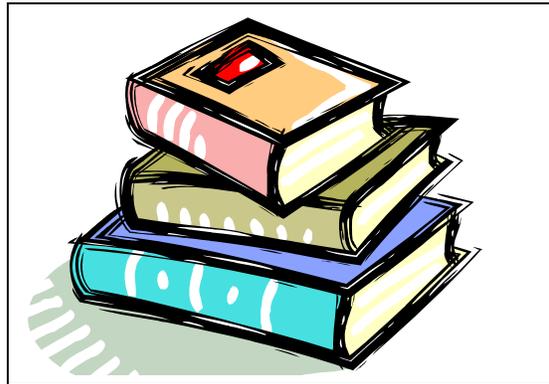


WESTLAKE
HIGH SCHOOL
STUDY GUIDE



INFORMATIONAL STRATEGIES,
RESOURCES AND ALTERNATIVES
TO HELP YOU EXCEL
ACADEMICALLY.



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ARE YOU AN EFFECTIVE LEARNER?

This “question and answer” test may help you spot where you might start to improve your study skills. Just answer **YES** or **NO**.

1. Do you plan, make a rough copy of, and check your homework or assignment before copying it out neatly?
2. Do you voluntarily review a subject even if no tests are coming up soon?
3. If you are having problems with a subject, do you talk it over with your teacher as soon as you can?
4. Do you complete your homework or assignment in advance of its deadline?
5. Do you have a place at home where you can study without being distracted?
6. Do you take notice and act upon the comments and suggestions your teacher might make about your work?
7. Do you keep a record of the “language” (terminology) used in each subject, especially if that subject is science?
8. Do you use the library, internet or other learning aids regularly to help with your studies?
9. Have you always kept your exercise books or folders in good order and up to date?
10. Can you easily spot the main points of a topic when reading a text book and make extra notes from them?
11. Do you plan your use of time by writing down what you have to do and by when?
12. Do you know ways of improving you memory when reviewing?
13. Do you plan ahead for tests or examinations?
14. Are you able to forget about schoolwork once you have finished studying?

“YES” TO AT LEAST TEN QUESTIONS:

You are well on your way to becoming an effective learner.
Use the rest of this guide to help you spot the weaknesses you may still have.

LESS THAN TEN “YES” ANSWERS:

No problem- read this guide very carefully, follow the advice, and you too can be an effective learner!



GETTING TO KNOW YOUR LEARNING STYLE

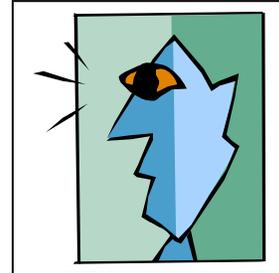
Did you know your learning style may be the single most important key to improving your grades?

Want to find out your learning style? Click the link below.

<http://homeworktips.about.com/od/homeworkhelp/a/1styleqz.htm>

Visual Learner

- Needs quiet study time.
- Has to think awhile before understanding lecture.
- Likes colors and fashion.
- Understands/likes charts.

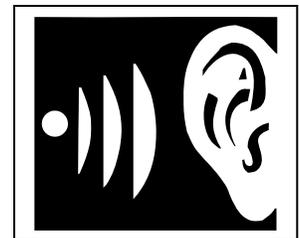


Learning suggestions for visual learners

- Draw a map of events or scientific process.
- Make outlines of everything!
- Take notes, make lists.
- Diagram sentences.
- Color code/highlight/circle words, notes.
- Use flashcards

Auditory Learner

- Is not afraid to speak in class.
- Is good at explaining.
- Can't keep quiet for long periods.
- Reads slowly.
- Follows spoken direction well.
- Is good in study groups.

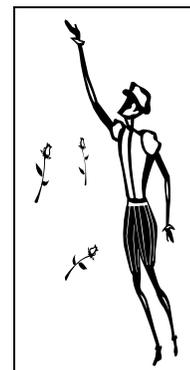


Learning suggestions for auditory learners

- Using word association to remember facts and lines.
- Recording lectures/using audiotapes.
- Repeating facts with eyes closed.
- Participating in group discussions.

