

DEVELOPING GOOD STUDY SKILLS

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TEACHER'S RESOURCE BOOK

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For teens, school is a full-time job. A major part of a young person's life is spent either in the classroom or at home, studying. The benefits of a good education are undeniable; students who are successful in the classroom are paving their way for success in college, a career, and life in general.

Unfortunately, many young people lack the basic skills needed to guide them successfully through school. A 2003 article in *The Washington Post* reported that many teachers are concerned that students do not know how to study effectively and retain information learned. As school curriculums get more complex and more emphasis is placed on preparing for standardized tests, teachers have even less time to spend on teaching essential study skills.

Every student needs to know how to listen in class and take helpful notes; how to study and complete homework; how to prepare for both objective and essay tests and how to conduct basic research. After learning the fundamentals of schoolwork and having sufficient opportunity to practice such skills, each student will develop his or her own personal style of effective studying.

The sooner young people master the skills that are necessary to study, write, and remember concepts, the better their school years will be. Not only will students study effectively and bring home good grades, they will also develop a crucial confidence in their abilities that will help sustain them as lessons get tougher. Learning how to study well is also an important step towards enjoying education. Students who enjoy going to school will be more motivated to do good work, will work harder inside and outside of the classroom, and will ultimately learn more than peers who do not enjoy school.

Teaching study skills in junior high and high school is also very important because many colleges expect incoming students to already know how to study. Failure to master such skills can put a student behind in an increasingly competitive college atmosphere. Alternately, becoming well-versed in the simple lessons of studying gives the student a head start toward developing his or her interests in higher education and increases chances of success upon graduation.

Developing Good Study Skills will help students develop their personal study skills by imparting time-tested tips and suggestions that young people can adjust to fit their own learning styles. By following the lessons of the video, students will be building a strong and vital base for their education, paving the way towards a more rewarding, rich, and enjoyable school experience.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After watching the video *Developing Good Study Skills* and participating in the class activities included in this Teacher's Resource Book, your students will be able to:

- incorporate good listening skills into their classroom behavior
- take efficient, detailed notes on class lectures
- schedule their homework assignments and balance their schoolwork with other activities and obligations
- understand how to prioritize their work
- develop a strong study habit in a location conducive to learning
- read textbooks more effectively and retain what they read
- keep their motivation strong and remain on task
- memorize sequences and facts more easily for objective tests
- develop their own study guides and organize study groups
- describe the basic format of an essay
- navigate a library and the internet for research purposes
- understand the need to cite sources
- develop skills for creating an outline

Developing Good Study Skills opens with two students listing typical school assignments, from tests to math worksheets to essays. They point out that with all this work, school can be challenging, but that learning basic study skills can make a young person's full-time job of education easier, more rewarding, and more fun. Mastering these skills will help students get through middle school, high school, and college successfully.

First, the video presents ways that students can improve their study skills while in class. The hosts explain that in-class learning starts with good listening. They advise viewers to prepare to listen even before they come to class by looking over their notes from the previous class and homework, which will prime them to organize and store new information. Once in class, students should sit somewhere that prevents distractions. Seats near the front of the room and away from distracting friends are the best choices. One more listening hint is offered: be aware of key phrases like "it's important that you know this," "this will be on the test," or "this is a key point"—when the teacher uses one of these phrases, it's a good idea to pay attention.

The hosts turn next to the topic of note-taking. They suggest that students use a separate notebook for each class to keep their notes organized. The notebooks should have wide margins to allow them to add more information later or to jot down reminders during studying. The hosts advise students to develop their own system of abbreviations so that they can take notes more quickly and avoid missing important information.

Viewers are also reminded that it is not necessary to write down every word the teacher says, but rather to take down the main points of the lecture. Once the most important facts have been written, students should summarize the details in their own words.

In-class study skills extend beyond the classroom. Once class is over, the hosts suggest that viewers review their notes while the information is still fresh in their minds. They introduce the "5 R's" of Cornell professor Walter Pauk. The first R is to **record** the main ideas of the lesson. The second R is to **reduce** notes by summarizing the lecture and emphasizing its main points. The third R, **reciting**, involves re-reading the notes and explaining them in the student's own words. The fourth R is **reflecting**, which means thinking about the new material and trying to connect it to knowledge the student already has. Finally, the fifth R is **reviewing**. This should start even before it's time to study for the test, because reviewing while the lecture is fresh will aid in recall and understanding.

Next, the video discusses tips for homework and studying. The hosts first turn to time management. They recommend that viewers use an assignment book to organize their workloads. Assignment books should have a separate section for every day of the week, and students should write down their homework in detail as soon as the teacher assigns it.

The hosts explain how to make up a study schedule. On a calendar, students should first write down their regular long-term engagements, like rehearsals or music lessons. The next step is to record a weekly schedule, including major events or big due dates. Finally,

students are encouraged to write themselves a daily schedule on very busy days to help keep them on task. They can decide when to work on their assignments, and for how long—sticking to this schedule will help them get everything done.

Next, prioritizing is addressed. The hosts explain that this means finishing the most important assignments before working on the less pressing ones. Usually, the assignment that is due soonest is the first priority, but something that is worth a significant portion of the student's grade—like a major paper or project—can also take precedence.

After time management, the video discusses details of effective studying. The hosts recommend that students find a place that is used for studying alone—not sleeping, eating or talking on the phone. Students should have a large desk, a comfortable chair, and other helpful items like a good light, a clock, and pencils, pens and a calculator. A good study space should not include distracting views, a phone, a stereo or a refrigerator. The hosts also advise students to study at the same time every day to develop a good habit.

