

A Parent's Guide to Effective Study Habits

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Effective study habits are essential for students who want to reach their full potential in high school. Pragmatic study skills enable students to become more successful in their academic, vocational and personal careers. Consistent practice, genuine effort and sound application of evidence based study skill strategies, help students to become more independent, confident and lifelong learners.

Over the course of this year, I will be presenting many useful strategies that will address the needs of students with diverse learning styles. The following are topics that I expect to cover:

Organizational skills	Note taking
Study strategies	Time management skills
Listening skills	Goal setting
Use of technology	Test taking strategies
Memorizing strategies	Critical thinking skills

Topic 1: Organizational Skills

Use of a Planner:

Several valuable organizational tools are calendars, planners and organizers. While these items can either be hardcopy or digital, their use is essential.



In order to plan a schedule, a master calendar should be utilized on which future assignments will be documented. A planner should be divided into short-term and long-term projects and assignments, and used to organize and prioritize homework, thereby, enabling students to plan ahead. It is essential to break up long-term assignments into small manageable chunks to prevent students from becoming overwhelmed. On the Jericho website, Blackboard is a useful tool for students and parents to monitor and check daily assignments in all classes. Please be sure to have ready access to your child's Blackboard login and password.

HELPFUL TIP # 1: Make sure to double check work for errors. Editing, revising, and reviewing the finished product are keys to success.

Use of a Checklist

Checklists should be created before school, during school, and at home. This will allow students to organize themselves and result in improved time management. A plan should be made in efforts to budget time needed for completion of each larger assignment. This will eliminate unnecessary amounts of time being devoted to one assignment and leaving too little time for others.

HELPFUL TIP # 2: Be proactive. Have your student take advantage of **all** resources available (i.e., attend extra help, peer tutoring, library, etc.) to help them when they are confronted with an area of academic difficulty.



Organize and maintain notebooks/binders:

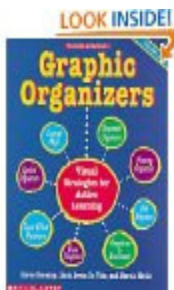
Becoming organized by using notebooks with dividers can be especially beneficial. Materials can then be grouped together for ease of use and review. Materials should be broken down by subject and then by topic. Once organized, students can use post it notes and highlighters to mark important facts, thus making it easier to study.

Many students successfully use different binders for each subject, while some use a single binder for all. Either way, it is helpful to create a designated homework folder for completed assignments so that students with organizational issues can more easily locate their materials.

Work Space:

The creation of a good work environment at home with limited distractions is imperative to student success. This work space must be free from clutter and other distractions, including cell phones, televisions and anything else which might result in off-task behavior. It is also important use this space as a home for appropriate resources, including timers to keep pace, books, handouts, study guides, flash cards outlines, notes, rulers, calculators, etc.

HELPFUL TIP # 3: Make sure students take short breaks with healthy snacks to keep their minds and bodies energized.



Use of graphic organizers:

Graphic organizers have proven to be extremely helpful for organizing information when studying for tests or preparing for an essay assignment. Graphic organizers come in different forms. A Venn diagram is perhaps the most well known, but there are literally hundreds of others that can help students find connections among large amounts of material.

HELPFUL TIP # 4: Please visit the website www.edhelper to view various graphic organizers to help in all academic areas.

According to Davis and Sirotowitz's book Study Strategies Made Easy (1995), some students are naturally organized while others need to learn these skills explicitly. Such skills are extremely important to help students succeed throughout their lives. Establishing a routine and becoming more organized will reduce anxiety, promote independence, and instill confidence and self-esteem.

Each month, look for new strategies that will help promote effective learning and build a solid foundation for a future filled with academic achievement.

Resources:

Davis, L. and Sirotowitz, S. (1996). *Study Strategies Made Easy: A Practical Plan for School Success*. Florida: Specialty Press Inc.

Dodge, J. (1995). *The Study Skills Handbook*. New York: Scholastic Inc.