

Effective Study Skills

Meghan Mammola - Gold Award Project

Effective Study Skills

Who	Middle School Students (current and future)
What	Share tips and techniques for effective study skills
Where	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• GSHH Girl Scouts• Mahopac Central School District
When	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• October 6th, 2013• October 30th, 2013• November 6th, 2013
Why	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• So that students will succeed in Middle School.• To allow others to benefit from my experience.

Project Overview:

- The Basics:
- Overall Organization
- Preparation
- Time Management
- Note Taking Tips
- Test Taking Techniques
- Research Paper Guide
- Tools
- Group Study



- **Overall Organization**
- **Eat a good breakfast everyday.**
- **Make a "To-Do list" everyday.**
- Put the most important tasks at the top, even if they're things you don't want to do, and tackle them first.
- Include things you want to do on your list too.
- Try motivating yourself with a reward if you get to everything on your list.
- **Some places are better than others to study in.**
- Libraries, study lounges or private rooms are best.
- Don't sit in the room with your TV on.
- **Good handwriting is a must.**
- **Use separate notebooks for each class.**
- **Stay ahead of reading assignments.**
- **Final Exam Prep**
- Save tests for later review for end of term tests.
- **Get a good nights sleep.**
- Your brain needs rest to perform at its peak.
- If it's time to sleep, list the things you still need to get done on the next day's to-do list and go to bed.
- **Preparation**
- **Got your supplies?**
- When studying have everything needed beforehand.
- Don't waste time looking for books, notes, or other information.
- After you have assembled the items you need, put them where you can reach them easily.
- **Plan your studying**
- Studying should happen only when you are rested, alert, and have planned for it.
- Last minute studying just before a class is usually a waste of time.
- **Prioritize your tasks.**
- Make a list of what you intend to study and stick to it.
- **Keep your work with you.**
- That way, if you ever find yourself with extra time, you can get something done.

- **Time Management**
- **Budget your time.**
- Figure out how much time you usually spend on your activities and then create a weekly schedule to follow.
- Determine how much free time you have before you make any commitments.
- **Find your productive time.**
- Are you a morning person or a night person?
- You'll be more efficient if you work when you're at your best.
- Study no more than 30-40 minutes at a time. Many students retain more by studying for short periods with breaks in between
- Never study within 30 minutes of going to sleep.
- **Create a dedicated study time.**
- Set up a time devoted only to studying or homework.
- Shut off your phone and respond to calls only when your work is finished.
- Don't check email or surf the web during this time either.
- **Schedule a few study sessions.**
- Whether studying alone or in a group, a few short sessions are much more useful than one long "cram" session.
- **Don't get sidetracked.**
- If you find yourself wasting time on unimportant things - STOP!
- Don't be afraid to say no.
- It's OK to say no if your friend asks you to go to a movie one night, but you have a test the next morning.
- Instead, find a time that works for both of you.



Note Taking Tips

➤ Notes are important!

➤ Get Ready

- Try to sit in the front of the class where you will be less distracted.
- The best place to keep notes is in a loose leaf notebook. Use dividers to separate the different classes you take.
- If you're caught without your notebook and need to take notes, always have a supply of loose-leaf paper with you.
- Date your notes
- Make sure that you write legibly, if you can't read them later, they'll be useless.
- **How to take notes effectively:**
- Take notes selectively. Do not try to write down every word.
- Make them short and to the point so you won't have any trouble remembering them later on.
- If the instructor writes something on the board or repeats an idea then you should write it down.
- Translate ideas into your own words.
- If a teacher says to write something down, write it!
- Write down any terminology along with the definition that the instructor may present.
- Use symbols to call attention to important words: underline, CAPS, circle, box, *, !, ?, or >.
- Skip lines to allow you to fill in more information later.
- Add any questions you have - these include questions you have about things you don't understand and the topics that you need clarification on later.
- **Don't be shy!**
- Don't be afraid to ask the teacher to repeat something you missed or don't understand.
- If you have a question, someone else probably does too!
- **Review**
- Compare notes with a classmate to make sure you didn't miss any important points.
- Don't rely on someone else's notes, you may not understand everything that they write down and you'll learn the best by taking your own notes.
- Review your notes periodically. This is the only way to achieve lasting memory.

Test Taking Techniques

➤ How to get an "A"

➤ Before the test:

- Prepare for your test days before you even take the test, such as paying attention during class, taking good notes, studying, completing homework assignments, and reviewing study materials on a daily basis.
- Ask questions about things you may be confused about before test day.
- Get at least 8 hours of sleep the night before a test.
- Eat before a test, this will give you energy and help you focus.

