# Article of the Week #1

Directions:

1. Mark your confusion.

2. Show evidence of a close reading. Mark up the text with questions and/or comments.

3. Fill out the T-Chart for the facts and why it matters.

# The Ten Study Habits of Successful Students

Successful students have good study habits. They apply these habits to all of their classes. Read about each study habit. Work to develop any study habit you do not have. Successful students:

1. **Try not to do too much studying at one time.** If you try to do too much studying at one time, you will tire and your studying will not be very effective. Space the work you have to do over shorter periods of time. Taking short breaks will restore your mental energy.
2. **Plan specific times for studying.** Study time is any time you are doing something related to schoolwork. It can be completing assigned reading, working on a paper or project, or studying for a test. Schedule specific times throughout the week for your study time.
3. **Try to study at the same times each day.** Studying at the same times each day establishes a routine that becomes a regular part of your life, just like sleeping and eating. When a scheduled study time comes up during the day, you will be mentally prepared to begin studying.
4. **Set specific goals for your study times.** Goals will help you stay focused and monitor your progress. Simply sitting down to study has little value. You must be very clear about what you want to accomplish during your study times.
5. **Start studying when planned.** You may delay starting your studying because you don't like an assignment or think it is too hard. A delay in studying is called "procrastination." If you procrastinate for any reason, you will find it difficult to get everything done when you need to. You may rush to make up the time you wasted getting started, resulting in careless work and errors.
6. **Work on the assignment you find most difficult first.** Your most difficult assignment will require the most effort. Start with your most difficult assignment since this is when you have the most mental energy.
7. **Review your notes before beginning an assignment.** Reviewing your notes can help you make sure you are doing an assignment correctly. Also, your notes may include information that will help you complete an assignment.
8. **Tell your friends not to call them during their study times.** Two study problems can occur if your friends call you during your study times. First, your work is interrupted. It is not that easy to get back to what you were doing. Second, your friends may talk about things that will distract you from what you need to do. Here's a simple idea - turn off your cell phone during your study times.
9. **Call another student when you have difficulty with an assignment.** This is a case where "two heads may be better than one."
10. **Review your schoolwork over the weekend.** Yes, weekends should be fun time. But there is also time to do some review. This will help you be ready to go on Monday morning when another school week begins.

“The Ten Study Habits of Successful Students.” How-To-Study.com. 2013.

**Taking Better Lecture Notes**

We've put together some strategies to help students take better classroom notes. While these tips have been developed especially for middle school and high school students, you'll find that even elementary level students will benefit from them.

Taking better lecture notes all starts with the process of listening. Becoming a better listener is a talent, like any other, that can be developed through practice. The more involved one becomes in the process of listening, the better one can understand, prioritize and interrelate the concepts presented. Here are a few tips on your way to becoming a better listener in the classroom:

1. Active listeners focus on what the speaker is saying.
2. They try to find the important details, and ask themselves questions like "How does this relate to what we talked about yesterday or to what I read in the textbook?"
3. They think of personal examples that relate to what the speaker is saying.
4. They picture scenes being described or draw diagrams in their notes for clarification.
5. They ask questions and participate in class discussion.

Part of your task as an active listener is to home in on key points and important supporting details, while filtering out unimportant trivia. Think of yourself as a detective with one of the richest sources of clues standing directly in front of you -- your teacher! Learn to pay attention to your teacher's body language and use of phrases that can tip you off when information is important and should be copied into your notes.

1. If a point isn't important, the teacher might be looking out the window or talking softly.
2. If a point is important,
   * 1. the teacher is probably at the front of the room, emphasizing the information in a raised voice.
     2. the teacher repeats something several times, or writes it on the board
     3. the teacher uses key phrases like, "The most important thing...," "The causes leading up to...," "Pay special attention to this...," or "There are four important points that I'll make about..."

Deciding what notes to take down and how to write them is more of an art form. Again, there are a number of helpful note taking techniques that can also be developed through practice. Here are some excellent tips you can start applying right away:

1. Don't try to write every word.
2. Use your own form of shorthand, including abbreviations, symbols, diagrams and drawings.
3. Try to draw parallels between your own experience and knowledge and the lecture.
4. Look for a structure in your instructor's lecture. If he or she says there were three main issues at stake in the Civil War, look for those three issues to be clearly defined, and listen for details about each one.
5. Try to review your notes as soon as you can after class, mark the most important points, and do a little reorganization if you need to, for instance drawing an arrow from a topic that belongs in a different spot than where you have it written.

“Taking Better Lecture Notes.” Homeworkandstudyskills.com. 2013.

**Homework**

Homework is a required part of the instructional program and should be assigned on a regular basis. You can expect to have one or two hours of homework daily. Homework includes not only the assignments your teacher gives you, but you may review past work, practice skills, and read to increase knowledge. It is always good to have the telephone number of a home­work buddy in each of your classes so that you can check out questions about assignments.

**Homework tips**

■ Some students prefer a quiet place to help them concentrate on their homework, while others find it helpful to work near an adult so they can ask for help when needed.

■ Some students find it best to work first on the subject that they like least, while others find it gives them a sense of accomplishment to do their favorite subjects first. The important thing is to find a style that works for YOU and stick with it.

■ If, after trying the above suggestions, you still have difficulty getting your homework done, see your teacher and/or counselor for extra help.

■ Try to avoid distractions like TV or phone calls while doing your homework.

“Getting Set: A Guide for Middle School Students.” Montgomeryschoolsmd.org. November 2009.

Reflection Thoughts:

What study habits do you already have? Did you see them in any of these articles? What study skills do you think would definitely help you this year? Why or why not?