

# Learn

## How to Study



Presented by: Teachnology

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# CH 1: Things to Do to Prepare for Studying

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## *Where to Study:*

Most students find its best to study in the same place each day such as the bedroom, sitting at a table at the library or in the family kitchen, on a comfortable couch in the living room, or at a classroom desk in study hall.

When you pick out your special study place, consider other factors such as:

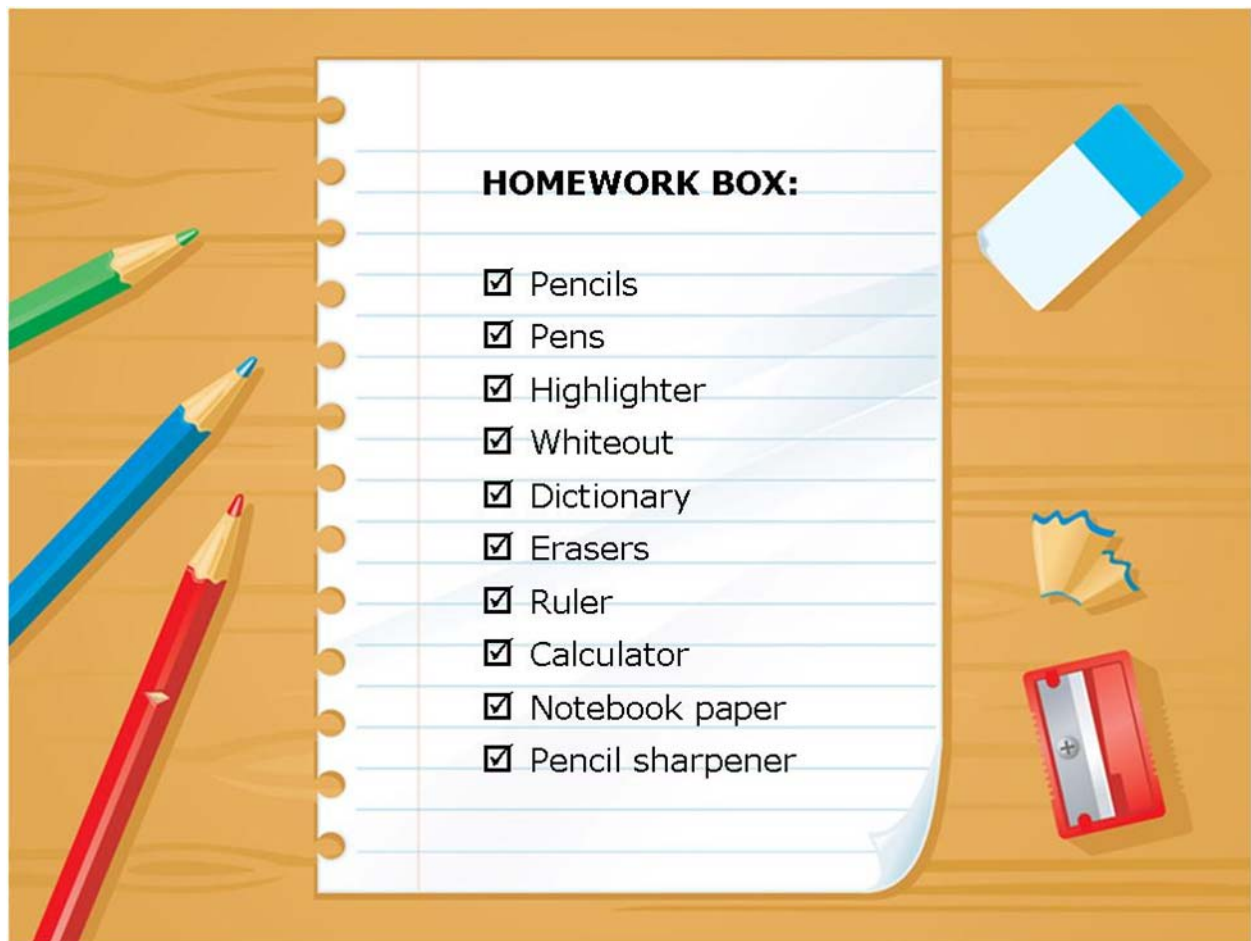
- ⇒ **Time of day** – choose a time of day when you are feeling the most alert and have the least amount of distractions. This may be first thing in the morning, right after school, or later at night when your siblings are in bed.
- ⇒ **Temperature** – too hot or too cold can interfere with studying, so get comfortable before your study session begins.
- ⇒ **Lighting** – you should have plenty of light to read without straining your eyes
- ⇒ **Atmosphere** – this needs to be a quiet area without a lot of commotion. The time of day (see above) may have a lot to do with this, so choose wisely.



Avoid distractions such as window views, loud music, and the television. Some people enjoy having soft music playing in the background which is okay if it doesn't cause you to get sidetracked. Clutter can also be distracting, so keep your desk or study area neat and orderly.

## *Homework Box:*

Use a Homework Box to keep all of your supplies in one place so they are ready when you are. This will prevent you from having to stop in the middle of studying to find something. Grabbing your homework box should become part of your daily routine when it's time to study. Things that you may need are:



## *When to Study:*

Research shows that daytime is the best time to study because this is when students have more energy and a higher level of concentration. Think about what time of day best suits your study schedule by taking into account other activities (social, sports, work, etc.) you need to work around.

