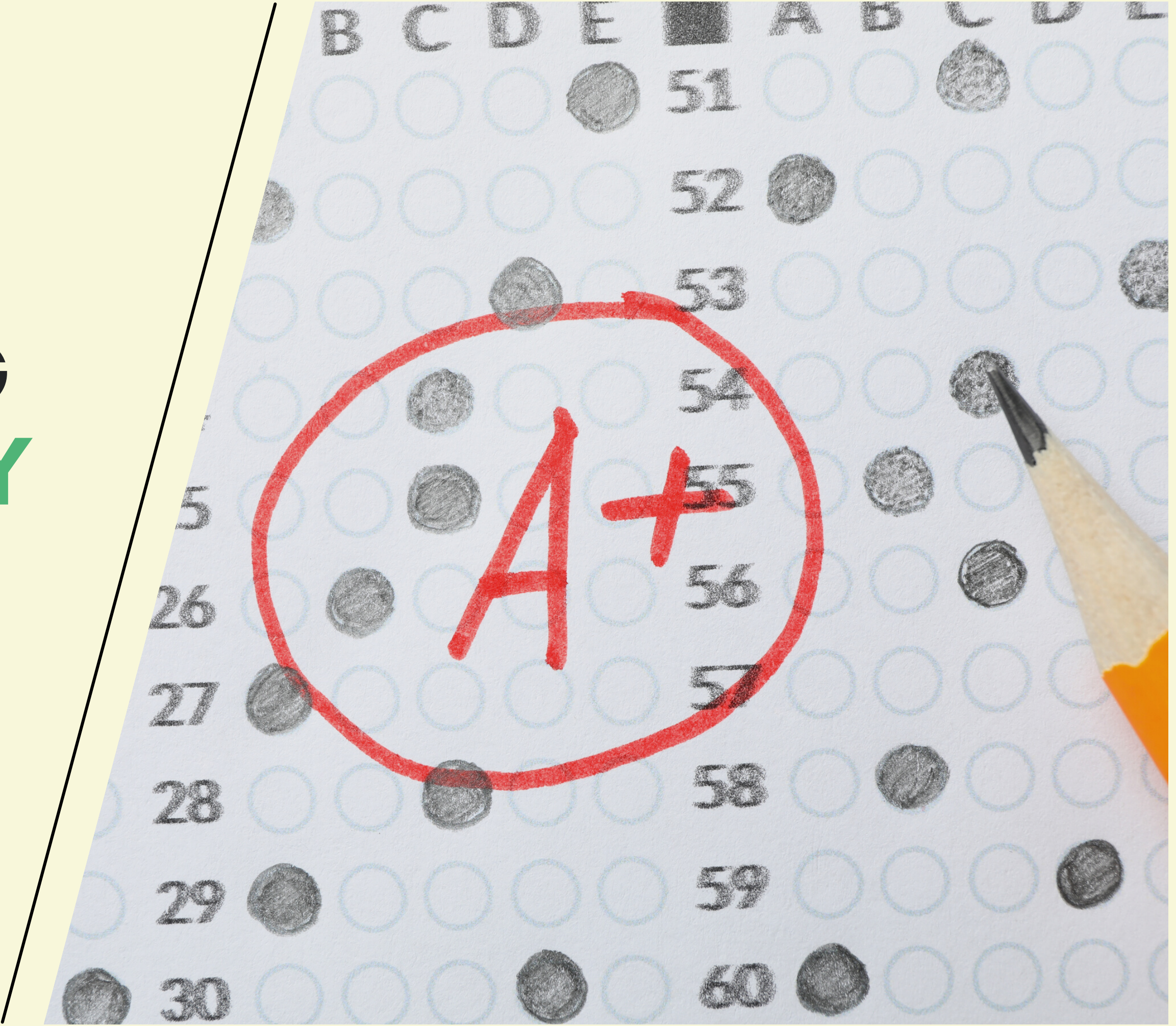


NAVIGATING TEST ANXIETY

Science and Strategies



marigold prep



Basics of Test Anxiety

What is it?

