

Learning Effective Study Skills



Place a check next to the things you are already doing. Circle the things that you would do to become a more effective learner.

1. Getting Organized

- **Tips for Organization**

- a) Take the time to organize your notebooks and binders everyday
- b) Pack and organize your backpack at night, so you are prepared with everything you need for the following day at school
- c) Take time to clean and organize you locker because it will make it easier for you to find things, and be prepared and on time for class

- **Your Study Environment**

- a) Pick a quiet place to do your homework- remove any distractions (anything that takes your attention away from studying)
- b) Have all supplies and books within reach
- c) Study at the same time (choose a starting time) and in the same place everyday
- d) Allow yourself to take short breaks during your homework time
- e) Begin by completing your toughest subject and end with completing your easiest subject

2. Spreading the Work Out

- **The Agenda Pad and Monthly Calendar**

- a) Write down all nightly homework and long-term projects in your agenda
- b) Check off assignments once you complete them
- c) Record your quiz and test grades in your agenda pad
- d) Post your monthly team calendar somewhere in your house
- e) Check your monthly calendar everyday to see what tests and quizzes are coming up

- **Spreading Out Big Assignments**

- a) Start planning big assignments the day they are assigned and space out the assignment over time until the assignment is due. For example, if you are assigned a book on Monday and it is due on Friday, you could write this schedule in your agenda pad:
 1. Monday- Write an outline
 2. Tuesday- Write a rough draft
 3. Wednesday- Write final draft
 4. Thursday- Check over the final draft for mistakes
 5. Friday- Hand in the report

- **Note Taking Techniques**

- a) Don't write full sentences. Use abbreviations, key words, and key phrases.
- b) Put the date on the top of you notes
- c) Write down any information the teacher puts on the board
- d) Listen for signals (the teacher says "pay attention" or 'here's an important point") or for when the teacher repeats information. Write this information down.
- e) Re-read your notes every night. Check on missing or incorrect information, and correct it right away.
- f) Write down the 5 W's: WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, and WHY

3. Remembering Facts and Information

- **Move information from long-term memory to short-term memory**
 - a) Group Information- organize details into main ideas or categories
 - b) Visualize Information- picture information in your mind's eye; create a mental picture
 - c) Repeat Information- put information in your own words and go over it
 - d) Choose to Remember- pay attention and be interested in what you are learning
- **Use Mnemonic Devices**
 - e) Mnemonic devices help us to 'hook' new things we are learning to things are common to us. For example, when trying to remember the 5 Great Lakes, think of the word HOMES.
 - H- Huron
 - O- Ontario
 - M- Michigan
 - E- Erie
 - S- Superior

4. Taking Tests

- **Before the Test**
 - a) Keep yourself in good physical health- get plenty of sleep and eat healthy
 - b) Keep yourself in good mental health- reduce stress and think positive thoughts
 - c) Get help from the teacher- ask questions in class and/or stay for extra help
 - d) Use outlines, flashcards, study sheets, or other techniques to study
 - e) Make a study schedule- Do NOT leave studying until the night before the test
 - f) Make up your own practice questions- guess what kinds of questions will be on the test
 - g) Review right up until the time you take the test
- **During the Test**
 - a) Relax and forget about the other people in the room
 - b) If you feel anxious, take a few deep breaths and exhale slowly
 - c) Carefully read all of the directions and re-read the directions throughout the test
 - d) Look over the whole test before you answer any questions
 - e) Think before you choose an answer
 - f) Check over the test when you are finished



Activities: TEST YOUR MEMORY

1. See if you can remember this series of numbers. Look at it for 4 seconds, cover up the numbers and then write down what you remember.

Group A	7	4	9	3	1	5	8	2	6
Group B	12	19	17	11	14	16	13	15	18
Group C	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Group D	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19

***Which numbers did you remember? What does that show?
Why were some series easier to remember? How does that apply to studying?***

2. Look at the following series of words for 5 seconds. Then cover them up and write down as many as you can remember.

Group E	Car	tall	bar	ball	guitar	wall
Group F	car	bar	guitar	tall	ball	wall

Why was Group F easier to remember? How does that apply to studying?

And finally:

Try this one: time it and takes succeed to practice

Now try this one: it takes time and practice to succeed

3. What have you learned by doing these exercises?

Remember: The first time you tried to shoot a basket, hit a ball with a bat, or ride a bike; you probably didn't do very well. You got better at it when you practiced it and after a while you did it automatically. Practice these new techniques and you will become a more effective learner!!!!

HELPFUL HINTS FOR ALL STUDENTS

1. **In Class: When the teacher is talking, always have a paper and pen and be ready to take notes**
 - Underline or circle something important
2. **When a teacher says these things, they will probably be on the test, so write it down.**
 - This is important . . .
 - Be sure to write this down . . .
 - Remember this
 - Don't forget
3. **When taking a test**
 - Re-read your study sheet just before the test and then put it away.
 - Before starting the test, look it over. See how much time you have to finish.
 - Read the directions twice to make sure you understand them.
 - You don't have to start at the beginning of most tests. Start where you are most confident about the questions.
 - Write clearly. A question that is poorly written is usually marked wrong.
4. **When studying, organize the information in a logical way that is easy for you to remember and understand. Then write it down on a separate sheet of paper (study sheet)**
5. **Spread out the work**
 - Keep a calendar at home and write down due dates for long term assignments.
 - Don't wait until the last day to do a long term assignment
6. **Use Mnemonic (pronounced new monic) Devices**

Mnemonic devices help us to 'hook' new things we are learning to things are common to us. For example, when trying to remember the 5 Great Lakes, think of the word HOMES.

 - H- Huron
 - O- Ontario
 - M- Michigan
 - E- Erie
 - S- Superior
7. **Use rhymes, raps and song parodies to memorize information**
 - In 1492, Columbus sailed the ocean, blue
i before e, except after c, or when pronounced a, as in neighbor or weigh
 - Remember when you sang the alphabet in kindergarten. It helped!
8. **Set up your school desk or home study area**
 - Have a pen and a pencil (sharpened and ready to write)
 - Clear off your desk. Get rid of any distractions
 - If you have a choice, don't sit next to your friends. They may distract you.
9. **When studying or reviewing at home**
 - Take a short break every 20 to 25 minutes
 - Keep your sessions short and focused
 - Just reading something rarely brings it to long term memory. Write key information down on your study sheet.
 - For some people (not everyone) having music playing quietly helps.