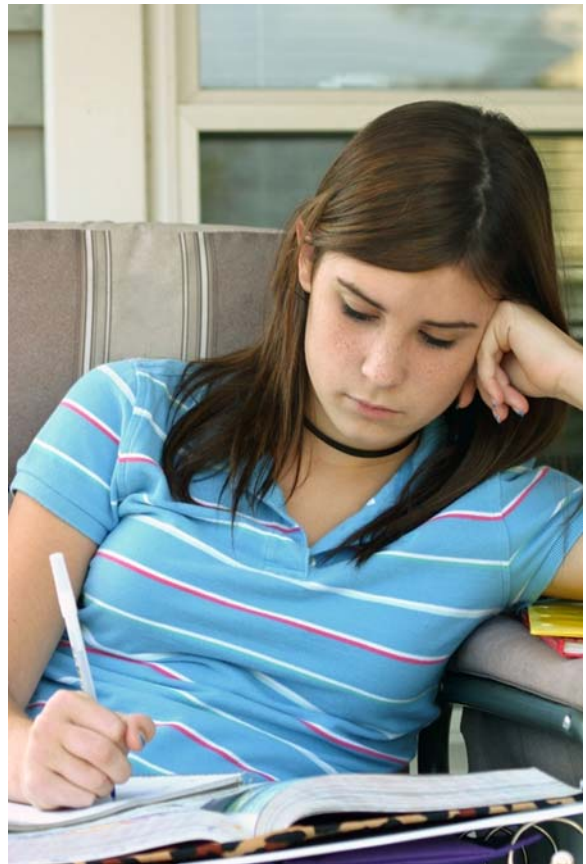
- ☑ Pick a time to study when you are the most alert.
- ☑ Establish a good routine by studying at the same time every day.
- ☑ Pace yourself by setting daily goals.
- ☑ Keep a list of ongoing assignments and when they are due. Include extra-curricular activities so that you will know how much time needs to be allotted each day for homework. This will help you to keep track of what exactly you need to study.

## *What to Study First:*

The best rule of thumb is to study for your difficult classes first.

Typically, students have more energy at the beginning of a study session than towards the end.

Break down larger tasks or projects into mini-goals to help stay focused. For example: read a book chapter, make some notes, and then tackle a set of math problems before coming back to read another chapter.



## *Studying With a Friend:*

Would studying with a friend help you get more work done? The answer depends on you and your friend(s). If this just turns into a gab session with everyone joking around, then there are no benefits to studying with someone else.

However, if you motivate one another this method can make doing homework or preparing for a big project a lot more fun because you can quiz each other and compare notes. And this leads to better grades!



Participating in a study group can also be helpful because you can encourage and support one another. You don't even have to study the same thing. Sometimes just being part of a group that has the same goals you do can motivate you to be more proactive with good study habits.



## *How to Study:*

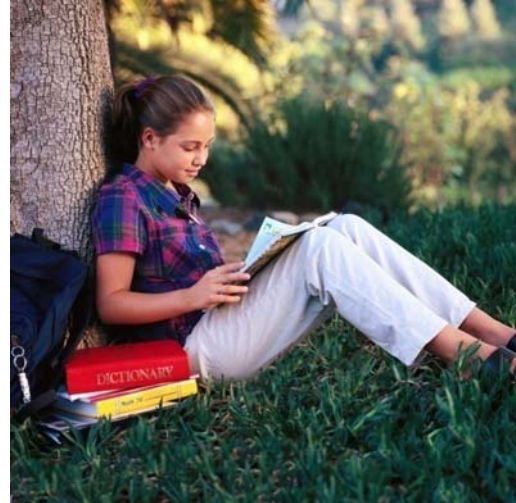
Although we will discuss studying procedures in more detail throughout this book, these are basic guidelines you should follow:

- ☑ Before settling down to study, gather and organize everything you need including the necessary books, tools, and materials.
- ☑ Scan the chapter or text to get a general idea of what the subject matter is.
- ☑ Then go back and read the material more carefully.
- ☑ Sort through the information by writing down headings and supporting facts.
- ☑ Carefully look at any visual aids such as illustrations, maps, charts, diagrams, and chapter summaries.
- ☑ Write down additional notes that will help you form ideas and recall this information later.
- ☑ After studying, test yourself on the material you have just read.
- ☑ Review your notes regularly to help you remember important details. One way to refresh your memory is to rewrite your notes and try to add new details.
- ☑ Take short breaks every 50-60 minutes. Take a few minutes to relax, have a snack, or do some exercises so that you can go back to studying feeling refreshed.
- ☑ Keep your assignment sheet/book up-to-date so that you can stay organized and on track.
- ☑ Reward yourself for studying well by doing something fun afterwards like watching a favorite television show, calling a friend, or taking a walk.



## *Additional Study Tips:*

- 👉 Eat plenty of healthy snacks and drink lots of water. Your body needs fuel to feel energized and alert.
- 👉 If you do homework in your bedroom do not lay on the bed as this can make easier to fall asleep.
- 👉 If you find yourself getting sleepy, get up and do some jumping jacks or stretches to work out the kinks.
- 👉 Loud music can sometimes make it harder to concentrate, so put on some instrumental tunes to play softly in the background.
- 👉 Don't wait until the last minute to study for a test or finish an assignment. Not only will you be unprepared, but this can really stress you out.
- 👉 Make flashcards out of your study notes by writing a question on one side of an index card and the answer on the back. Then ask a friend or family member to quiz you using the flashcards.
- 👉 Get plenty of sleep each night so that you will feel refreshed and energized the next day.