➤ During the test:

- Always be sure to read the directions, when taking a test.
 - Pace yourself, don't rush.
 - Read the entire question and pay attention to the key words.
 - Do the easiest problems first.
 - Eliminate answers you know aren't right.
 - If you aren't sure how to answer a question fully, try to answer at least part of it. You might get partial credit.
 - Be sure that you answer the question that was asked.
 - When answering essay questions, scan the list of questions to be answered, choose the ones you know most about. A good idea is to prepare an outline of your answers.
 - When there are several questions about a reading passage or chart, look for clues in other questions that will help you with those items about which you are unsure.
- ### ➤ Check your work:
- Fill in bubbles fully, write neatly, and erase stray marks.
 - When using scratch paper on a math test, double check to make sure that you have copied the problem correctly from the test booklet.
 - When taking a math test, line of place value correctly.
 - If you have time left when you are finished, look over your test.
 - Make sure you have answered all the questions and leave nothing blank.
 - As you go back through the test, do not change all answers. Remember: Your first guess is usually right.

➤ **Tips to write a good research paper:**

➤ **Review the assignment**

- Choose your topic.
- It's very important to start out your research with a solid thesis statement.
- This is the question you propose to answer in the paper.
- Make it specific.
- It's much easier to do research on a narrowly selected subject than a massive idea.
- Help yourself by narrowing it down.

➤ **Start with a detailed outline**

- Each paragraph should have clear, well thought out points.
- First, write a rough draft as freely as possible, following your outline closely.

➤ **Stick to the facts**

- Don't put opinionated statements like "I think..." or, "In my opinion..."

➤ **Reference your notes**

- Organize all the information you have gathered according to your outline.

➤ **Avoiding plagiarism**

- Do not include any information that is not relevant to your topic, and do not include information that you do not understand. Make sure the information that you have noted is carefully recorded and in your own words.

➤ **Make a first draft**

- Start with the first topic in your outline.
- Summarize, paraphrase or quote directly for each idea you plan to use in your essay.
- Put all your note cards or paper in the order of your outline.

➤ **Revise your outline and draft**

- Read your paper for any content errors. Double check the facts and figures. Arrange and rearrange ideas to follow your outline. Reorganize your outline if necessary, but always keep the purpose of your paper and your readers in mind.

➤ **Index Card System**

➤ **Try an index card system.**

- Write each question or term on the back of an index card.
- On the front of each index card, write an answer or an explanation for the question or term on the back.
- Shuffle the index cards so you can't figure out any answers based on their location in the deck.
- Look at the card on the top of the deck.
- Try to answer the question or explain the term.
- If you know it, great! Put it on the bottom of the deck.
- If you don't know it, look at the answer, and put it a few cards down in the deck (so you'll come back to it soon.)
- Proceed through the deck of cards until you know all of the information.
- Get your family and friends to quiz you.
- Study your cards at dinner, at breakfast the day of the test, and on the bus!
- **Quizlet**
- Quizlet is a lightning fast way to memorize vocabulary lists. It's like flashcards, but much more fun and interactive.
- **What to do on Quizlet** <http://quizlet.com/>
- Flashcard - Basic flashcards, on the set page. Use the arrow keys for quick navigation.
- Speller - Audio powered studying where you type what you hear.
- Learn - Powerful call-and-response-type learning. It keeps track of your right and wrong answers and retests you on ones you get wrong.
- Test - Generates a random test of written, matching, multiple-choice, and true/false questions. Test mode is highly customizable, allowing you to choose which types of questions and how many.

A+

➤ Do you work well with others?

- If you choose to study in a group, only study with others who are serious about their homework and tests.
- It often works best to have just three to five people in a study group. That way, each person gets the time to talk and make sure they understand the material.
- Having one person act as the leader in the study group can help a group to run smoothly.
- The main goal of the leader is to keep everyone focused on studying so that things don't become too social and it doesn't turn into a hang out instead of a study group.
- Do any practice exams or study sheets provided by the teacher. These will help you focus your study session and give you confidence.
- Get help from the teacher if you do not understand something.
- Make up your own quiz or test based on your notes and have a friend, parent, or sibling test you.



- **What to do if you need more help:**
 - **Talk to your teacher**
 - **Review work, tests, etc**
 - **Ask the teacher for extra help**
 - **Be sure to attend scheduled extra help sessions**
 - **Get help from others**
 - **Friends**
 - **Peer tutors**
 - **Parents**
 - **Guidance Counselors**
 - **Get help fast**
 - **Don't wait until you're in over your head**
 - **If you don't understand - ask!**
 - **Focus on studying**
 - **Put in extra time and effort**
 - **Don't take shortcuts!**