

Overview:

The purpose of Study Skills is to help students maximize the learning process. They will require ample amount of time and dedication to enable the student to experience school success.

Objectives:

This course is designed to help students develop and use study skills that will help them become successful learners. Students will learn various techniques that will be helpful to them throughout their academic years.

The course is divided into components and may be taught by several teachers during the year. These components will be taught throughout the year:

- Time management and organization of materials
- Reading strategies and text structure
- Learning styles
- Note taking from a lecture and from text
- Test preparation and test taking strategies
- Character education
- Research process: choosing and narrowing a topic, taking notes, writing and revising a research project
- Finalizing research paper/word processing
- Public speaking

Daily Responsibilities:

- 1) Check Student agenda/planner every day.
- 2) Serve as the student's check-in check-out mentor if needed.
- 3) Monitor grades.
- 4) Aid students in organization (folders, lockers, etc.)
- 5) Tutor as needed.
- 6) Allow resource time to work on assignments.
- 7) Assign a daily participation grade.
- 8) Conduct RtI help for students that are assigned. This includes progress monitoring.
- 9) Conduct Check-In, Check out ...(CICO) for students in the Study Skills Class.

PBIS Cool Tools:

- 1) Reinforce Cool Tools.
- 2) Give a weekly assignment that can be used in the other classes (for example ... have them make note cards for an upcoming test).

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- 3) Tutor as needed
- 4) Topic will change at the end of every week. Some topics may be covered twice.
- 5) Cover Essential 55 questions

Letting a student do nothing in class is encouraging failure!

Study Skills Curriculum Overview:

1. Create an ideal study environment
2. Reinforce the importance of maintaining a daily/weekly notebook for the purpose of listing assignments, activities and events.
3. Teach *Time Management* and *Organizational Skills*.
4. Practice Note-taking Skills
5. Teach tactics concerning how to improve memory by using various strategies for the purpose of better study habits.
6. Develop test taking skills
7. Improving critical thinking and listening skills.
8. Discovering the different learning styles and applying the principles of each to make learning easier.
9. Teach and explore many different reading tactics.

Class Format:

Class will be divided into 2 parts: learning organizational skills & working on homework.

- 1) The **first 5 minutes** will be for checking student planners.
- 2) The **next 10-20** minutes will be for learning a new skill.
- 3) The **last 20-30** minutes will be for homework and organizing. Students should **not expect** to be using this class to finish work that is due that day. They are learning to be prepared & organized – not rushed and panicked. Exceptions will be given to reviewing for a test that day.
- 4) Periodically, progress monitoring for RtI or IEP objectives can also be done in this class during homework time.

Essential 55:

Please review essential 55 topics with students as a part of the PBIS system.

Assessment:

Students will receive a participation grade every day. This grade will not count towards the GPA but will towards eligibility.

TIPS TO TEACH

Time Management Tips

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1. Set goals for yourself: short and long term
2. Record assignments: Use an agenda book or pocket calendar.
3. Make a “to do” list daily: Prioritize what you want to accomplish that day.
4. Use spare time wisely: Read on the bus ride when going home, to games or while waiting for practice to begin. Also when given class time to begin your homework, USE IT!!!
5. It is okay to say “NO” to interruptions: Keep focused on your goals!!! For example, if an employer asks you to work an extra shift it is okay to say no if you are preparing for a quiz or test the next day.
6. Find the right time and place: Know how you learn best, what time of the day you concentrate the best as well as choosing an environment that will make you successful.
7. Get plenty of sleep: Lack of sleep can make you irritable and less productive. Plan your time so that you are in bed at a decent hour.

Organization

Organize a study area. Designate a specific work area at home where you can keep **all** of your school materials. (This may involve having to **clean your room!**) But this can be wherever you feel comfortable working. When you get home in the afternoon, put everything right there. Keep it organized and free of clutter, and all of your things will be easy to use, and especially **easy to find**.

Use your agenda book for more than a passbook. Record not only homework assignments but also due dates for projects. Fill in all of your commitments, (practices, club meetings, etc.) This gives you a better sense of your available time and helps you to use it wisely. Keep each subject separate.