## CH 2: Understanding Your Learning Style

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Everyone is special and unique with different ways of doing things, including different learning styles. A specific style of learning indicates how your brain gathers and processes information.

Understanding what your own style is will help you to choose study methods that are best suited for you. This helps with optimal learning and easier recall so that you can excel in the classroom – even in subjects that you find more difficult.

Most experts agree that there are three basic learning styles: **Visual**; **Auditory**; and **Kinesthetic**. These are described in more detail below. Individuals can have one singular style or possess a combination of two or more styles. To help identify your learning style you will find a quiz at the end of this chapter.

Always remember that there is no right or wrong way to learn – just your way! And knowing your own individual style will give you a big advantage in the classroom.



## *Visual Learners*

“Seeing is believing” and visual learners typically learn by what they are able to see or visualize. Approximately 65 percent of the population are visual learners. People who learn better visually usually like to have front row seats, whether in the classroom or at a sporting event or movie theatre for the best view.

These individuals like to use visual aids such as maps, charts, and diagrams, along with highlighted notes and flashcards to help put the material in a better perspective. Being able to visualize these images or objects later makes it easier to recall the information when needed.

Often, visual learners describe things in vivid detail using words to paint a picture. That’s why many of them are good writers and perform well on written assignments. They can also process information better when instructions are written down rather than spoken out loud. This sometimes makes following lectures and classroom discussions more difficult, especially if they are unable to take notes.



## **Tips for the Visual Learner:**

If you are a visual learner, you can maximize your learning style by using these tips:

- Use charts, maps, posters, and videos whenever possible to study.
- Watch the person speaking and observe their body language and facial expressions.
- It's usually best to study alone in a quiet atmosphere.
- Use colored highlighters to mark important notes and main ideas.
- Write down information that you want to remember such as notes from the board or verbal instructions.
- Ask for verbal instructions to be repeated for better understanding.
- Rewrite key points or explanations that are difficult to recall.
- Whenever possible use your own visual images to relate to the topic being discussed.
- Look over new material by scanning the pictures and titles/headings before reading.

## ***Auditory Learners:***

Auditory learners are very good listeners who prefer hearing materials rather than reading it. Approximately 30 percent of the population is made up of auditory learners who find it easier to recall information after it has been verbalized.



Individuals who have strong auditory processing skills absorb information better through sounds, music, classroom discussions, audio books, and verbal instructions. They also generally prefer giving oral presentations and reports, rather than written ones.

Auditory learners are usually more talkative in class and enjoy participating in debates and discussions. While they may struggle with reading, they are often skilled in music and/or foreign languages.

### **Tips for the Auditory Learner:**

If you are an auditory learner, you can maximize your learning style by using these tips:

- Read study materials, notes, and other information out loud.
- Study with a friend or in a small group.
- Listen to audio books whenever possible.
- Participate in class discussions.
- Create rhymes to recall dates, names, facts, etc.
- Use word association techniques to memorize facts.
- Use grid or graph paper to work on math problems.
- Use colored highlighters to mark important notes and main ideas.

## *Kinesthetic or Tactile Learners:*

Kinesthetic or tactile learners absorb information through the sense of touch, physical activity, and experimental projects. These individuals prefer the hands-on approach to learning new things. Roughly five percent of the population are kinesthetic or tactile learners that study best in situations that require them to be active in some manner.

While kinesthetic learners may take notes in class or doodle on their papers, they often will not look at their notes again. They tend to be touchers or feelers and will often stand close to someone when they are talking or touch that person on the arm or shoulder. They are usually fidgety or like to have something in their hands, even if it's just a pencil or paperclip.

Individuals who learn best with a kinesthetic learning style are easily distracted or become bored in situations where they are required to sit for long periods of time. They enjoy discovering things, classroom participation, going on field trips, arts and crafts, and science projects. Tactile learners are often good at playing musical instruments, martial arts, dance, or sports.



## Tips for the Tactile Kinesthetic Learner

If you are a kinesthetic (tactile) learner, you can maximize your learning style by using these tips:

- Get comfortable when studying such as lounging in a chair or comfy couch. Kinesthetic learners are probably the only ones who can study effectively by laying across the bed.
- Listen to music while studying.
- Take frequent breaks!
- Record notes to listen to while walking or exercising.
- Listen to audio books while walking or exercising.
- Demonstrate key study points by acting them out or miming to reinforce them in your memory.
- Hold your book in your hands to read rather than placing it on a table.
- If possible, draw a picture or create a model to clarify the material being studied.
- Use flashcards and different types of board games to process and reinforce new information.
- Stand up when called on in class to answer a question.
- Use colored transparencies to read study materials.