Kinesthetic Learner

- Can't sit still for long.
- Enjoys studying with music.
- Likes role playing.
- Takes breaks while studying.
- Likes to build models, play sports, dance.



Learning suggestions for kinesthetic learners

- Studying in short blocks.
- Taking lab classes.
- Studying with others/role playing.
- Using memory games and flashcards.

WHAT YOU CAN CONTROL IN YOUR STUDIES!

- **“Here I study”**

Get a dedicated space, chair, table, lighting and environment.
Avoid your cell phone or telephone!
Put up a do not disturb sign.
If you like music in the background, OK, but don't let it be a distraction.



- **Stick to a routine, efficient study schedule**

Accommodate your day/nighttime energy levels.
Make a schedule and set goals.

- **Focus**

Before you begin studying, take a few minutes to summarize a few objectives and gather what you will need.

- **Incentives**

Create an incentive for successfully completing a task, such as calling a friend, snack, walk.

- **Change topics**

Changing the subject you study every one to two hours for variety.

- **Vary your study activities**

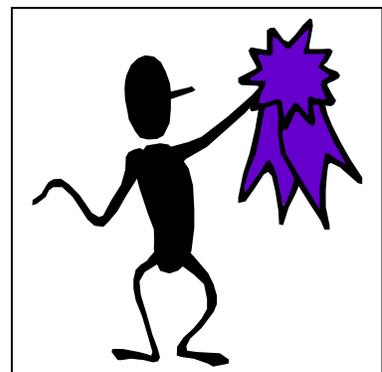
Alternate reading with more active learning exercises.
If you have a lot of reading, try the **SQ3R** method (can be found later in packet).
Ask yourself how you can increase your activity level while studying? Possibly creating a study group? Creating study questions?

- **Take regular, scheduled breaks that fit you**

Do something different from what you've been doing.

- **Rewards**

Give yourself a reward when you've completed a task.



MANAGING YOUR STUDY TIME

There are only so many hours in a day, a week, and a term. You cannot change the number of hours, but you can decide how to best use them. To be successful in school, you must carefully manage your study time. Here is a strategy for doing this.

At the beginning of a term, prepare a Term Calendar. Update it as the term goes on. Here is what to do to prepare a Term Calendar.

- Record your schools assignments with their due dates and your scheduled tests.
- Record your planned school activities.
- Record your known out-of-school activities.



Each Sunday before a school week, prepare a Weekly Schedule. Update it as the week goes on. Here is what to do to prepare a Weekly Schedule.

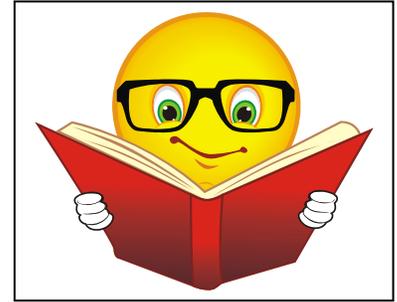
- Record your daily classes.
- Enter things to be done for the coming week from your Term Calendar.
- Review your class notes from the previous week to see if you need to add any school activities.
- Add any out-of-school activities in which you will be involved during the week.
- Be sure to include times for completing assignments, working on projects, and studying for tests. These times may be during the school day, right after school, evenings, and weekends.

Each evening before a school day, prepare a Daily Organizer for the next day. Place a \checkmark next to each thing as you accomplish it. Here is what to do to prepare a Daily Organizer.

- Enter the tings to do for the coming day from your Weekly Schedule.
- Enter the things that still need to be accomplished from your Daily Organizer from the previous day.
- Review your class notes for the day to see if you need to add any school activities.



“A.S.P.I.R.E”



A: Approach/attitude/arrange

- Approach your studies with a positive attitude
- Arrange your schedule to eliminate distractions

S: Select/survey/study!