Set up different folders, 3-ring binders, or notebooks for each subject. Be sure to follow any directions that a teacher may give – you may be required to have a 3-ring binder or a spiral notebook for a particular class. Otherwise, use the method that works best for you. Take a few moments **every day** to keep up with this organization. Be sure that papers are in the correct folder, punch holes to put papers into binders, and put materials in some type of order. Chronological order is usually most effective, so be sure to **date every paper that you receive**.

Get ready the night before. Make a habit every night of pulling your things together. Since you now have an organized study area, this should be a breeze. Make sure an alarm is set and you know what you’re wearing. Then get **plenty of sleep**.

How to use your Agenda Book

- 1) Bring your agenda book to school and home everyday!!!
- 2) Make an entry EVERYDAY for EVERY CLASS!
- 3) Use a consistent format.
- 4) Write in each class the assignment and due date
- 5) Example: Science, Separation of a Mixture Lab Report, 9/10
- 6) Write due dates as dates and avoid using things like tomorrow or next Friday.

- 7) Use the agenda book to manage assignments and time!
- 8) Include work or extra-curricular activities when planning your use of time after school.
- 9) Update the status of your assignments. (Use check marks when an assignment is complete or use an arrow when you need to carry an assignment over to another day.)
- 10) Use a large binder clip to keep track of where you are in the agenda book.

Effective Reading

If you know how to read a textbook, you will understand and remember what you have read.

There are 3 simple tools that you can do to read more effectively.

SCAN: Scan the chapter in the book. Look at the boldface terms, charts, graphs, headings & subtitles, maps, photos & illustrations, summary, and review questions. Scanning provides you with information in a short amount time. You get a quick view of the information and it prepares you for what you are about to read. It makes it easier when more understandable when you actually do read.

READ: When you read, have a purpose. This helps you to stay focused and understand what you have read. Ask yourself questions as you read. "What does this word mean?, Why is this event important?, etc." You are a detective while you read. Looking for answers to your questions while you read. When you finished reading you should have answered all of your question and the review questions.

REVIEW: Once you have finished reading, take the time to go one set further. Go through the scanning process again and look at the bold words, italicized words, charts, pictures, headings, etc. Make sure you understand what you have read. You can even make flash cards of the different headings or events that took place in your reading. You will be amazed how much you remember when it is time to review for the test.

Taking notes on readings

Taking notes on class readings can be as important as taking notes on class lectures. Not everyone can remember or understand something they only read once, so if you can take efficient notes on readings, you can save yourself a lot of time and effort when you need to review readings for quizzes and tests!

Here are some general tips to follow when taking notes on readings.

1. Budget enough time for taking notes. The time you spend taking clear, efficient notes initially, will save you review time and increase your knowledge retention.

2. **Date your notes, and write full bibliographic information next to the date**, including author, title, publication, date of publication, city, publisher, and volume number for journal articles. Do this so you don't waste time later writing a paper or other assignment that may call for proper citation.
3. **Compose your notes in a concise and legible fashion**. If you can't read your notes you are either writing too much or may need to consider using a computer. Use short and meaningful phrases, and abbreviate when necessary. Don't use abbreviations that you won't recognize later.
4. **Create a system of note-taking that allows YOU to write quickly and get down basic concepts**, but which will also allow you to quickly find information in your notes later. Consider using an outline format, for example, or clearly separating your notes into different sections (or columns if you are using a steno pad or a computer).
5. **Use the structure of the book (or article) as the structure of your notes**. For instance, chapters correspond to major headings, chapter sections to subheadings. You also may want to include page numbers in case you need to refer back to the text at a later time.
6. **Note anything that is pertinent to the author's argument**. Important points tend to come in introductory and concluding paragraphs, where details and more complete explanations or arguments are located in the body of the text.
7. **Distinguish facts from opinions, and quotations from summaries**, in a way that will make it clear which is which when you review your notes.
8. **Review your reading notes the next day**, and do it again a few days later. This is a time-efficient way of retaining the material.
9. **Record any comments or questions you may have in your notes**. Asking clarifying questions of your teacher will not only help you understand the text, but it will also show your teacher that you are taking ownership of your own learning!