## What Type of Learner Are You?

The following chart will help you discover your individual learning style. Answer the questions in the far left column and then see which of the responses best fit that situation. Although your answers may fall into more than one category, there will most likely be one column that overrides the others. That will indicate your primary learning style:

Question:	Visual	Auditory	Tactile
What do you do with hard-to-spell words?	Write the word down to see if it looks right.	Sound it out or try to spell it out loud.	Use finger spelling by air tracing it.
How do you prefer to look over study materials?	Read the text book or notes.	Have someone ask me questions that I can answer out loud.	Make up index cards that I can review.
How do you prefer to figure out how something works?	Read the instructions.	Let someone explain it to me.	Figure it out as I go.
After going to a school event what will you remember the next day?	The faces of the people who were there.	The music that was played or things talked about.	The food I ate and/or activities I did.
What is distracting for you when trying to study?	Movement such as people walking past.	Loud noises or music.	Not able to get comfortable.
When you are upset, what is your typical reaction?	Pout or put on a "mad" face.	Yell, cry, or scream.	Slam doors and throw things around.
When you are really happy and in a good mood, what do you do?	Smile a lot.	Talk a lot.	Act really hyper.
When going to a new mall or store how do you find your way around?	Look for a map or directory.	Ask someone for directions.	Walk around until I find what I need.
What do you like to do to relax?	Read a book.	Listen to music.	Go outside for a walk or to play.
What would you rather do with a group of friends?	Go to the movies.	Go to a concert.	Go to an amusement park.
What is the best way for you to remember someone's phone number?	Write it down.	Say it out loud over and over.	Picture the numbers on the keypad.

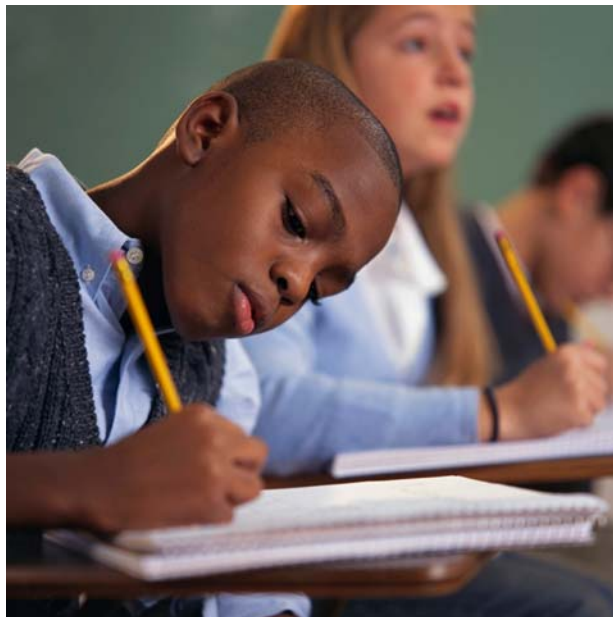
# CH 3: Strategies for Taking Good Notes

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Often, students don't realize how important it is to take good notes. Taking good notes is an acquired skill that can serve as an important tool for understanding key concepts and preparing for tests. What do we mean by "acquired skill?" It means you can learn the best way to take notes by using one or more of the strategies detailed in this chapter.



Taking notes helps the listener to stay focused, recognize main ideas, and understand the material being covered. The notes can later be used as a study aid – kind of like an external memory device (i.e., computer hard drive) that aids in recovery and review.



## *Cornell's 5Rs of Note Taking:*

Use the worksheet at the end of this chapter to use the Cornell system, or divide your notebook paper into 5 sections as shown on the worksheet.

**Record:** Date and number your pages; write clearly; in the main section of the paper jot down words and phrases to identify facts and main ideas; abbreviate when possible.

**Reduce:** Go over your notes as soon as you can and write down keywords and their definitions in the top part of the column on the left side of the paper. Highlight or underline important facts and dates in the main section.

**Recite:** Go back over your notes and rewrite them or repeat them out loud. Memorize important facts and details.

**Reflect:** Write down questions or things to be researched on the bottom left side of the column. Include possible questions that could be asked on an exam. At the very bottom of the page, summarize the book/chapter of what you read or heard in class.

**Review:** Go over notes frequently to keep them fresh in your memory. Don't just re-read them; cover them up and test your ability to recall. Also, make sure all of the questions in the workspace have been answered.

## *Mind Map Method:*

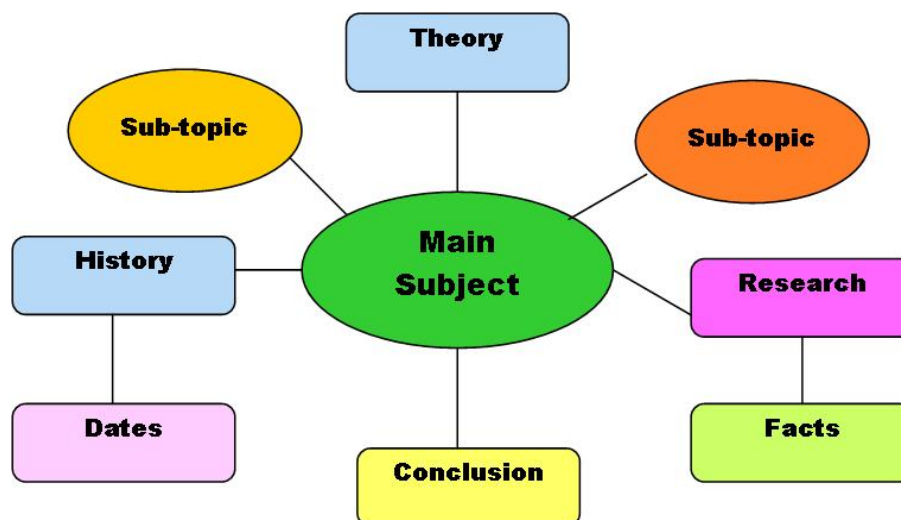
Mind mapping is a creative technique that can help note takers quickly identify the structure of a subject and understand how all of the pieces fit together. It helps with complex problem solving and makes it easy to absorb information from different sources.

