

EFFECTIVE STUDY SKILLS

Education Time
21-7-08

WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO STUDY? WHAT WILL WORK FOR YOU? SHOULD YOU ADOPT THE TECHNIQUES THAT WORK FOR OTHERS? WHAT IF YOU ARE DISTRACTED BY THE TV OR FEEL LIKE CHATTING UP FRIENDS? **MEERA RAVI** GIVES YOU TIPS ON HOW TO STUDY FOR THE BEST RESULTS

No two people study the same way, and there is no doubt that what works for one person may not work for another also. However, there are some general techniques that seem to produce good results.

Your success in high school and college is dependent on your ability to study effectively and efficiently. For best results, effective study skills must be practised. The results of poor study skills are wasted time, frustration, and low or failing grades. It's your life, your time, and your future, plan appropriately.

STUDY SMART

Study Techniques



Active involvement in reading the text is important for

comprehending the material. One frequently suggested method for reading textbooks is the SQ3RT method. Mastering this technique will help you increase your grasping power dramatically. SQ3RT consists of the following steps:

S=Survey

Briefly survey the chapter, noting the divisions, headings, sub headings, captions, graphs or maps, tables and figures. Read the chapter summary. This provides an overview of the chapter content and a framework for organizing the material.

Q = Question

Turn each section heading into a question that you want answered. Also, try to guess questions that might appear on the exam.

R = Read:

Read the chapter, section by section, trying to answer your questions. Read with full understanding, answer the questions at the end of chapters and note all the underlined, italicized, bold printed words. Reduce your speed for difficult passages.

R = Recite

After you have read a section, orally ask yourself questions about what you have just read. Answer the questions and state the main points verbally. You may also write down the answers and key points for later reference.

R = Review

Briefly look back over the material to assure that you have included all the main points. Reflect on the meaning and application of the major points. Refine your mental organization and begin building memory. The review can be done in small chunks of time as you wait between classes or have some time to spare while waiting for friends or between classes. Engaging in short periods of intensive concentration is very efficient study method.

T = Test

After a gap of a few days, test yourself on whatever you have learnt. Testing is one of the most important points

because if you are not able to recollect something, you have a chance to learn it again. If you do not test, you may remain under the false impression that you know it very well.

The value of a schedule

Before you even begin to think about the process of studying, you must develop a schedule. If you don't have a schedule or plan for studying, then you will not have any way of allocating your valuable time when the unexpected comes up. It's up to you to learn how to develop a schedule that meets your needs, revise it if necessary and most important, follow it. All schedules should be made with the idea that they can be revised. A good schedule, if properly managed, assigns time where time is needed, but you've got to want to do it!

Vary your study activities

Varying activity would reduce boredom. Read and take notes for a while, formulate questions and answers for a time, recite and review to break the monotony. Another example is to do math problems for awhile, then read another subject, review that subject, and then go back to math.

Reading to understand

You can "read" something at many different levels. For example, you might be holding a book in front of your face while you're actually watching other people. Or you might "read" because your teacher asked you to, so you just sort of look at the words and sentences and then close the book. You may also be reading because you are enforced by your parents to sit for studies. You might read by rushing through because you have to finish the portion. One of the most common mistakes students do is to read without understanding. To really READ something, you should set out with the goal of understanding what the words and sentences mean. You must

learn to read with a purpose. One way is to test yourself on the material you've read. Imagine what questions a teacher might ask you from that lesson. If you can come up with the questions (and the answers too!), you've been paying attention to what you've read. If not, time to read again.

Guidelines for effective study

- * Be specific about what you want to accomplish. (For example, complete exercise of chapter 8, not study biology, it's too broad!)
- * Manage daydreaming or distracting thoughts. This occurs when your mind has to choose between something pleasurable and something demanding. Use your will power to stop distracting thoughts and refocus on your studies.
- * If you frequently think of things that distract you from your work, write down these thoughts on a piece of paper and once you are done with your studies, think only about them for the next ten minutes. Once you give the thought the attention it requires, it would bother you less.
- * Resist the desire to snack, get up, watch TV or phone friends. Reward yourself when you succeed in resisting.
- * Follow a schedule: eight hours of sleep per night, sufficient activity, etc. Lack of sleep, lack of food, excessive fatigue, high stress and personal problems can cause a lack of concentration.
- * Address personal problems before studying or note it on paper and talk to someone trustworthy to unburden yourself. Any kind of emotional disturbance is one of the major causes of lack of concentration.
- * You can prepare yourself to succeed in your studies. One of the most important things is to take responsibility for yourself, to recognize that in order to succeed you need to make decisions about your priorities, your time, and your resources. Follow up on the priorities you have set for yourself, and don't let others or other interests, distract you from your goals.