Test anxiety is a nervous feeling before or during a test, often related to fears of poor performance.

How common is it?

The available statistics vary widely depending on the study's methods and measurements, but we know test anxiety is fairly common:

- Up to 75% of students experience **some level** of test anxiety
- Up to 35% of students experience levels of test anxiety that **impair their functioning**.

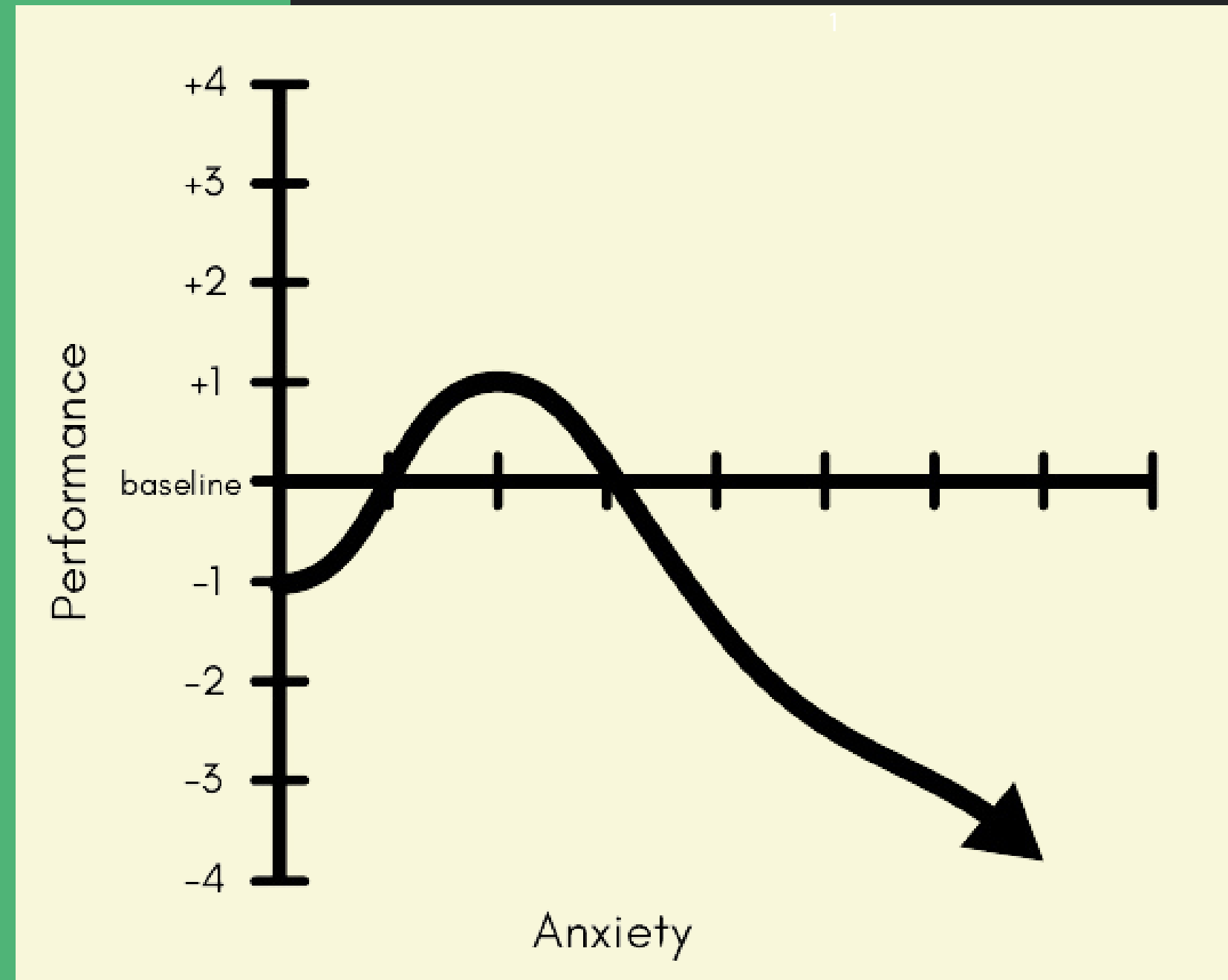


The Yerkes-Dodson Effect

A small amount of nervous energy can sharpen focus and improve performance, but high anxiety results in worse performance.