Concentration tips are addressed next. The hosts tell viewers that writing down a list of goals can help keep them on task. The goals should be specific and realistic—a goal like “read up to page 40 for history” is much better than “read all 500 pages of my book in one sitting.” Realistic goals will not discourage or overwhelm students, so they help in concentration.

Reading textbooks is a big part of homework and studying. The video moves on to reading tips. First, viewers are advised to look over their assignment before actually reading it carefully to get an idea of what they are about to learn. Skimming over the sections, pictures, graphs and charts will prepare students to process the textbook's lessons. The hosts also recommend that viewers read the summary at the end of a chapter before they read the chapter itself. Then, as they read, students should take note of any new words or phrases introduced and write them down for future reference.

Next, the video describes ways to remember readings. Reciting new information in one's own words after finishing a textbook section or chapter helps fix it in one's mind. Reviewing the reading right away also saves time later when preparing for a test. The hosts recommend that students take time to think of their own test questions for each paragraph of the reading—if they write these questions down, they can use them later to study.

Finally, motivation is discussed. The hosts suggest that viewers break up large tasks to make them more manageable and less overwhelming. They also present rewards as a way to help motivate. Students should give themselves small rewards during studying, such as a snack break, when they accomplish a small goal. Finishing large goals can lead to larger rewards, like a trip to the movies. Thinking of the reward in store can motivate students to keep working when they get tired.

The video then moves on to test preparation. First, the hosts discuss strategies for objective tests. Some objective tests involves memorizing sequences of facts, so students are recommended to make up a sentence in which the first letter of each word corresponds to the first letter of each item on the list to be memorized. The sentence “my very excellent mother just served us nine pizzas” is used as an example to illustrate a way to remember the planets in order according to their distance from the sun. Another memory strategy presented is chunking, which means breaking up a long list of items into several smaller lists and memorizing each list separately.

The next test preparation tip discussed is construction of a study guide. The hosts suggest that viewers use their reduced class notes as a guide, or to make a new guide by going back through their class notes and listing the main topics. Then, students can quiz themselves by listing as many details as they can under each of these main topics. If students wrote their own questions when they read their textbooks, they can also use these questions to refresh their memories.

Then, the hosts advise viewers to form study groups for test preparation. Since meeting with friends is more enjoyable than studying alone, students are more likely to do it, and discussing topics with others can help students answer each other’s questions and share each other’s thoughts. Several ways to organize a study group are presented—students can divide the material into sections and each student can be responsible for reviewing a section in detail, students can review all the information together, or students can review separately and come together to quiz each other.

The video moves on to test-taking strategies. Viewers are advised to be wary of true/false questions that contain the words “always” or “never,” because such questions are usually false. For tough multiple-choice questions, the hosts recommend that students eliminate answers they know are incorrect and choose between the remaining ones to improve their chances of a right answer.

The next topic presented is the essay test. The hosts tells viewers to make themselves a schedule when they first read the questions, deciding how long to spend on each question and on each paragraph of the essay. They should keep an eye on the clock to prevent spending too much time on any one section, and remember to leave about five minutes to proofread and edit their work. Another tip is to read the essay question carefully and to determine exactly what the teacher is asking—students should make sure they know the difference between a question asking them to describe something and a question asking them to analyze.

The basic essay format is then discussed. The hosts explain that almost every essay begins with an introduction that presents the subject and outlines the paper’s argument. The introduction also contains the thesis, a sentence that specifically presents the argument and alerts readers to the topic of each body paragraph. An essay can have any number of body

paragraphs, but each should begin with a topic sentence that corresponds to a part of the thesis. The last paragraph of an essay is called the conclusion, which restates the thesis and wraps up the subject.

Next, the video turns to research skills for papers and projects. Students are advised to use the library rather than relying only on the Internet for sources because a library is organized, full of legitimate information, and librarians can help guide. The hosts explain how to use an electronic index to find sources, including tips on searching for related words and topics. After finding sources, students should photocopy or take notes only on the information that will directly help them write a paper or project.

The hosts address the topic of plagiarism next. They explain the importance of citing sources and tell viewers that copying another person's words or ideas is a crime with serious consequences.

The video then discusses using the Internet for research. The hosts show students how to use search engines to locate information, then warn them not to trust everything they read online. They offer tips on finding reputable sources and recommend that students check the information against another source. Viewers are reminded to cite information they find on the Internet as they would information found in a library.

Next, the hosts suggest that viewers make an outline before they begin writing a paper or project to help organize their thoughts. They explain that an outline is like the skeleton of a paper, then go over the basic outline format and show how to fill it in with information.

In conclusion, the hosts review all the lessons of the video. They remind students that the study skills they've just learned can lead to better grades, less stress, and more confidence in school. By mastering these skills, students will improve their education—and enjoy it.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Name: _____

Pre/Post Test

Decide whether the following statements are true or false.

1. TRUE or FALSE: Choosing a seat near the front of the room is a good way to prevent distractions in class. _____
2. TRUE or FALSE: Using a separate notebook for each class helps students keep their notes organized. _____
3. TRUE or FALSE: It is important to write down every single word the teacher says during class. _____
4. TRUE or FALSE: To help with reading comprehension, it is a good idea to read the summary at the end of a chapter before reading the chapter itself. _____
5. TRUE or FALSE: Prioritizing means finishing the most important assignments before working on the less pressing ones. _____
6. TRUE or FALSE: To study most effectively, students should have a large desk, a comfortable chair and other helpful items like a phone, a stereo and refrigerator to help remain relaxed and focused. _____
7. TRUE or FALSE: Writing your own test questions after reading a homework assignment can help you remember the material more easily. _____
8. TRUE or FALSE: When taking an essay test, it is important to keep an eye on the clock to prevent spending too much time on any one section. _____
9. TRUE or FALSE: When writing a research paper, it is best to rely only on the Internet for information rather than wasting time in the library. _____
10. TRUE or FALSE: Plagiarism—which means copying another person’s words or ideas without giving the person credit—is a crime. _____

Answers to this test appear on the next page.

