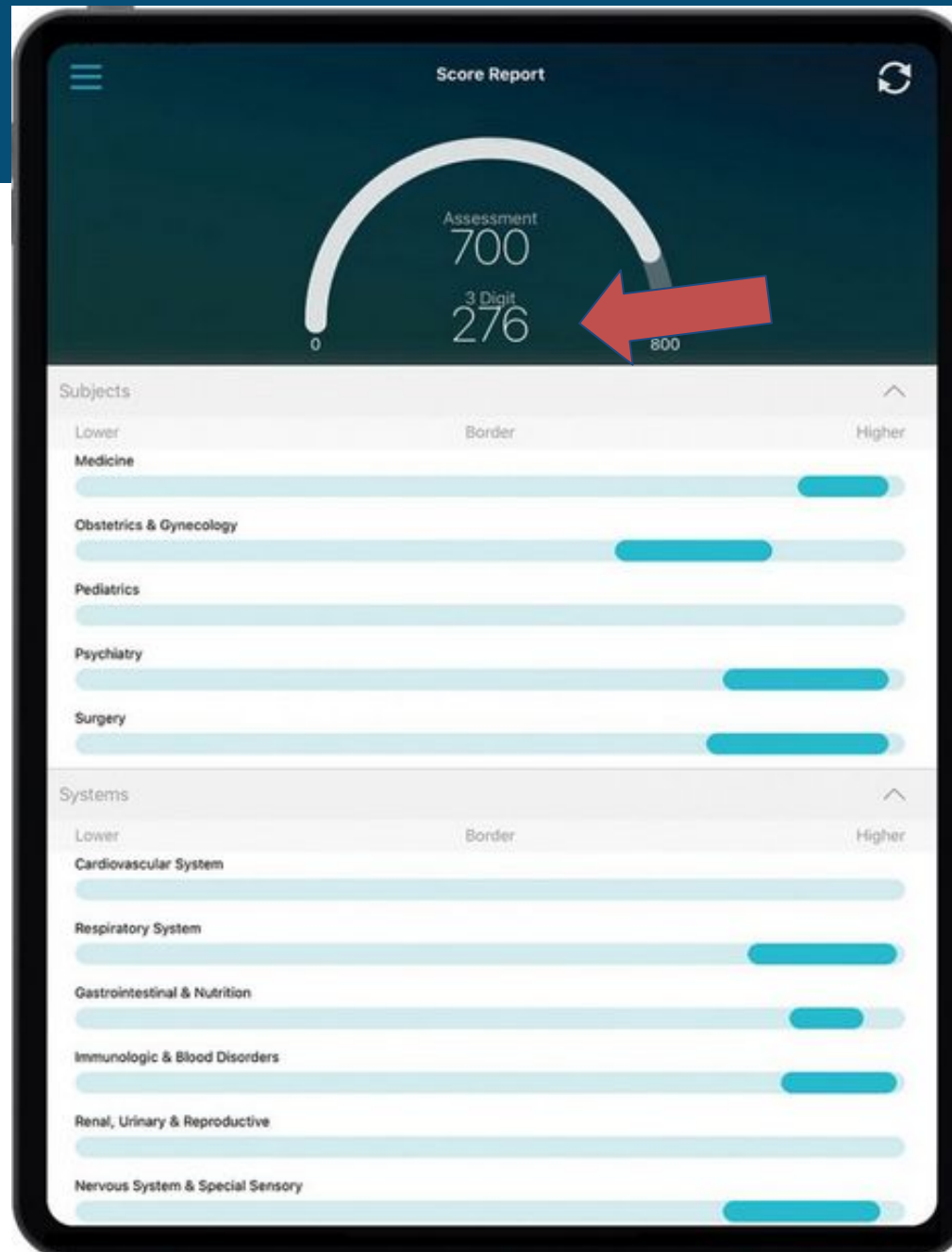
Column K: List location for resource to close the knowledge gap

Date	Q ID#	System	Subject	Topic	Gen Pop % (% can be used to rate difficulty level)
2/5	18690	Biochemistry	Biochemistry	White blood cell disorders	74%
3/21	1	GI & Nutrition	Surgery/Amb Med	Proctitis	59%
3/21	2	Nervous System	Clin Neuro/Amb Med	Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis	63%
3/21	3	Nervous System	Peds/Clin Neuro	Migraine	72%
3/21	4	Rheum/Ortho &Sports	Medicine	Osteoprosis	69%
3/21	5	Ophthalmology	Surgery	Ocular trauma	54%
3/21	6	Female Repro & Breast	Surgery	Incisional hernia	47%
3/21	7	Derm	Amb Med/FM	Dyshidrotic eczema	57%
3/21	8	Rheum/Ortho &Sports	Surgery/EM	Hip fracture	61%
3/21	9	Hem/Onc	Medicine	Adrenal insufficiency	44%
3/21	10	GI & Nutrition	Amb Med/FM	Autoimmune hepatitis	62%

<https://www.uworld.com/courseapp/usmle/v4/demo/testinterface/launchtest/2/189999685/2/1>

<https://indd.adobe.com/view/d2d2098f-0143-4e1b-baa4-14c32d49b4e6>





Report includes:

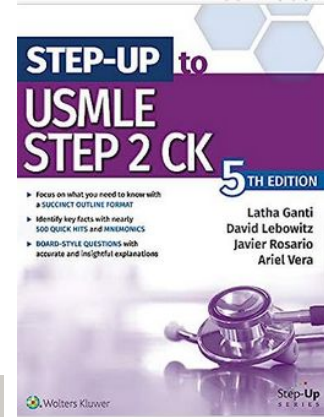
- Percent correct for each block of 40 Qs
- Overall percent correct

Save this self-assessment until the last week of your dedicated study period.

