

Study Skills

by

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“There is always homework that needs to be done.” – Carol Brown

How We Learn

The following list demonstrates how people best learn new information:

Hearing 5%

Seeing 15%

Hearing and Seeing 25%

Doing the act 50%

Doing, saying out loud 75%

Doing, hearing, seeing, saying out loud 90%

Schedule

Calendar

1. Get a calendar on either a computer, iPad, phone, daily planner, black board calendar, and gather all of your syllabi. Next, take time to write down when all of the homework assignments are due. Pencil in everything from homework, sport events, family time, study time, shopping dates, lunch, etc. This will help make sure you have set time to study and get homework done. If you do not have your time planned out on a schedule that you can see, study time will get put aside.
2. Color Code:
 - A) Blue: Reading assignments /quizzes
 - B) Red: Research Paper and Exam
 - C) Green: For Fun Activities
3. Set Alarms: Whenever I have a reading assignment due, I put an alarm on my computer to go off 5-7 days before it's due so I know when I need to start reading a certain book. If you have an Exam in 2 weeks and you know you missed some of class, go ahead and start getting the notes that you missed. Also set 2-3 alarms, one for 2 weeks, another for 1 week, and one for 5 days before the final. This will help you know when you need to start studying. For research papers, set an alarm 1 month in advance because most of the work for research papers are reading books. I will set a second alarm 2 weeks before it is due so I can have an outline or start my rough draft. The third alarm to go off 5-7 days before it is due is to make sure I have it done, and at this point, I will send it to the writing center to help get edits on the paper.
4. Prioritize how many pages you need per day, how long you need to spend

working on research for a paper, as well as when and how long you are going to study for an exam. I recommend studying for 10 minutes per day.

5. Plan out your day by the hour, like this:

8:00am - 9:00am – Get ready for the day and have breakfast
9:00am - 10:00am – Read for History
10:10am -11:00am – Math
11:00am -11:45am – Lunch
11:50am -12:30pm – Nap
12:35pm - 1:45pm – Workout
1:45pm - 2:00pm – Get cleaned up
2:05pm - 2:50pm – Research Paper
3:00pm - 4:00pm – Study for Science
4:05pm - 4:30pm – Make phone calls and send emails
4:40pm - 5:30pm – Read
5:40pm - 7:00pm – Dinner with friends

Reading

“Learn to decrease in expectation, yet increase in discipline.” - Gunner Gunderson

Reading Pages

First, look at your syllabus and see when all the books/reading assignments are due. Second, count how many pages are in each book and each chapter. Third, make a schedule and try to read a little bit every day. Example: read 30 pages per day. This would accumulate to 210 pages per week, then 840 pages per month, and 2,520 pages per semester.

“If you take care of your books, then they will take care of you.” - Dr. Brain Payne

5 Colors

1. Blue - Biblical truth, agree with the author, key figures
2. Orange – Secular/sin, opposing side, major events
3. Yellow – Scripture Reference, dates,
4. Pink – Main question or theme, quote another writer, results of major events,
5. Black Pen – Write on side margins and interacting with the book as though you were having a conversation.

Before reading a book I will skim through and highlight yellow for scripture reference first for three reasons.

1. This saves you time so that you do not have to highlight all at once as you're going through the book. It can also be easy to highlight too much so you want to avoid that.

2. It is also helpful because you can see which passages the author uses to make his case.
3. This gives you a broad overview of what the author will argue for, which makes the book easier to read.

Reading Tabs

1. Allow you to keep track of how many pages you need to read.
2. It's helpful to see the progress, which you have made in the book.

Keep a Small Note Pad

1. After reading a chapter summarize what you have just read in a couple of sentences.
2. Also write down certain page numbers, which you think are crucial to understanding the book.

Dictionary

Always have a Dictionary book or app with you when reading. If one does not have an understanding of one word, it can make the difference between understanding and misunderstanding what the author is advocating for in the book.

Reading Speeds

1. Reading silently is typically faster than reading out loud. I recommend this if the class requires you to *only read the material for a completion grade*.
2. Reading out loud is much more effective than silently because you're using more of your cognitive function. This will allow you to retain much more information. If you are having to do a book review or going to be quizzed over the material, reading out loud will be much more beneficial.

Music

1. If you are going to listen to music, make sure that it is **only instrumental with no vocals.**
2. One can go to Spotify and listen to Exam Study Music Playlist, Piano Tributes or make your own playlist.
3. I prefer to listen to one song as I am reading and have it on repeat because it allows me to keep track of my reading pace.
4. Sound Therapy is also a great option and can block out distractions.

Benefits

You will have already marked the author's main points and arguments, which will make things like, book reviews, reading quizzes, and research papers easier as well as save you time in the end. With doing this, you will not have to try to scan through the book and find the author's main points again. Yes, this will take you longer to read but the investment is well worth it.

Writing Papers

Download Zotero

Zotero is a free computer software program, which automatically helps do your footnotes and bibliography for papers. This program will save you an enormous amount of time when working on your research papers.