Answer Key

1. TRUE or FALSE: Choosing a seat near the front of the room is a good way to prevent distractions in class. (*TRUE*)
2. TRUE or FALSE: Using a separate notebook for each class helps students keep their notes organized. (*TRUE*)
3. TRUE or FALSE: It is important to write down every single word the teacher says during class.
FALSE. It is not necessary to write down every word the teacher says, but rather to write down the main points. Once the most important facts have been written down, students should summarize the details in their own words.
4. TRUE or FALSE: To help with reading comprehension, it is a good idea to read the summary at the end of a chapter before reading the chapter itself. (*TRUE*)
5. TRUE or FALSE: Prioritizing means finishing the most important assignments before working on the less pressing ones. (*TRUE*)
6. TRUE or FALSE: To study most effectively, a student should have a large desk, a comfortable chair and other helpful items like a phone, a stereo and refrigerator to help remain relaxed and focused.
FALSE. Students should have a large desk, a comfortable chair, and other helpful items like a good light, a clock, and pencils, pens and a calculator to help them study. However, a good study space should not include a phone, a stereo or a refrigerator.
7. TRUE or FALSE: Writing your own test questions after reading a homework assignment can help you remember the material more easily. (*TRUE*)
8. TRUE or FALSE: When taking an essay test, it is important to keep an eye on the clock to prevent spending too much time on any one section. (*TRUE*)
9. TRUE or FALSE: When writing a research paper, it is best to rely only on the Internet for information rather than wasting time in the library.
FALSE. Students are advised to use the library rather than relying only on the Internet for sources because a library is organized and full of legitimate information, and librarians can help guide students to relevant sources.
10. TRUE or FALSE: Plagiarism—which means copying another person’s words or ideas without giving the person credit—is a crime.
TRUE. Citing sources is extremely important. Copying another person’s words or ideas is a crime called plagiarism and it has serious consequences.

Name: _____

Everyone has certain strengths and weaknesses when it comes to schoolwork. Maybe you're great at taking notes, but you need a little help remembering what you read, or vice versa. Just because you have trouble with a particular skill now doesn't mean you always will—it just means you'll have to work a little harder on that skill until you improve. The first step towards mastering study skills is to understand what your strong and weak points are, so you know what to focus on in school.

Rate yourself on the skills below, using a scale of 1 to 5. A score of 1 means you need a lot of improvement in that area and a score of 5 means you are very good in that area. Be honest—this will help you identify ways to become an even better student.

HOW WELL CAN YOU...

- Pay attention in class? _____
- Identify the most important facts in a lecture? _____
- Keep your notes organized? _____
- Ask questions in class when you don't understand something? _____
- Summarize a long lecture? _____
- Keep track of all your assignments? _____
- Schedule your time/balance all your activities with school? _____
- Tell the difference between a high-priority assignment and a low-priority one? _____
- Concentrate for long periods of time while doing homework or studying? _____
- Finish assignments on time? _____
- Remember what you read in textbooks? _____
- Break large tasks into smaller, more manageable parts? _____
- Start assignments early rather than waiting until the last minute? _____
- Memorize sequences and lists? _____
- Prepare a study guide? _____
- Organize and write an essay? _____
- Take tests? _____
- Find what you need in the library quickly? _____
- Find reputable information on the Internet? _____
- Organize and write an outline? _____

Now, look over your answers. Which skills are your best? What do you need to work on the most? On the back of this page, describe which areas need improvement.

TEACHER'S PAGE:

This activity is designed to help your students learn how to listen effectively and take notes. Distribute activity sheets 2b and 2c to your class. Then read the following paragraph aloud to students at a normal pace, but do not repeat any of the information, even if students request it. After listening and taking notes, your students should write down what they believe to be the five most important things to know from this selection. When they finish, put them into groups of three or four and have them collectively decide on the five most important facts. You should also decide which five facts are most important for your students. You may use the guide below, or adapt it to fit your own style.

Have you ever wondered about life on other planets? What would such life be like? Would aliens look like the little green men you see on TV or in the movies, or would it be very different? Scientists have been considering this very question for years. Some believe that extraterrestrial life could exist—but not in the form of intelligent, angry invaders from outer space. They think that if aliens exist, they are most likely bacteria! Even further, some scientists have proposed that bacteria could travel from planet to planet on meteors or comets. At first, it may seem crazy; how could cells survive in the harsh environment of space? It's not as far-fetched as it sounds. First of all, cells in space would have to be able to survive intense cold. This is a major point. In fact, it has been found that bacteria can survive such cold, even on the moon. In 1967, the Surveyor 3 lunar lander touched down on the moon and left cameras there for two-and-a-half years. When NASA brought the cameras back, they discovered that bacteria from Earth had gone with the Surveyor 3 and lived on it while it was on the moon! These cells survived without water and were not killed by many cycles of freezing and thawing. Extraterrestrial life must face extreme cold, but that is not the only obstacle. It must also survive the cosmic rays and ultraviolet radiation in space that can destroy DNA, the building blocks of life. However, it's important to know that bacteria have been found living in the radioactive water in nuclear power plants. These cells have developed a protective shell made of sugar, protein, and a dark pigment that functions like sunscreen. This shell could help bacteria live in the face of cosmic rays and ultraviolet radiation. Given these findings, scientists admit that it may be possible for bacteria to survive on meteors and comets—and perhaps even galactic dust clouds. This is a key point: scientists Fred Hoyle and Chandra Wickramasinghe studied these dust clouds in space during the late 1970s and discovered they consist mostly of water, carbon, and some other mysterious substance. Upon further investigation, they proposed that bacteria could be that substance. There is no satisfactory answer to the question of extraterrestrial life—yet. Only time will tell.