- Select a reasonable chunk of material to study
- Survey the headings, graphics, pre and post questions
- Study marking any information you don't understand

P: Put aside/piece together

- Put aside your books and notes
- Piece together what you've studied and summarize

I: Inspect/investigate/inquire

- Inspect what you did not understand
- Investigate alternative sources of information you can refer to: books, websites, peers
- Inquire from support professionals (tutors, teachers, librarians) for assistance

R: Reconsider/reflect/relay

- Reconsider the content: If I could speak to the author what questions would I ask?
- Reflect on the material: How can I apply this material to what I am interested in?
- Relay understanding: How would I make this information interesting and understandable to other students?

E: Evaluate/examine/explore

- Evaluate your grades on tests/assignments and look for a pattern
- Examine your process towards improving it
- Explore options with a teacher, tutor, etc.

SQ3R

Survey! Question! Read! Recite! Review!

SQ3R is a strategy to help you understand your reading assignments.

Before you read,

Survey the chapter:

- The title, headings and subheadings
- Captions under pictures, charts, graphs or maps
- Review questions or study guides
- Introductory and concluding paragraphs
- Summary



Question while you are surveying:

- Turn the title, headings, subheadings into questions
- Read questions at the end of the chapters/subheadings
- Ask yourself, “What did my instructor say about this chapter/subject when it was assigned?”
- Ask yourself, “What do I already know about this subject?”

When you begin to **Read:**

- Look for answers to the questions you first raised
- Answer questions at the beginning or end of chapters
- Note all the underlined, italicized, bold printed words/phrases
- Study graphic aids
- Stop and reread parts which are not clear
- After reading each section, stop and recite

Recite after you’ve read a section:

- Orally ask yourself questions about what you have just read, or summarize what you read
- Take notes from the text in your own words
- Underline or highlight important points
- Use the method of recitation which best suits your particular learning style

Review, an ongoing process:

- After you read and recite the chapter, write questions in the margins for those points you have highlighted or underlined.
- Cover the right hand column of your notebook/text and orally ask yourself questions in the left hand margins.
- Make flash cards or develop mnemonic devices for material which needs to be memorized.
- Alternate between your flashcards and notes and test yourself on the questions you formulated.
- Using the text and notebook, make a table of contents- list all the topics and subtopics you need to know from the chapter.
- From this table of contents, make a study sheet/diagram.

TAKING NOTES IN CLASS

In classes, your teachers will talk about topics that you are studying. The information they provide will be important for you to know when you take tests. You must be able to take good written notes from what your teachers say.

Taking good notes is a three-stage process in which there are certain things you should do before class, during class, and after class. Here are the three stages of note taking and what you should do during each stage.

1. Get Ready to Take Notes (Before Class)

- Review your notes from the previous class session before you come to class. This will help you remember what was covered and get you ready to understand new information your teacher provides.
- Complete all assigned readings before you come to class. Your teacher will expect that you have done this and will use and build upon this information.
- Bring all note taking materials with you to class. Have several pens and pencils as well as your notebook.

2. Take Notes (During Class)



- Keep your attention focused on what your teacher is saying. Listen for “signal statements” that tell you that what your teacher is about to say is important to write in your notes. Examples of signal statements are “The most important point..” and “Remember that...” Be sure to include in your notes information that your teacher repeats or writes on the chalkboard.
- Write quickly so that you can include all the important information in your notes. Do this by writing abbreviation words such as med for medicine, using symbols such as a % for percent, and writing short sentences.

3. Rewrite Your Notes (After Class)

- Rewrite your notes to make them more complete by changing abbreviated words into whole words, symbols into words, and shortened sentences in longer sentences.
- Making your notes more accurate by answering any questions you had when writing your notes in class. Use your textbook and reference sources to obtain the information you need to answer your questions. If necessary, ask your teacher or other students for help.
- Check with other students to be sure you did not leave out important information.

Note Taking Suggestion:

THE CORNELL

SYSTEM

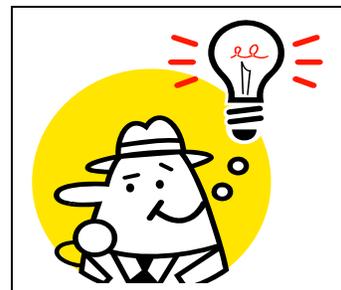
The Cornell system for taking notes is designed to save time but yet be highly efficient. There is no rewriting or retyping of your notes. It is a “DO IT RIGHT IN THE FIRST PLACE” system.

