

THE CENTER FOR SPEECH EXCELLENCE

21 Steps to Better Grades

1. Find a quiet, well-lighted place to study.
2. Collect your tools: a pad of paper for notes
 - pencil
 - pen
 - highlighter
 - dictionary
3. Focus on the attitude of learning. Take 3 or 4 slow, deep breaths to clear your mind.
4. Open the book, read the chapter title and think about what the chapter will be about.
5. Read the study questions at the end of the chapter so you are alert to important points.
6. Read the first paragraph closely, one word at a time.
7. Circle or highlight any word you don't know. At the end of the paragraph, look up any word that you circled. Write down the definition and spelling on your note pad. If you are studying from a library book that you can't write in, photocopy the pages and study from the copy. Unfamiliar words are likely to show up on a test as important vocabulary.
8. Reread the paragraph. Remember that everyone must read something more than once to learn it.
9. Write one sentence that summarizes the paragraph. Repeat the process for each paragraph. Keep notes in your notebook but don't hesitate to make notes in the margins of book if you own the book (see #7).
10. Stop every 15 minutes and ask, "What have I done in the last 15 minutes?"
11. At the end of the chapter, write a short summary of the whole chapter.
12. Read and answer the questions at the end of the chapter.
13. Label your notes by date and subject. Don't lose the notebook.
14. Study from your notes. Make flash cards from your notes. The flash cards should cover vocabulary, dates, concepts, and discussion topics.

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15. If you do not understand a word or idea in the context of the topic you are studying, write down a question and ask the teacher during the next class.
16. Request a conference with the teacher to review missed questions on a test or quiz.
17. Always prepare for class so you can be familiar with the material that the teacher will be discussing. Don't lose grade points by failing to turn in your homework.
18. Attend any help sessions offered.
19. Sit on the front row so that your right ear is toward the teacher.
20. Keep an assignment calendar. Break projects into steps-to-completion and put your due date for each step into your calendar.
21. When your grades improve-enjoy your success!

-Compiled by Pamela H. Bashor, CCC-SP (1999)