Source: The Real Science Behind the X-Files™ by Anne Simon, Ph.D.

Five Most Important Things for My Students to Know:

1. Cells in space must survive extreme temperatures, such as intense cold.
2. Bacteria have been known to survive on the moon (without water and through freezing cycles).
3. Cells in space must also survive cosmic rays and ultraviolet radiation.
4. Bacteria have been known to live in radioactive water in nuclear power plants.
5. Galactic dust clouds may be made of water, carbon, and possibly, bacteria.

Name: _____

PART TWO:

Look over your notes. How did you do? Did you write down too many extra details? Did you miss any important main points? Pick out the five things you think are most important to know from the reading and write them here:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Now, form a group with two or three other classmates and compare your notes. Did you all pick the same five things? Discuss why you chose the facts you did and come up with a group list of what you all consider to be the five key things to remember.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Share your findings with the rest of the class. How closely does your group's list match the lists of your classmates? How closely does it match your teacher's list?

Name: _____

Annie is a busy teenager—not only must she find time for school and homework, but she is also involved in many activities. Her usual school day starts at 8:00 in the morning, and she often doesn't get back home until 4:30 or later. Sometimes she has so much to do she can't keep track of it all, but you can help her make up a schedule to manage her time. Look over her commitments for next week, write them down in her calendar, and use it to answer her questions below. This is what Annie needs to accomplish in the next week:

Schoolwork:

- Spanish report due Tuesday*
- English test Thursday*
- Study group meeting Friday, 6-7 pm*

Activities:

- Family dinner Sunday 6-7:30 pm*
- Basketball practice Monday through Friday, 3-5 pm*
- Violin lesson Wednesday, 7-8 pm*
- Work Saturday 12-5 pm*
- Steve's birthday party Saturday 8-12 pm*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

Annie's questions:

I have some time to study on Sunday before dinner. I have to prepare my Spanish report and study for my English test on top of my usual homework: a science worksheet and a history chapter due Monday. Which one should I work on first? How long should I spend on each assignment, and why? I don't want to spend my whole day studying!

My friend Tiana wants to meet me for dinner one night this week. Do I have time? When?

I'm really nervous about my English test. When should I start studying for it? For how long each time?

Name: _____

ACTIVITY 5
YOUR WEEK

Reading about and scheduling Annie’s life may have sounded familiar—maybe you have a similar number of activities and school assignments to fit into your week. Making a schedule can be a huge help as you try to take care of all your commitments. First, list all your schoolwork assignments and activities for the week. Be specific and include days and times. Next, write them all down on the weekly calendar below. Finally, answer the questions.

My schoolwork:

My activities:

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

What are your first priorities this week? Which things can wait a bit longer?

How much time can you spend next Monday on studying? Tuesday? Each day of the week?

On which day will you need to study for the longest time? At what time?

When will you relax and do something fun this week?

Name: _____

We all have hopes for the future, but sometimes we spend too much time dreaming about them and too little time making them come true. The best way to make a wish come true is to set a goal and make up a realistic plan to achieve it. Big goals can seem impossible to achieve at first, but if you break it up into smaller goals, you'll realize that you can do it.

Use this worksheet to make up a plan for achieving an important goal in your life. It can be anything: to make the volleyball team, to get straight A's this semester, to win a role in a play at school, to get into your dream college. Work through the following questions to draw up a realistic road map towards your goal.

My goal is: _____

Example: to learn to speak Italian fluently

Think of at least three smaller goals within your big goal. Achieving each of these smaller goals should take you one step closer to the ultimate goal.

Example: to learn the Italian alphabet, to get an A in Italian class, to be able to carry on a basic conversation in Italian

Now, think of what you can do to help you achieve each of your smaller goals. These are the "steps" on your road map towards your big goal. Use another sheet of paper if necessary.

Steps toward mini-goal one: _____

Example: find an Italian textbook to study, enroll in an Italian class

Steps toward mini-goal two: _____

Example: study Italian every night, organize study groups for tests

Steps toward mini-goal three: _____

Example: practice speaking Italian with classmates, watch Italian movies, or take a trip to Italy

Name: _____

YOUR OWN TEST QUESTIONS

A great way to study for a test is to make up your own test questions from your textbook readings or classroom notes. Practice writing your own test questions here. Read the following excerpts and write four questions that might appear on a test. Include one of each type of question—multiple choice, true or false, short answer, and essay—for each reading.

Although the chances of being killed by a shark are very slim, beach visitors on every coast still fear shark attacks. Shark behavior is very unpredictable, but there are two main similarities among shark attacks on humans. Blood in the water attracts sharks, even in small amounts or when it is very diluted. Vomit seems to have a similar effect. Behaving like a hurt or inexperienced swimmer by moving in an irregular, frantic way also attracts sharks because it may suggest wounded prey nearby. Other features may contribute to shark attacks. Some believe that shiny objects like jewelry or light-colored clothing are attractive to sharks. Shark attacks fit a rough pattern: most are unprovoked, most occur during the summer months when many swimmers are in the water, most happen during the day, and most occur within 300 feet of the shore.