Like most forms of anxiety and psychological distress, a little bit is a perfectly normal response to stress – in fact, it can help put us “in the zone.”

But there is a threshold we can cross where anxiety hurts our performance.



Identifying Test Anxiety

Symptoms of test anxiety depend on a child's age

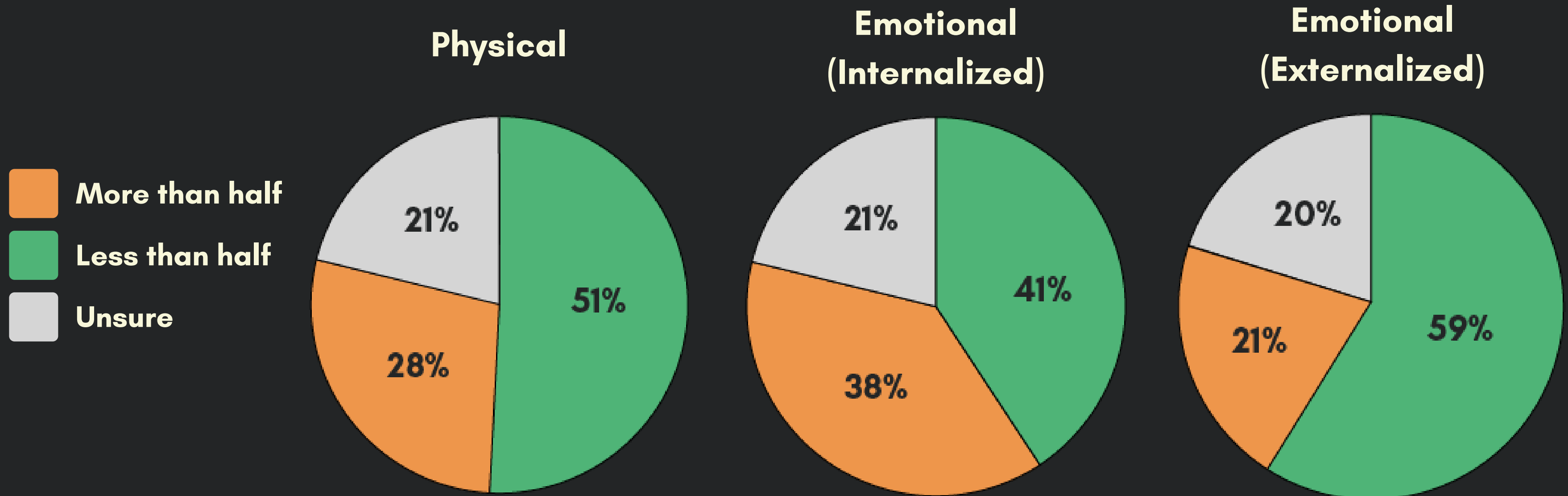
“**Young children** may demonstrate anxiety through **outward distress**, such as crying, clinging, or refusing to do something when encountering an anxiety-provoking situation. In early childhood, preschoolers and elementary school children may demonstrate anxiety through restlessness, irritability, aches and pains, nausea, meltdowns, and needs for reassurance. Nightmares or sleep terrors also may occur at this age level...

... in **middle school students**, symptoms of anxiety may **become more internalized** and manifest themselves through worry and/or withdrawal, as well as complaints of physical symptoms such as headaches and stomachaches. Teens may experience excessive worries and insomnia, and may appear preoccupied. **Teens are more likely to keep their worries to themselves because they are embarrassed or afraid they will be misunderstood.**”

from “Anxious for Success: High Anxiety in New York’s Schools” from NY Association of School Psychologists

Identifying Test Anxiety

From school counselors: *Approximately what proportion of students you work with display the following types of symptoms of test anxiety?*



from "Anxious for Success: High Anxiety in New York's Schools" from NY Association of School Psychologists