### **Guidelines:**

Write the title of the subject or book you are studying in the center of the page and draw a circle around it.

- List major subtopics or subdivisions around the circle and draw lines to those from the main topic.
- As you move deeper into the subject or book you may discover more levels of information that can be linked to the subtopics. Jot those down and draw a line connecting them.
- Use single words or simple phrases
- Highlight with different colors to keep sections and ideas separate.
- Use different symbols to identify different topics.

The following is an example of what basic mind mapping looks like:



## *Periodical Method:*

Using this simple method is excellent for reviewing main subjects and key ideas. Divide a sheet of paper into three columns. The center column should be the wider than the two outside columns. This is where the main notes/text will be written down so the answers can easily be found. Use words and phrases rather than full sentences. Afterwards, summarize your notes in the left-side column. Jot down questions and ideas in the right-side column.

Summary	Notes	Questions
Summarize notes here	Write notes in the middle column	Questions and ideas go here

## *Episodic Notes:*

This is a good technique for taking notes when you have a book or assignment that has different stages or scenes. Each “episode” or scene in the story can be broken down into sequences for better recall.

Using the worksheet at the end of this chapter, draw a detailed picture in the box on the right side of how you visualize a particular scenario. (Keep in mind that it doesn’t matter how well you draw because these are “notes” that only you will see.) Write down in the notes section what is happening and why it’s noteworthy.

## *Interactive Notes:*

Sometimes referred to as the “BFA System” (Before, During, and After), interactive note taking is a simple way to process reading assignments and develop ideas for easier recollection.

Using the worksheet at the end of this chapter, write down the title and subheadings of the book or chapter you are reading in the first column. Add relevant words, themes, headers, captions, and objectives. Ask yourself questions to look for in the story and make a guess as to what you think will happen.

In the second column, write down questions and comments you may have as you are reading. For example:

- I wonder why....
- What caused...
- I think...
- This is similar to...
- This is important because...
- What do they mean by...
- What I find confusing is...
- What will happen next is...
- I can relate to this because...
- This reminds me of...
- As I read, I keep wanting to ask...

The third column will be your summary as you make note of important points of interest and ask follow-up questions for more details or research.

Things to think about:

- Three important points/ideas are...
- These are important because...
- What comes next...
- The author wants us to think...
- At this point the article/story is about...
- I still don't understand...
- What interested me most was...
- This means that...

## *Reading for Changes:*

This method of note taking is when the student looks for changes or shifts in the text to help prompt memory recall, and is probably more useful when reading fiction. Things you are going to look for are:

- **Setting** – Does the location where the story is taking place change?
- **Time** – Does the story skip ahead or go backwards in time?
- **Action** – Does something happening in the story or whatever action the character is doing change?
- **Point of View** – Does the character's attention shift from one focal point to another?
- **Tone or Mood** – Does the tone or mood of the story suddenly change? Could be a change in a character's emotion or feelings about something.
- **Direction or Focus** – Does the story seem to be directed on a particular focal point or plot and then make a surprising shift?
- **Condition or Status** – Are there any changes to a character's circumstances, behavior, physical or emotional well-being, or social status?



To determine if something has changed, ask yourself these questions:

- What specifically changed?
- What was the situation before and after?
- Is the change important? If so, how?

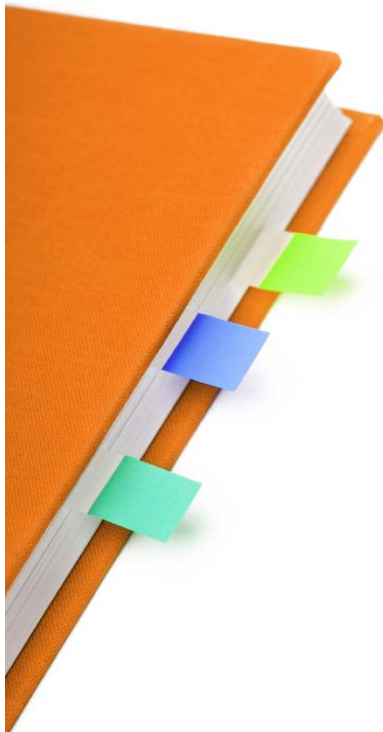
To help you evaluate the significance of any changes, next ask yourself the following questions:

- Who or what did this change have an effect on?
- How did this change affect others in the story?
- What was the reason for the change?

## *Title Talk:*

This is an easy pre-reading method of note-taking that teaches students how to create their own ideas and predictions by linking the title with the text. Write down the title of the book or chapter in the center of your page. Circle the main words and then write any words around each one that you think applies. Skip ahead to read subheadings or chapter titles to see if they can offer additional ideas. Then as you read through the material you can add more relevant words.

## *Post-It Annotations:*



Post-it notes (a/k/a “sticky notes”) are great when using a book as a study resource that cannot be marked up. Stick a small cluster of sticky notes to the inside cover of the book so they are handy whenever you come across ideas, facts, and other information that should be noted. Jot down short details on the sticky note so that you will remember that page’s or section’s relevance. Then, when you are ready to write your report or study for an exam, you can easily skim back through the book using the sticky notes.