Source: Shadows in the Sea by Thomas Allen

Multiple-choice question:

True/False question:

Short answer question:

Essay question:

Stories of "Bigfoot," a huge, hairy creature that is not quite man, not quite ape, have been told for decades in the woods of North America. The Salish Indians of British Columbia had a name for this creature: "Sasquatch," which means "wild man of the woods." No proof of its existence has ever been found, but many report sightings of Bigfoot or his huge footprints. The first recorded report of a footprint was in 1811. Explorer David Thompson found a footprint in Canada that measured 14 by eight inches, with four toes and claw marks. In the years that followed, several hikers reported being surprised by a huge creature as they camped out that carried them away in their sleeping bags. The hardest evidence of Bigfoot's existence is a famous videotape made in 1967 by two men hiking in northern California. The film shows a hairy creature, about seven feet tall and with a cone-shaped head, walking in the woods. Most scientists called this film a hoax, probably a man in an ape suit; however, some believed it was real. Casts of the footprints found in the mud at the site showed that whatever made the prints was about seven feet tall.

Source: The Mammoth Encyclopedia of the Unsolved by Colin Wilson and Damon Wilson

Multiple-choice question:

True/False question:

Short answer question:

Essay question:

Name: _____

A mnemonic (“knee-mon-ick”) device is a memory aid—a trick to help you remember facts and sequences. You may be asked to memorize things for a test or quiz. Using a mnemonic device makes such a daunting task much easier. One such memory trick, called “sequence sentences,” can help.

Some teachers may ask you to memorize lists in which the order of words is important. One such sequence you may already know from biology class is the classification system for life, from most general to most specific: Kingdom, Phylum, Class, Orders, Genus, Species. A great way to remember the order is to think of a new sentence in which the first letter of each word corresponds to the first letter of each item. For this example, a popular mnemonic sentence is “Kings Play Chess On Fine Glass Stands.”

Practice making up your own sequence sentences for the sequences below. The sentence doesn’t have to make sense—the crazier or funnier it is, the better you will remember it.

Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, Ford, Carter, Reagan, Bush, Clinton, Bush

Dracula, Frankenstein, Mummy, Blob, Wolfman, Swamp Thing, Witch

Massachusetts, Vermont, Georgia, Pennsylvania, Alabama, Illinois, Washington

Cucumber, Onion, Carrot, Spinach, Broccoli, Lettuce, Pumpkin, Radish

Infant, Toddler, Preschooler, Child, Pre-teen, Adolescent, Young Adult, Adult, Senior

Name: _____

Another useful mnemonic device is called “chunking.” Chunking means breaking a large task into several smaller tasks—this trick can come in handy if you need to memorize a long list of items. Try this exercise to see how effective chunking can be. Find a partner and decide which of you will try to memorize the list below in its entirety and which one will try to memorize it by breaking it into three separate lists of five items each. Only use the method you’ve been assigned—no cheating!

Look at the list below for three minutes. Then, turn this sheet over and write as many words as you can remember on a separate sheet of paper. The order of the words doesn’t matter—just write down all you can think of. Which one of you remembered the most words?

PIGLET
ASPARAGUS
CRANBERRY
PENCIL
BIKINI
BOTTLE
GERMANY
COUCH
INFANT
COOKIE
TRUCK
FRIEND
AMAZON
SPAGHETTI
FRIDAY

Name: _____

An essay consists of a few basic parts: an introduction with a thesis, body paragraphs that begin with topic sentences, and a conclusion. The introduction presents the subject of the essay. The thesis is a sentence that outlines your argument. The topic sentences alert your reader to the subject of the paragraph. The body paragraphs provide details to support your argument. The conclusion restates your thesis and wraps up the essay.

Practice organizing an essay by filling in an essay skeleton. Follow the directions below on a separate sheet of paper.

1. Choose one of the topics below and think of an argument. For example, if the topic were drunk driving, your argument could be that drunk drivers should face harsher legal penalties.

Topic choices:

Rap music	The movie rating system
A favorite sports team	The drug Ecstasy
First dates	Teenage marriage
School uniforms	After-school jobs
Plastic surgery	The prom

2. Write the entire introduction to your essay, including the thesis. The main points of your thesis should correspond to the subject of each of your body paragraphs. For example, a thesis for the drunk driving argument could be: drunk drivers should face harsher legal penalties because they cause many traffic deaths, they cost the government money in damages, and harsh penalties will cut down on the number of drunk drivers.
3. Write the topic sentence of each of your body paragraphs, then jot down your supporting details with bullet points. These details do not have to be complete sentences; they are the points you would use to prove your argument if you were writing a full essay. Example for the topic sentence of the first body paragraph: drunk drivers pose a serious threat to motorist safety by causing accidents and traffic deaths.
4. Write the entire conclusion of your essay. The conclusion should remind readers of your thesis and argument, present any questions you would like the audience to think about, and wrap up the paper.

Name: _____

For this activity, imagine that you need to write a paper or present a project about jungle survival. You have taken the notes below, but now you need to organize them before you can begin writing. Read through these notes, then fit them into the outline on the next page. This outline could guide you if you were to take the next step. Include all the notes.

1. Jungle travelers should wash their clothing daily to prevent rot from the jungle's near-constant moisture.
2. Don't pull leeches off your body—their mouths could stay attached to you, causing infection. Instead, poke them with a flaming stick until they release their grip, and then peel them off your skin.
3. It's very important to carry lots of water (in water bottles) in the jungle to prevent heat exhaustion.
4. Primary jungle consists of huge trees that create a dense canopy. Most animals in primary jungle live in the canopy.
5. Jungle travelers should have a large knife or machete to use for hacking through the thick plant growth.
6. The main danger of jungle travel is heat exhaustion from the humidity and hard labor required to pass through.
7. Always shake out your clothing and boots before putting them on to get rid of poisonous animals or insects that may be hiding inside.
8. Jungle travelers should wear a long-sleeved shirt and long pants, cuffed at the wrist and ankle to keep bugs out.
9. Secondary jungle is the result of human burning for farmland—after the land is cleared, sunshine reaches the ground and causes lots of plant growth. The vegetation there is very thick and difficult to pass through.
10. Wear a hat with a mosquito net at dusk when they are most active.
11. Keep all-important items, like a compass, on a cord around your neck.
12. Roll down the sleeves of your shirt when cutting through the jungle to prevent cuts.
13. Guard against infections from cuts caused by sharp plants by carrying a first aid kit with disinfectant.
14. Clothing should be light and strong, so it can withstand the constant wetness.
15. Wear lots of insect repellent to avoid biting insects, especially mosquitoes, which can spread malaria.

