TAKING TIME TO MAKE TIME

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Good organization and study skills are keys to success in school. It is not uncommon for students to have difficulties with organization. Review the following tips with your child to help them stay organized and meet success.

**Organize Your Time**

Do you ever wonder where all the time goes? Effectively managing time and setting priorities can be difficult. Homework, projects, and after-school activities can become a scheduling challenge. Distractions such as TV, video games, the Internet, and the phone use a great deal of your time. To help you see where you spend your time, take a few minutes to complete the following activity:

- Imagine you are a recording artist making a 24-track CD. Each track represents one hour of your day. Color in the number of hours you spend on each activity listed below. Will you be filling your CD with time spent on useful activities?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hours Spent:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sleeping</td>
<td>Eating Meals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At School</td>
<td>Doing Homework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching TV</td>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With Friends</td>
<td>Video Games</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extracurricular Activities</td>
<td>Doing Chores</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Are you making the best use of your time? If not, try…

- Setting priorities and sticking to them.
- Using a planner and making a “to do” list.
- Breaking large tasks into “mini” assignments.
Ring Binder

Follow these tips to keep your ring binder organized:

- Make sure binder rings are in working order. If the teeth on the rings don’t meet properly, your papers may get “chewed up.”

- Place your student handbook, agenda book, and a pencil case with sharp pencils and pens in the rings in the front of the binder.

- Store extra blank sheets of paper in the back of your binder, so you can reach for them quickly while still listening to directions.

- Use a sturdy divider to label each subject section. You may need subsections for warm-ups or class work. Color coding the dividers may also help.

- Create a homework folder within your binder where you can put all handouts, assignments, and school correspondence that you receive during the day.

- Date all of your work and any handouts you receive.

- Examine papers for torn holes, and repair as needed.

- Trim off torn and tattered edges of papers.

- Organize your binder each night.

- When you need help, ask your teachers, parents, and other family members for assistance, encouragement, and advice.
Good Study Habits

Good study habits make learning more efficient and rewarding. Students with strong study skills tend to listen carefully, take good notes, participate in class, and do their homework. Start building strong study habits by using the following tips:

- Choose a quiet, well-lit area that is free from interruptions and distractions. Be sure you have all materials you need before you begin.
- Review class notes at least once per week. Be sure to highlight the points that seem most important.
- Take notes as you read, and write a summary in your own words.
- Ask your teacher what you should concentrate on when studying.
- When memorizing, use flashcards, try acronyms, memorize smaller segments at a time, or put the words to a tune.
- Maximize your time by studying between classes or when waiting in line.
- When studying, take breaks, stretch, or eat a snack.
- Attend “coach” classes for additional explanation from the teacher.
- Study with a homework buddy.
- Get psyched! Think about how good you are going to feel when you succeed!

After-Class Strategies

According to certain studies on memory, approximately 62% of what a person has just learned is forgotten after the first day if it is not reviewed. Review your notes each evening. Rewrite your notes to make them more complete. Schedule a weekly review period at a time that works right for you. You’ll find that reviewing material often may reduce the time needed to study right before a test.
Note Taking

Come to class ready to listen. Remember, just hearing what your teachers say is not the same as listening to what they say. Listening is a cognitive act that requires you to pay attention and think about what is being said.

Bring all note-taking materials with you to class. Have several pens, pencils, and your notebook. When taking notes in class, continue to listen actively and do the following:

- Record notes in your own words; they should be brief yet complete enough to retain the main idea.
- Listen for “signal statements” that tell you what your teacher is about to say is important and record that information in your notes. Examples of signal statements are “The most important…” and “Remember that…”
- Emphasize important words by underlining, capitalizing, circling, boxing, or drawing arrows.
- Copy certain information word-for-word such as formulas, diagrams, and sequences.
- Include in your notes information that your teacher repeats or writes on the chalkboard or overhead.

In Advance of Class

Before you go to class, take the following steps:

- Eat a healthy meal or snack. Breakfast, lunch, and snacks can affect how you learn.
- Complete all assigned readings. Your teacher’s lesson will build upon what you have read.
- Review your notes from the previous class session. This will help you remember what was covered and prepare to learn new information.
- Briefly preview the material that will be covered. The purpose of previewing is not to fully understand the material but to gain a general idea of what to expect.
Running on less than adequate sleep makes the day seem longer and your tasks more difficult. Studies show that when children stay up late, they have more academic and attention problems at school. In a national survey on the sleep patterns of U.S. adolescents (ages 11 through 17), National Sleep Foundation’s 2006 Sleep in America Poll finds that only 20 percent of adolescents get the recommended **nine hours** of sleep on school nights. The following suggestions make it easier for young people to get more sleep every night:

- Set a consistent bedtime and wake-time (even on weekends) that allow for the recommended nine hours or more of sleep every night.
- Have a relaxing bedtime routine, such as reading for fun or taking a warm shower.
- Keep the bedroom comfortable, dark, cool, and quiet.
- Create a sleep-friendly environment by removing the television and other distractions from the bedroom.
- Avoid late afternoon drinks that contain caffeine.

**Eavesdrop-Be a Good Listener**

Listed below from How-To-Study.com are tips to help you be a good listener in class:

- Be emotionally ready to listen. Make a conscious choice to find the topic useful and interesting. Be committed to learning all that you can. Your attitude is important.
- Listen with a purpose. Identify what you expect and hope to learn from the class. Listen for key points as your teacher talks.
- Listen with an open mind. It is good to question what is said as long as you remain open to points of view other than your own.
- Be attentive. Focus on what your teacher is saying. Try not to daydream and let your mind wander. It may help to maintain eye contact with your teacher.
- Be an active listener. Take notes about what your teacher says. Taking notes requires you to make decisions about what to write, and you have to be an active listener to do this.
- Accept the challenge. Make an extra effort to listen when you find the information difficult or boring. Work hard to pay attention and understand what is being said. Don’t be afraid to ask questions.
- Triumph over the environment. The classroom may be too hot, too cold, too bright, or too dark according to your preferences. Don’t let these inconveniences get to you. Stay focused on learning.