## *What's the Big Idea?*

Using the worksheet at the end of this chapter, you can quickly make a synopsis of the book or chapter you are studying by identifying the main idea. First, write down what you think the main idea is. Then, focus on the idea by narrowing down the main point(s). Finally, list the reasons why you thought this was the main idea of the book or chapter.

# Cornell 5R System

Name:		Date:	
Topic:		Class:	
Keywords/Concepts:	Notes:		
Questions:			
Summary:			

## Episodic Notes:

Name:	Date:
Topic:	Class:
	Notes:
	Notes:
	Notes:

## Interactive Notes:

Name:		Date:
Topic:		Class:
<b>BEFORE</b> Prepare to Read	<b>DURING</b> Questions & Comments	<b>AFTER</b> Summarize



List the reasons why you thought this was the main idea of the book or chapter. Include relevant page numbers.


## CH 4: Study Methods That Work

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### *Acronyms and Acrostics:*

Creating acronyms and acrostics are great strategies to help you remember information because they offer cues for facts and ideas that need to be recalled later.

**Acronyms:** An acronym is a word (real or silly) that is formed through a combination of letters. The process is really quite simple: write down the facts or ideas that you need to remember. Underline the first letter of each fact or idea and then combine the letters to form a word that you can remember.

- Here is a **CLEVER** example: Clinical Laboratory for Evaluation and Validation of Epidemiologic Research
- Another example is remembering the names of the five Great Lakes: Superior, Erie, Michigan, Huron, Ontario = **HOMES**

**Acrostics:** An acrostic is a sentence that has been made-up using a combination of letters. The first letter of each invented word is a prompt to

remember a fact, a concept, event, math problem, or musical lines and spaces. Here is a sample acrostic:

**B**ases: First, Second, Third  
**A**ll-stars game  
**S**trikeout  
**E**xhibition game  
**B**ats  
**A**thletic sports  
**L**ittle League  
**L**eft field

### *Location Method:*

Use this method to memorize certain items on a list by imagining where each one is located in a specific location such as a room, closet, or cupboard. Another visualization strategy is to picture how the words or items look written on a chalkboard or a piece of paper.



## *PRWR Method - Preview, Read, Write, Recite:*

- ⇒ **Preview** the assignment by taking a few minutes to skim through the book or chapter. Glance at headings and subheadings; look at key words or terms in boldface or italics; look over pictures, charts, and graphs.
  
- ⇒ **Read** the chapter or assignment straight through. Then, re-read it again, except this time identify new words, definitions of terms, important ideas, facts, and other important data.
  
- ⇒ **Write** down important information that can be used as study notes such as the title, subheadings, vocabulary words, definitions, facts, dates, ideas, and other items. Keep the summary brief so that it will be easy to focus when going back over the information.
  
- ⇒ **Recite** the material/notes to yourself several times. Repeat key words and terms, dates, and facts over and over. Recitation is an excellent way to commit information to memory.

## *Verbal Repetition:*

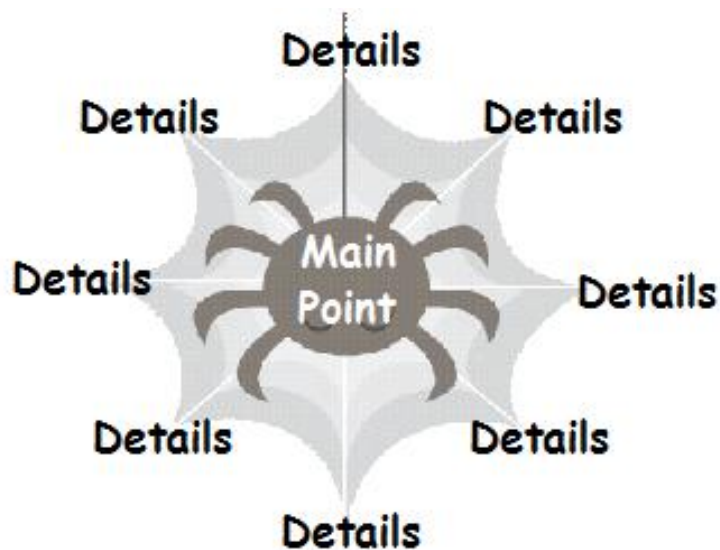
Repeating things over and over is a highly effective way to commit information to memory. Read out loud to yourself or in a study group. Create rhymes, acronyms, or acrostics that can be repeated out loud for better recall.



## *Study Trees/Webs:*

Using a study tree or web that branches out is an excellent way to fill in the gaps for areas that you have not memorized yet. This is a good study method for scientific or technical subjects where you need to know a lot of information for just a few main points. Although you may know what those points are, it's important to nail down the specifics with in-depth details.

Start by writing down the main points and circling them. Then branch off into more specific details with subheadings. These subheadings can also split off into more branches with relevant information. As you are doing this you will come across some "knowledge gaps." These gaps can be filled by referring to your notes. Once the tree or web has been completely filled in, test yourself on the material by making another one without referring to your notes or the existing web.



## *Compare and Contrast Grids:*

- **Comparison:** shows how two items are alike
- **Contrast:** shows how two items are different

This type of study method is used when two concepts are being compared and contrasted. It's perfect when studying for tests that require written responses. The grid helps you to organize information in a different way and think about how it is all connected. You should already know the material/facts well enough to make appropriate comparisons and contrasts, so make sure you have already done your reading.