Source: The Complete Wilderness Training Book by Hugh McManners

This activity is continued on the next page.

Name: _____

Write down the number of the note you are referencing in the blank space provided. You may decide to use a single note more than once.

JUNGLE SURVIVAL

- I) Introduction
- II) Types of Jungle
 - A) _____
 - B) _____
- III) Necessary Gear
 - A) Clothing
 - 1) Items of clothing
 - (a) _____
 - (b) _____
 - (c) _____
 - 2) Maintaining clothing
 - (a) _____
 - B) Accessories
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____
- IV) Jungle Dangers
 - A) _____
 - B) Infections
 - 1) Prevention & treatment
 - (a) _____
 - (b) _____
 - C) Animals & Insects
 - 1) Preventing bites
 - (a) _____
 - (b) _____
 - 2) Leeches
 - (a) _____

This activity is continued on the next page.

ANSWER KEY:

JUNGLE SURVIVAL

- V) Introduction
- VI) Types of Jungle
A) (4)
B) (9)
- VII) Necessary Gear
A) Clothing
1) Items of clothing
(a) (14)
(b) (8)
(c) (10)
2) Maintaining clothing
(a) (1)
B) Accessories
1) (3)
2) (11)
3) (13)
4) (5)
- VIII) Jungle Dangers
A) (6)
B) Infections
1) Prevention & treatment
(a) (12)
(b) (13)
C) Animals & Insects
1) Preventing bites
(a) (7)
(b) (15)
2) Leeches
(a) (2)

Name: _____

The key to writing a good research paper is knowing how to find the most useful sources of information quickly. Searching for sources on an electronic index at the library or on the Internet can be tricky—sometimes you will find too many options and need to narrow your search, and other times you may find too few and need to expand your search. Use this worksheet to practice refining your research skills.

1. HOW TO NARROW A SEARCH

PART ONE:

Imagine that you need to write a report on American rock music of the 1960s.

Using a library index, search for the topic “music.” How many sources did you find? _____

Now try searching for “American music” or “Music, America.” How many sources did you find? _____

Narrow your search even further now and search for “American rock music” or “Rock music, America.” How many sources did you find? _____

Be even more specific and try “1960s American rock music” or “American rock music, 1960s.” How many sources did you find? _____

PART TWO:

Now imagine that your topic is lung cancer prevention. What words or phrases could you use to search for this topic?

Experiment with different ways to search. Which phrase found you the most useful sources?

This activity is continued on the next page.

Name: _____

2. HOW TO EXPAND A SEARCH

PART THREE:

Imagine that you need to write a report on UFO sightings in America.

Try searching for “UFO sightings America.” How many sources did you find? _____

Expand your search. Try “UFO sightings.” How many sources did you find? _____

Broaden the topic even more and search for “UFOs.” How many sources did you find? _____

Now, try searching for related words. Search for “aliens,” “extraterrestrials” and “life in outer space.” Which one found you the most sources? _____

PART FOUR:

Now imagine that your topic is women in politics. What related words or phrases could you use to search for this topic?

Which word or phrase did you find the most useful?

Name: _____

The library holds a wealth of information—you just need to know where to look. See how sharp your researching skills are by going on a scavenger hunt for facts in your school library. Form a group with two other classmates and compete with the rest of your class to see which group can answer the most questions.

SCAVENGER HUNT RULES:

- 1.** Your teacher will set a time limit for the scavenger hunt. Stop searching immediately when time is called.
- 2.** You must provide a source for all your answers. If it is a book, write down the title, author, and page number. If it is a website, write down the exact URL.
- 3.** You can only use the Internet to answer 10 of the 50 questions. You must find the rest of the answers in books, magazines, or other non-computer library sources.

On the next three pages, answer as many questions with your group as you can. Use more paper if necessary.

Good luck!

This activity is continued on the next page.

Name: _____

1. Who played Deep Throat in the film *All the President's Men*?

2. In what year did Enrico Fermi win the Nobel Prize for physics?

3. Which American politician was known as “the Kingfish”?

4. What are the names of the two grumpy old men who heckled the muppets on *The Muppet Show*?

5. What is the third letter of the Greek alphabet?

6. How many teeth does a dog have?

7. Maat is the Egyptian goddess of what?

8. On what date is the Mexican holiday The Day of the Dead celebrated?

9. How many floors does the Empire State building have?

10. What flower was the emblem of the House of York during the Wars of the Roses?

11. Who was the first First Lady to have graduated from college?

12. How many comets did Jean-Louis Pons (1761-1831) discover?

13. How many feet tall is Chicago’s Sears Tower?

14. How many chromosomes does a hamster have?

15. What kind of hat was outlawed in Turkey in 1923?

16. In what year did Octavio Paz win the Nobel Prize for literature?

17. How many yards are in a furlong?

This activity is continued on the next page.