Note Taking Strategies

1. **Come to class prepared**: Bring a three-ring binder, pocket folder and a writing utensil.
2. **Start a new page for each class**: Put the date at the top of each page. This makes it easier for you to access notes when you miss a class.
3. **Develop a note taking system that works for you**: There are several ways to take notes such as outlining, charting or mapping. Attached is an example of one system, the Cornell note-taking system. Use can use various colors to distinguish between concepts.

- 4. Don't try to write down every word the teacher says:** Make sure you listen, write and ask questions as needed.
- 5. Write down the major ideas:** Listen for facts, connections and main ideas. This can be difficult so don't get frustrated. Ask the teacher to slow down if needed.
- 6. Leave enough space between notes:** When writing leave a lot of space between ideas. Your notes will be easier to read and add to when needed.
- 7. Use graphic organizers or pictures:** Sometimes it is helpful to draw pictures that make connections between ideas, sequences or events.
- 8. Write down page numbers from your textbook:** This makes it easier to gather information for assignments quizzes or tests.
- 9. REVIEW YOUR NOTES:** This is important!!!! Make sure you take the time to look through your notes and develop questions or rephrase them so they make sense to you!!!! Write down any questions you have and ask at the beginning of the next class.
- 10. GET NOTES FROM MISSED CLASSES:** Create a partnership with another student that you can rely on and also can rely on you for notes when a class is missed. If not you may need to schedule time after school to do this with your teacher.

Test Preparation Strategies—TOP TEN

- 1) Be Confident.

If you feel that you know the material and have put in significant study time, you can look forward to showing off all you have learned. Showcase your best effort. Answer every question to the best of your ability. THINK A!

- 2) Be Prepared.

Come with required materials such as pencils, calculator, notes, formula sheet, etc.

- 3) Be Alert.

When you are given an exam, take a minute to look through all of the questions. READ ALL DIRECTIONS.

- 4) Be Careful.

Avoid careless errors. Take time to review all problems and proof-read all answers.

- 5) Be Ready.

Preparation is the key to success. Complete all reading and problem sets before the exam. Designate study time.

6) Be Smart.

Utilize review sessions. Learn your teachers testing style.

7) Be Efficient.

Prioritize your time wisely. Do not get stuck on one problem and run out of time. Outline essay answers.

8) Be Neat.

Write clearly. Erase thoroughly. Make sure your numerical answers are legible. Many teachers will not give credit if they cannot read your answer.

9) Be Honest.

A test is a measure of your knowledge of a particular topic. Academic integrity is extremely important.

Resist the urge to cheat—it is never worth it.

10) Be Mature.

A test is just that—a test. Keep every exam in perspective. Tests are learning opportunities too. Use them as tool to make yourself a better student. Communicate with your teacher about your performance.

Improve Your Memory

If you want to improve you memory, here are some tricks you can learn.

Acronyms: Acronyms is when you make a word from the first letter of each word to be memorized is used. For example, HOMES for the Great Lakes (Huron, Ontario, Michigan, Erie, Superior).

Acrostics: Acrostics are phrases or poems in which the first letter of each word or line functions as a cue to help you recall the words that you are trying to remember. For example, “Please Excuse My Dear Aunt Sally” is used to remember the order of operations in Math.

Narrative: Make up a story with the list of words throughout the narrative helps with memorizing.

Rhymes: Rhyming can help retention of information. Remember the phrase “I after E except after C”?

Imagery: Draw or imagine a picture of what’s being studied, or find one in a book. Mentally refer to the picture when you are testing.

Visualization:. Use graphic organizers to help organize and remember information.

Flash Cards: When information is written out on cards you have access to studying at any time.

The Importance of Time Management

Learning to manage time well is a key skill for success at home and in the workplace. By incorporating specific calendar and daily-planner routines into your classroom, you are helping students build important life skills that will serve them well in the years ahead.