[Free 120](#) for Step 2 includes the tutorial.

Watching the tutorial before Step 2 gives you 15 more minutes of break time. (8 blocks, 9 hours)

- Know the purpose of each resource
- Know how each resource will be used
- Use each one narrowly & with purpose



DIRTY MEDICINE

AnKing

Divine Intervention
PODCASTS



Himmelfarb Health Sciences Library

Himmelfarb Health Sciences Library / Research Guides / Board Preparation: USMLE Step 2 / Question Banks & Cases

Board Preparation: USMLE Step 2: Question Banks & Cases

Rock the Boards: information tools and resources to prepare for USMLE Step 2.

- Question Banks & Cases
- General Review Books
- Emerg Med
- Int Med
- Neuro
- Ob/Gyn
- Peds
- Psych
- Surgery

Run cold water over
your hands or face

Dig your heels into
the floor

5 Senses: 5 things you
can see, 4 things you can
hear, 3 things you can
feel, 2 things you can
smell, and 1 thing you
can taste

Say a coping
statement: "I can
handle this"
"This feeling will
pass"

4-7-8 breathing
<https://i.pinimg.com/originals/fd/ea/b4/fdeab482dbe5ef3d9e73e971fcb496e9.jpg>

Notice your body:
wiggle toes, back
against the chair

Seated aerobic
exercises

Progressive muscle
relaxation

Visualization

Self-Awareness & Radical Self-Compassion

R

ecognize

What is happening right now?

Thought / Feeling / Memory

What am I feeling in my body?



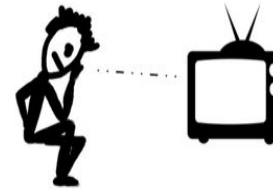
Name it

A

ssess

Am I saying Yes or No to this?

Sit and simply observe for 15 seconds



I

investigate

What am I longing for?

What is the function of this experience?

Where is this experience trying to lead me?

What is this experience trying to tell me?

N

urture

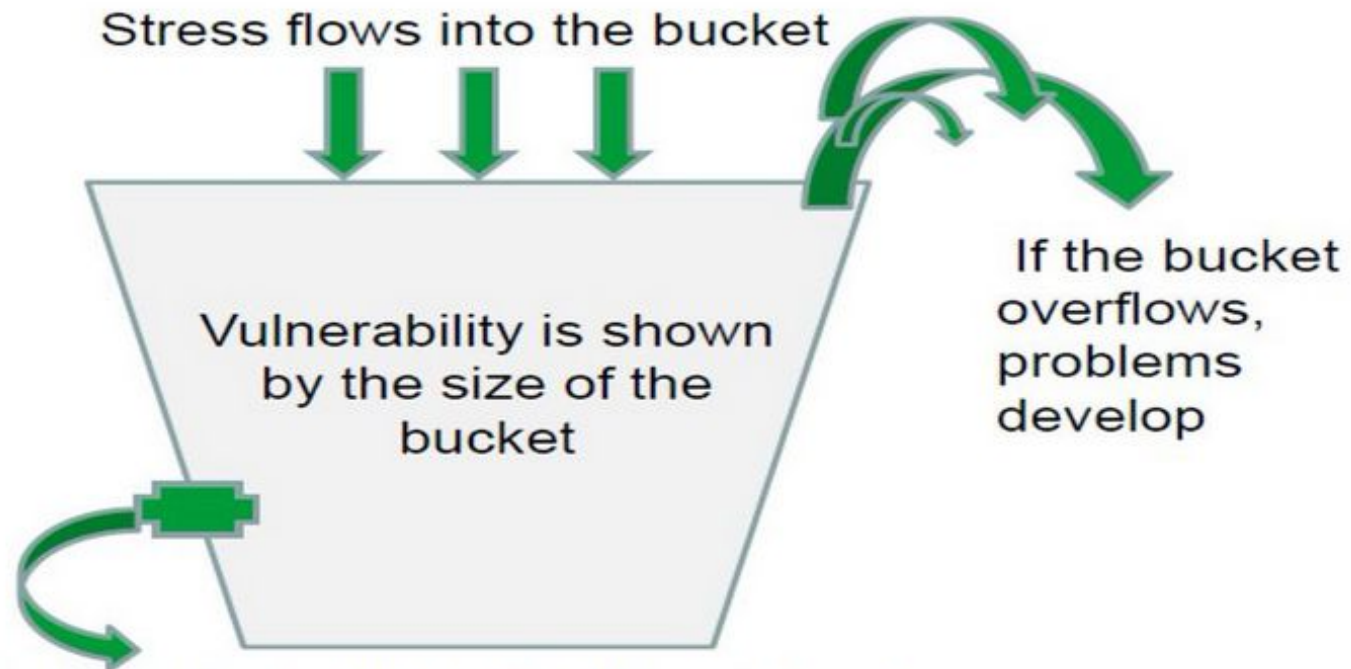
What is the kind thing I can do in this moment?

Words: _____

Actions: _____

What's in your stress bucket?

(Source: Brabban & Turkington 2002)



Good coping = tap working lets the stress out

Bad coping = tap not working so water fills bucket and overflows

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[Step 2 Progress Report Form](#)