Name: _____

18. How was the goddess Athena born, according to Greek legend?

19. Who was the 31st president of the United States?

20. Which 1896 Supreme Court decision established the “separate but equal” doctrine?

21. What two colors are found on Finland’s flag?

22. Which planet has the most moons?

23. What is the mascot of the University of Wisconsin-Madison?

24. Who won the Olympic gold medal for women’s singles figure skating in 1976?

25. What is the first line of Allen Ginsberg’s poem, *Howl*?

26. In what year was the first female governor elected?

27. What is the Spanish word for “arm”?

28. What does the acronym SETI stand for?

29. What is the common name for the disease cholelithiasis?

30. What Civil War battle took place August 29-30, 1862?

31. What was the name of the plane Charles Lindbergh used to make the first solo transatlantic flight?

32. Who wrote the song *All Along the Watchtower*?

33. How old was hockey player Gordie Howe when he finally retired?

34. In what year was the movie rating PG-13 instated?

This activity is continued on the next page.

Name: _____

35. For what is Helen Wills Moody famous?

36. Who said, “And like the old soldier in the ballad, I now close my military career and just fade away...”?

37. Who kidnapped Patty Hearst?

38. How old was suffragette leader Elizabeth Cady Stanton when she died?

39. What is the genus of the daffodil?

40. What is the full name of Harry Potter’s best friend in J.K Rowling’s *Harry Potter* series?

41. What does a Beaufort scale measure?

42. On what island was the now-extinct Dodo bird once found?

43. Where is St. Francis National Park located?

44. What country does Vaesterbottenost cheese come from?

45. How many wings does a honeybee have?

46. In what country would you spend drachmas and leptas?

47. Who lived in Machu Picchu?

48. In Germanic religion, who were the maidens sent by Odin to bring warriors to Valhalla?

49. For what event was the Eiffel Tower built?

50. Zenobia was the queen of what Roman colony?

The Answer Key for this activity appears on the next page.

Name: _____

ANSWER KEY:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Hal Holbrook | 26. 1925 |
| 2. 1938 | 27. brazo |
| 3. Huey Long | 28. Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence |
| 4. Waldorf and Statler | 29. Gallstones |
| 5. Gamma | 30. Second battle of Bull Run/Second Manassas |
| 6. 42 | 31. Spirit of St. Louis |
| 7. Truth | 32. Bob Dylan |
| 8. November 1 | 33. 52 |
| 9. 102 | 34. 1984 |
| 10. White rose | 35. Playing tennis |
| 11. Lucy Hayes | 36. General Douglas MacArthur |
| 12. 37 | 37. Symbionese Liberation Army (SLA) |
| 13. 1450 feet | 38. 86 |
| 14. 22 | 39. Narcissus |
| 15. Fez | 40. Ronald Weasley |
| 16. 1990 | 41. Wind strength |
| 17. 220 | 42. Mauritius |
| 18. She was born from Zeus's head | 43. Arkansas |
| 19. Herbert Hoover | 44. Sweden |
| 20. Plessy v. Ferguson | 45. 4 |
| 21. Blue and white | 46. Greece |
| 22. Saturn | 47. Incas |
| 23. Badger | 48. Valkyrie |
| 24. Dorothy Hamill | 49. The Centennial Exposition of 1889 |
| 25. "I saw the best minds of my generation destroyed by madness, starving hysterical naked" | 50. Palmyra |

Name: _____

The Five R's are guidelines for note-taking developed by Professor Walter Pauk of Cornell University. Following these simple steps will help you take effective notes, remember classroom material, and retain new information for tests or quizzes. Before the Five R's can help you, though, you have to remember them!

The Five R's

1. **Recording:** writing down the information in a class lecture
2. **Reducing:** going back over your class notes, picking out the main points of the lecture, and summarizing the details. These reduced notes can be used later for a study guide.
3. **Reciting:** speaking the new information aloud to yourself in your own words. This works best when you recite soon after you take the notes.
4. **Reflecting:** thinking about the new information and connecting it to any prior knowledge you may have on the subject.
5. **Reviewing:** looking back over your class notes to prepare for a test.

Memorize the Five R's by creating a fun project. Alone or in groups of two or three, brainstorm a way to teach the Five R's to someone else in a creative way. Some ideas:

compose a song

draw a cartoon

write a poem

design a poster

perform a skit

When you or your group has finished, share your project with your classmates. Quiz yourself—do you remember all five R's?

Sources: www.csbsju.edu/academicadvising/help
www.byu.edu/stlife/cdc/Learning_Strategies/study_skills/note-tak.htm
www.geocities.com/richlearning/Cornell

FACT SHEETS

Name: _____

Check out these Web sites for even more information on developing good study skills and doing well in school.

Virginia Tech Division of Student Affairs Web site
www.ucc.vt.edu/stdysk/stdyhlp.html

Study Skills Topic Pages
www.how-to-study.com

College of St. Benedict/St. John's University Office of Academic Advising
www.csbsju.edu/academicadvising

Chemeketa Community College Study Skills Web site
www.howtostudy.org

University of Texas at Austin Reading/Writing/Study Skills Center
www.utexas.edu/student/utlc/rwsstc/resources/index.html

Santa Barbara City College Learning Support Services
<http://lss.sbcc.net/orientation/skills>

The Study Skills Help Page
www.mtsu.edu/~studskl

University of St. Thomas Study Guides and Strategies
www.iss.stthomas.edu/studyguides/

California Polytechnic State University Academic Skills Center
www.sas.calpoly.edu/asc/ssl.html

Homework Helper Study Skills
www.infoplease.com/homework/studyskills1.html

Name: _____

- Prepare yourself for taking notes before you even arrive in class. Think about what you are about to learn: go over your notes from the previous class and review your homework. You'll remember the information you have already learned and prepare yourself to organize any new information you receive in class.
- Sit near the front of the room so you can see the board and hear the teacher easily.
- Avoid sitting near friends if they will distract you from the lecture.
- Listen for key phrases like, "It's important that you know this," "This will be on the test" or "This is a key point." Make sure you take note of any information introduced with a phrase like this.
- Use a separate notebook to take notes for each class. This way you won't become disorganized or lose important notes.
- Use notebooks with big margins. This will give you room to add more information to your notes later on in class or to add reminders while you study.
- Use your own system of abbreviations instead of writing out every word in your notes. Try using "b/c" for "because," "w/o" for "without," and "+" for "and." Make up your own personal abbreviations for each class as well.
- Don't write down every word the teacher says. Instead, just pick out the most important points and write those. Then listen to the teacher's elaborations and explanations and write down a summary of these details.
- Always ask questions as soon as you can. You'll understand the rest of the lecture much better if you clear up any confusing points as they come up.