1. First Step- PREPERATION

Use a large, loose-leaf notebook. Use only one side of the paper. (you then can lay your notes out to see the direction of a lecture.) Draw a vertical line 2 ½ inches from the left side of your paper. This is the recall column. Notes will be taken to the right of this margin. Later key words or phrases can be written in the recall column.

2. Second Step- DURING THE LECTURE

Record notes in paragraph form. Capture general ideas, not illustrative ideas. Skip lines to show end of ideas or thoughts. Using abbreviations will save time. Write legibly.



3. Third Step- AFTER THE LECTURE

Read through your notes and make it more legible if necessary. Now use the column. Jot down ideas or key words which give you the idea of the lecture. You will have to reread the lecturer’s ideas and reflect in your own words. Cover up the right-hand portion of your notes and recite the general ideas and concepts of the lecture. Overlap your notes showing only recall columns and have your review.

MEMORIZATION STRATEGIES

1. Acronyms

*An **acronym** is an invented combination of letters. Each letter is a cue to remember a certain item.*

***Example: PEMDAS**, sequence to remember math information
Parenthesis Exponents Multiplication Division Addition Subtraction*

2. An Acrostic

*An **acrostic** is an invented sentence or poem with a first letter cue:
The first letter of each word is a cue to an idea you need to remember.*

***Example: Please Excuse My Dear Aunt Sally** (PEMDAS above)*

3. The Keyword Method

This is a great method for remembering foreign words.

***First**, select a key word in English that sounds like the foreign word you need to remember. **Next**, imagine an image which involves the key word with the English meaning of the foreign word.*

***Example:** The Spanish word “cabina” means phone booth. For the English keyword you might think of a cab in a phone booth. Now on a test when you see the word “cabina”, you should recall the image of a cab in a phone booth.*

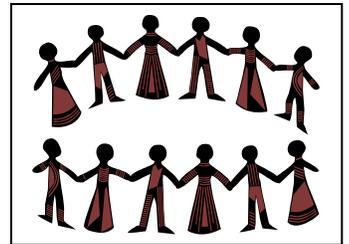
REACH OUT!

START A PEER STUDY GROUP

Research shows that seeking out extra help in a subject 2 to 3 times a week for as little as 20 minutes each time can greatly improve your grades and understanding in a subject area. Talk to your teachers and arrange to get some extra help!

Peer Study Group Guidelines

- **Group should consist of both students in need of assistance and students who excel at a particular subject.**
- **Group meets at least once but preferably twice a week.**
- **Group meets for one hour at a time.**
- **Group exchanges contact information so that they can call one another if in need.**
- **Focus on small tasks.**
- **Seek out a teacher to monitor your study group from time to time.**



The Drop-In Center is available for all students during the school day

If interested in peer tutoring please contact your teacher or counselor for further information.

Teachers are available everyday from 2:18-2:45pm for extra help. Please see your teacher for details.

Some helpful websites to assist you and provide you with extra resources:

1. HighSchoolHub.org
2. ProQuestk12.org
3. RegentsPrep.org
4. DiscoverySchool.com
5. Highschoolace.com/ace/ace.cfm

Helpful web links listed by subject area:

English

1. Sparknotes.com
2. PinkMonkey.com
3. BookWolf.com
4. English-Zone.com
5. SpeechTips.com
6. WordCentral.com

Math

Science

1. MrBiology.com
2. PlantCare.com
3. ChemTutor.com
4. Medscape.com
5. HomeworkSpot.com

Foreign Languages

1. Mathstories.com
2. CoolMath.com
3. Math.com
4. Algebra.help
5. Hotmath.com

1. FreeTranslation.com
2. About.com
3. JapaneseOnline.com
4. LatinWordList.com
5. Conjuguemos.com

Social Studies

1. NationalGeographic.com
2. NetState.com
3. Capitals.com
4. UnitedStatesHistory.com
5. HistoryChannel.com

Materials for this packet were gathered in part from
Studygs.com, HighSchoolHub.com and How-To-Study.com