First, pick out similarities between the two concepts and write them in the grid. Then write down their differences, followed by the conclusion or summary.

	Similarities	Differences	Conclusion
1 <sup>st</sup> Concept			
2 <sup>nd</sup> Concept			

## ***Flashcards:***

Flashcards are excellent tools for memory recall that can be used in a variety of ways. They are great for studying just about any topic including spelling words, maps, places, and facts, as well as multiple-choice or short essay exams.

The traditional way to use them is to write the keyword or fact on one side and the definition or answer on the flip side. Another way is to color code them and categorize information using the different colors.

Flashcards can easily be made out of index cards, notepad sheets, or small pieces of paper cut into rectangles.

## ***Note Review:***

Regularly review your notes in anticipation of exam preparation and classroom discussions. Using one or two of the note taking strategies outlined in Chapter 3, go over information from notes that were taken in class, study groups, or reading assignments. This will help you fill in missing gaps and reinforce material already committed to memory. The more you review your notes, the quicker you will be able to recall them.

## ***Homework Review:***

This type of study review is recommended when preparing for exams that involve problem-solving techniques for classes like mathematics, science, physics, etc. Repetition is key for understanding difficult concepts. Each day select a couple of challenging problems from your homework. Pretend you are taking a test and try to work through the process of finding the answers without referring to your notes. This will give you the confidence you need to ace your next exam!

## *Study Groups:*

A study group can be very helpful when preparing for exams, reports, or class discussions. Some students are reluctant to ask questions in a large classroom setting but find it much easier in a small study group. Material that may have previously been considered boring can be much more interesting in the company of others. Other benefits to participating in a study group are learning and sharing new ideas and concepts with one another. Plus, group members can offer one another support and encouragement.

Follow these guidelines to start your own study group:

- Decide when and where you are going to meet, as well as how long the study session will last.
- Plan an agenda for the group and set specific goals. This could be comparing notes, going over reading assignments, or preparing for tests.
- Assign each member specific responsibilities so they will feel part of the group and be more inclined to participate.
- Keep focused and stay on task to avoid getting distracted.
- Remember this is not a social group. You can hang out after study is over and do something fun as a reward.



## *Practice Exams:*

“Practice makes perfect” and like homework review, practice exams are recommended when preparing for tests that involve problem-solving techniques for classes like mathematics, science, physics, etc. They are also good when getting ready for multiple choice exams. Repeatedly taking practice exams sharpens your focus and gives you the confidence you need when test day arrives. Think of practice exams as a dress rehearsal for the real thing.

## *Study Guides:*



Using study guides are important when you are going over a lot of material that will be covered on an exam. Some projects and reading assignments come with study guides that are handy to use. Otherwise, use the note taking strategies discussed in Chapter 3 to easily put together effective study guides to help you get your notes organized and prepare you for comprehensive exams.

# CH 5: Getting Ready for the Big Test

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## *Setup a Study Schedule:*

Set up your study schedule based on how much time you have before the actual test, whether it's a couple of days, weeks, or months. Once you have a schedule, make sure you stick to it! Last minute cramming will only increase your anxiety which could make you more forgetful.

### **Before the Test:**

- Find out what subject/material the test will cover.
- Find out what type of test this will be: multiple-choice, essay, true/false.
- Set goals for study times and information you want to go over.
- Using the strategies outlined in Chapter 4, decide what study methods you want to use for this particular test.
- Take practice exams.
- Read and re-read notes, chapter excerpts, and other relevant information.
- Create study aids such as outlines and flashcards.
- If you are still struggling with understanding the topic or material ask for help from a teacher before test day.
- Get a good night's sleep the night before the test. You will not be very alert the next day if you stay up late. Plus, last minute cramming will just make you more nervous.
- Eat a good breakfast or lunch before the test, but avoid overeating.

## *What to Do During the Test:*

- ⇒ Always read the instructions carefully. Although you may have taken similar tests, never assume you know how each one is going to go. If you are unsure about anything, ask the teacher before proceeding.
- ⇒ Skim over the test before starting. If point values have been assigned to each section, this will help you decide how much time you need spend in each one and which sections to work on first. The ones with the highest point value deserve the most attention.
- ⇒ Answer the easiest questions first. If you get stuck on a question, skip over it and come back later. Chances are the answer will come to you later on in the test.
- ⇒ If you only know part of an answer to a question, write down what you know. Hopefully you will at least get partial credit.
- ⇒ Write answers neatly. If your teacher can't read your answer, it may be marked incorrect.
- ⇒ Try to leave enough time at the end of the test to go back over and check your answers for errors.
- ⇒ Turn off your cell phone during the test!



## *Strategies for Specific Types of Tests:*

### **Tips for Problem-Solving Tests:**

- Be prepared by bringing whatever materials are needed such as pencils, erasers, rulers, calculators, etc.
- When working through problems be sure to show all of the steps in the process. Even if the answer is incorrect you may still receive partial credit.
- Don't worry about erasing incorrect answers. Just draw a line through it and rewrite the answer to save time.
- When you receive the test do a "data dump" by immediately writing down relevant formulas and information that are still fresh in your mind. You can then refer back to them during the test.
- Try to leave enough time to go back and check your work when you are finished.