HOMEWORK & STUDYING SKILLS

- Keep track of all your assignments in an assignment book. Make separate sections for each day of the week and write down your homework as soon as your teacher assigns it. Be specific when you record your work: write down page numbers, chapter headings, and authors so you don't have to waste time later figuring out exactly what is expected.
- Make yourself a schedule. On a calendar, first write down all your long-term engagements, like sports practice or a job. Next, plan out your weekly schedule by recording any special events or big assignments due that week. On very busy days, you can even make a daily schedule by writing down all you need to accomplish that day and how much time to spend on each thing.
- Decide which of your assignments has the highest priority, then complete that one before you work on lower-priority items.
- Choose a study space that you don't use for sleeping, eating, or any other activity. Your space should have a desk or table, a comfortable chair, a clock, good lighting, pencils, and any other supplies you may need. Avoid distracting views, the TV, or the refrigerator while you are studying.
- Study at the same time every day and develop the habit of a weekly review of your classes.
- Make a realistic goal list of what you want to accomplish in every study session.
- Skim over textbook chapters before you read them to familiarize yourself with the material. Read captions, graphs, and charts. Read the summary before you read the chapter, but don't skip reading the chapter.
- Recite new material to yourself in your own words as you finish each section of reading. This will help you to understand and remember the material.
- Write your own test questions from the reading.
- Stay motivated: break large tasks into smaller tasks, give yourself rewards and study breaks, and avoid procrastination.

OBJECTIVE TESTS

- Use mnemonic devices to remember a list of facts, like **sequence sentences**—sentences in which the first letter of each word matches the first letter of each item in the sequence. **Chunking** is another such device: break a long list into several smaller lists memorize them separately.
- Write your own study guide by reviewing your class notes and reading assignments and writing down the main topics. Then, you can quiz yourself by filling in as many details as you can for each topic.
- If you wrote test questions while reading, go back over them and see how many you can answer.
- Form study groups with your classmates to help each other and encourage each other to prepare for tests.
- Remember that true/false test questions that use the words “always,” “never,” “all,” or “none” are usually false.
- Eliminate all the answers you know are incorrect on a multiple-choice question before you decide between the remaining answers.

ESSAY TESTS

- Make up a schedule when you receive your test: decide how long you can spend on each question, and within each question, how long you can spend on each section. Leave time to proofread your work.
- Read essay questions carefully and ask your teacher if you don't understand right away.
- The basic essay consists of an introduction with a thesis, body paragraphs that begin with topic sentences, and a conclusion.

Name: _____

- Don't overlook the library when you begin research. Although the Internet can give you access to lots of information, a library is well-organized, full of reputable sources, and has librarians to guide you.
- Ask a librarian to show you how to use the library's index. Each library is likely to have its own system of cataloging its resources, so don't assume that an index in a new library will work the same way as the index in a library you're used to.
- You don't need to look through every source your first search pulls up. If you find too many sources, or the sources you find are too general, try another search using more specific key words. If you don't find enough sources on your first search, try another search using broader key words or search for words related to your topic.
- Don't read through every source you find. Instead, skim through them to determine if they will be useful. If a book deals with a general topic, look through it to see if your topic is addressed in a particular section.
- Always cite your sources by noting the title, author, and publishing information. Directly copying someone else's work or using someone else's ideas without giving credit is called plagiarism, and it is unacceptable.
- The Internet can also be a good source of information. Try using a search engine like Google™ or Yahoo™ as your first step.
- Be careful when you use Internet sources—anyone can post any information online, so double-check your facts and only use information you find on reputable Web sites. Official Web sites and government Web sites are usually good sources.
- Organize your information by writing an outline before you proceed with your paper or project. An outline uses Roman numerals, numbers, and letters to form the skeleton of a paper.

Name: _____

These are the five R's of Note-Taking, according to Professor Walter Pauk of Cornell University.

RECORDING

Writing down the information in a class lecture.

REDUCING

Going back over your class notes, picking out the main points of the lecture, and summarizing the details. These reduced notes can be used later for a study guide.

RECITING

Speaking the new information out loud to yourself in your own words. This works best when you recite soon after you take the notes.

REFLECTING

Thinking about the new information and connecting it to any prior knowledge you may have on the subject.

REVIEWING

Looking back over your class notes to prepare for a test.

Sources: www.csbsju.edu/academicadvising/help

www.byu.edu/stlife/cdc/Learning_Strategies/study_skills/note-tak.htm

www.geocities.com/richlearning/Cornell

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Think Quest

www.library.thinkquest.org

Yahooligans Reference

www.yahooligans.com/reference

Virginia Tech Division of Student Affairs Web site

www.ucc.vt.edu/stdysk/stdyhlp.html

Study Skills Topic Pages

www.how-to-study.com

College of St. Benedict/St. John's University Office of Academic Advising

www.csbsju.edu/academicadvising

Chemeketa Community College Study Skills Web site

www.howtostudy.org

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<i>The Road to Riches: Pros and Cons of Credit</i>	video/print

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