Thesis Statement

1. This is absolutely vital when writing a paper, speech, or sermon. If you do have a clear thesis then your reader or audience will be engaged or able to follow you well. If you do not have a clear thesis statement people will become disengaged and will struggle to understand what you're trying to convey. Always have a clear thesis statement.

2. Make your thesis statement one sentence that is concise and precise. All of your sub-points should be supporting your thesis. View it as a tripod. If you have three points you wish to make, your thesis statement should be on top of the tripod. If the thesis statement is not clear then your tripod will fall apart. The end of each sub-point should re-direct your reader/audience back to your thesis statement and they will see how your main points properly support your thesis.

Example: The thesis of this paper is... or the main point we will be looking at today is...

Outline:

Always make an outline before you write a paper, presentation, or sermon. Outlines serve a helpful reference point as you are working on your paper. This will give you a clear direction as to how you should approach your assignment and how long you need to make your points.

Example: Your paper must be 9 pages long

Introduction 1/2 - 3/4 pages

First point 2 pages

Second Point 2pages

Third Point 2pages

Forth Point 2pages

Conclusion 1/2 page

1. Also you can decide to rearrange the points so the flow of the paper will be a smoother read and not choppy.

Example of an Outline: Sermon on James 1:1-4

Thesis: The reason why Christians can be joyful in trials is because ultimately we become more like Christ through them

Intro and Historical Context

1. Joyful in Trials
2. We Grow In Steadfastness
3. Trials Conform us to the Image of Christ

Conclusion

More Expanded Outline:

Intro

- Illustration of Laura and Ted
- Thesis
- Historical Context
- Understanding the Author

1. We are to be Joyful in Trials because of the Hope We have
 - What is Joy?
 - Reasons why Christians have Joy
2. From Joy We Grow in Steadfastness
 - What is a trial?
 - What is Steadfastness?
3. The End Goal of Trials is to Conform us to the Image of Christ
 - Suffering Has Purpose
 - Christians are not exempt from Suffering
 - Not all things that happen to us are good

Conclusion:

- Summarize Everything
- Close with quote

Class Notes

1. If you have a hard time taking notes, ask the professor if you can record the lecture on your computer. Then you can re-listen to the lecture and fill in what you missed in class.
2. If the teacher is going too fast, do not be afraid to ask him/her to repeat what they said or explain it in a different way. Chances are you're not the only student in the classroom struggling to understand what the professor is teaching.
3. Compare your notes with another student to ensure you are not missing any information.
4. If you hear the teacher say things like, "this is important, take note, you may see this on your test, this will be helpful for you paper" or anything else to that nature then write it down. Also if your teacher has a powerpoint presentation, takes notes. They did not spend all that time making it for no reason. If they repeat something write it down. If the teacher takes the time to write on the board then you need to write it down immediately.
5. Pre-Read!!! Reading the material beforehand will allow you to engage better in class. This will make it easier to follow along and take notes. Your notes will be neater and have more complete thoughts because you are able to keep up since you pre-read. The lecture will reinforce what the professors view as important in the book and what they really want you to know.
6. One method to become a better note taker is to listen to a variety of teachers who have different teaching/learning styles.
7. Review your notes daily for at least 10-15minutes. Do this so that the information you're learning will be stored into your long-term memory. If you do not review new information within 24 hours, it does not go to long-term memory and it is as though we are relearning it the next time we see it.

Test

Before you answer any questions, swiftly read through the entire exam and figure out which questions you do and do not know. It is beneficial to read through the test before you begin because you may find an answer to an earlier question in a later one. Start with the questions you know, and then move on to the questions you partly know. You do not want to waste unnecessary time on questions you do not know, so it is best to save those for the end.

1. Pace yourself! If you rush, you are more likely to make an error. Read each question thoroughly, at least twice, before answering them! Don't leave any questions blank! Try to answer every question as best you can. If there is one you are uncertain of you may

get some credit for it. If a question is not clear go and ask your professor if he can clarify it for you.

2. Always double and triple check your answers before submitting your exam!

Note cards

1. Say it out loud as you write it down onto the note card.
2. Then say it out loud again 8 -10times, before moving onto the next question. Remember to review it within 24 hours.
3. Type the answer on my computer or phone in case if I ever loose my index cards.
4. If you're not a fan of using note cards, then use Quizlet online or download the app for free onto your phone.

Closing Thoughts

1. To tie this all together, remember that learning is an active and ongoing process. Writing, thinking, and saying the material in your own words and in a meaningful order will increase comprehension. You must reproduce in your own mind the truth to be learned. –Carol Brown
2. Forming strong study habits and sticking with a schedule is key for success. When studying, take little breaks after each subject, and when tired, take a nap. It is also good to study in a clean, clutter-free environment. It will be less distracting and help you stay focused. Find a place to study where you will not be distracted.
3. Remember in your studies to ask yourself two important questions. Did you do your best work? Are you struggling well? If you can answer yes to these two questions, then be proud of your grades.