### **Tips for Matching Tests:**

- Read all of the questions before answering/matching.
- Answer the questions you know the answers to first and come back to the harder ones.
- Decide what is being asked for: location, person, date, etc.
- Check off items as they are matched so you won't use them again.



## Tips for True-False Tests:

- Always read the entire question or sentence before answering.
- Be careful of long, detailed sentences. Break them down and look at each part. If only part of the sentence is true, then the answer is "false."
- Look for specific keywords. Statements that have words such as "usually," "sometimes," "generally," and "often," are usually true. Sentences with the words "always," "every," "never," or "all" are typically false.
- If you don't know the answer, then make a guess. You will have at least a 50 percent chance of getting it right. There are usually more true answers than false on a test, so sometimes a safe bet is guessing "true."

## Tips for Fill in the Blank Tests:

- Most fill in the blank questions use keywords and phrases from your notes and reading material, so make sure you have studied beforehand.
- Questions with more than one blank should be treated as more than one question.
- Answer the questions you know first and then go back to the harder ones.
- Mark keywords and phrases in difficult questions to help you focus on the missing blank.
- Rephrase difficult questions in your own words to help find the missing part.
- Make sure the answer is spelled correctly.



### Tips for Take Home Exams:

- Start working on the take home exam right away to give yourself plenty of time. Don't wait until the last minute to try and complete it.
- Pay attention to grammar, spelling, and punctuation.
- Before starting make sure you have everything you need at your fingertips: notes, books, homework, paper, pencil, and any other resource materials.
- Scan through your materials to find relevant information. Mark with a sticky note or write the answers down for future use.

### Tips for Open Book Exams:

- Open book exams are often more difficult than closed book exams because the teacher expects you to find the answers if you don't know them.
- Prepare in advance by studying ahead of time.
- Be prepared by bringing whatever materials are needed such as pencils, erasers, rulers, calculators, etc.
- Use sticky notes or bookmarks to help you find information more readily.
- Bring index or note cards with formulas written on them for easy reference.
- Answer the questions you know the answers to first and come back to the harder ones.



## Tips for Oral Exams:

- Prepare for an oral exam the same way you would for a written exam by studying in advance.
- Anticipate possible questions and practice giving the answers out loud – preferably to a friend or classmate.
- Practice talking in front of a mirror so you can see your facial expressions and how you stand.
- Pay close attention to the questions asked. If you don't understand something, don't be afraid to ask for it to be repeated.
- When giving oral answers stand up straight and don't slouch. Maintain eye contact with the teacher and students.
- Speak in complete sentences; not one or two word answers.



## Tips for Essay Exams:

- Carefully read each question and underline keywords and phrases. Look for words like "compare," "contrast," "evaluate," and "summarize."
- Look for additional clues in the question such as words like "explain," "describe," or "define."
- Build your confidence by answering the easier questions first; then come back to the more difficult ones.
- Organize your ideas by writing down your initial thoughts. Then do a rough outline on the back page or scratch piece of paper that includes main points, arguments, dates, and other important facts.
- Proofread your answers and check spelling, grammar, and punctuation. If necessary, add more details such as illustrations or examples.

### Tips for Multiple-Choice Tests:

- Study well in advance so that you are familiar with keywords and phrases.
- Read the question carefully before selecting an answer; reading it twice is highly recommended.
- Multiple-choice questions test your applied knowledge so make sure your answer encompasses all parts of the question.
- Answer the question in your head first; then pick the answer on the test that matches it the most closely.
- If you are unsure about a question, eliminate the answers that you know are not right before taking a guess.
- Never leave a question unanswered because you still have a 50 percent chance of getting it right.



### Tips for Standardized Tests:

- Before taking the test use a study guide if one is available; if not, make your own using the note taking strategies outlined in Chapter 3.
- Give yourself practice exams.
- When it's time to take the test, answer the easier questions first and then go back to the more difficult ones. If necessary, make an educated guess.
- Look over the tips outlined in this chapter for other types of tests. Standardized tests will have a variety of formats, so it will help knowing the different strategies.

## *How to Calm Your Nerves Before and During the Test:*

Some students have extreme test anxiety that can actually interfere with their performance on exam day. Reasons for this may be pressure to perform well, previously failed exams, or the fear of failure. This worry or fear can make it hard to concentrate or create mental blocks. It can even cause physical symptoms like nausea, an upset stomach, or accelerated heart rate.

Here are some steps you can take to reduce test anxiety:

- Prepare in advance by studying all relevant material. Cramming at the last minute will increase your anxiety level.
- Think positive! By following the steps outlined in this book you are doing everything necessary to ensure a successful outcome.
- Practice deep breathing exercises to reduce tension and clear your mind.
- Take a personal timeout every day to do something fun and relaxing. Don't overdo the studying routine or you will tire yourself out.
- Get plenty of rest and exercise. Eat healthy meals every day. Avoid caffeine late in the day and at night as it can interfere with sleep.
- Don't view tests as a threat. Instead look at them as an opportunity to show off what you know.



## *After the Test:*

Take a deep breath and congratulate yourself on a job well done!

Once you have received the test back, go over incorrect answers and figure out why you missed them. Did you misunderstand the question? Did you fail to prepare for it? Did time run out?



Using old tests, prepare new strategies for future ones. Save them as study guides. Use them to determine what types of questions the teacher likes to use.

Good luck!!