

KEYS TO ACHIEVING GOOD GRADES

(1) Always do HARDEST subjects first, and then EASIEST last

- You have the most energy and concentration when you first begin working which will help you attack the difficult work, fatigue will not set in.
- Mentally you are relieved and happy when it is done, and confident about your remaining work. This reinforces positive feelings towards homework and your ability to get it done.
- You will be far less likely to delay the completion of your work once the most difficult tasks are completed.

(2) Always do your WRITTEN assignments first, and then READING assignments last.

- Written assignments require more energy, do them first when you have the energy.
- You can pretty much read anywhere, but writing takes preparation for finding a desk or suitable place to write as well as paper and writing utensils.

(3) Make sure to give yourself BREAKS between assignments or every 50 minutes

- For 9 months of the year, in school, you train your brain to focus for 50 minutes at a time for each class. Even if you have block periods you get lectured for 50 minutes then move to a lab or activity.
- Do not work past your training. Short breaks in between assignments, or every 50 minutes, whichever comes first, will help rejuvenate you as you work.

(4) REPETITION is the key to studying and memorization

- Review materials daily by reading them over 2-3 times. This should take no more than a half hour a day. Simply take your vocabulary list, notes, whatever, and read through them like you read a book. You are trying to familiarize yourself with material as you do when you watch a movie every now and then, or meet someone new every once in a while...you are learning to commit the information to long term memory without having to study for hours at a time!
- Repetition review should occur daily regardless if you have a test coming up soon or not. By the time the test comes you will not have to study for 2-3 hours because you've already put in the time and committed the information to long term memory. It alleviates stress and builds academic confidence.

(5) Use your WASTED TIME

- Your "Wasted time" consists of the drive to and from school and the commercials you watch when you're watching television. It could even involve what else you are doing while you eat breakfast, lunch or dinner (You can still read!).
- Instead of watching the world go by as you ride to and from school, review notes and gain more repetition so you can commit information to long term memory.
- If you watch television for 2 hours, about 45 minutes of the two hours consists of commercials (which you do not need to watch). Have your notes, study guides, index cards, etc. next to you and put the television on mute when a commercial comes on and review. When your show comes back on then put the volume back up, mark your place with what you were reviewing and continue on the next commercial. Now you do not have to use your personal time after the television shows are over to get this work done. You just freed up some more of your time to do the things you enjoy doing!

(6) Make sure you EAT a good breakfast and/or lunch on the day of a quiz or test

- Biologically your brain will not focus on dispersing information if the body is crying for food or liquids. Nourishment is the body's number one priority.
- You have enough distractions to overcome from the external world; do not create distractions for yourself internally.

(7) Keep a DAILY PLANNER

- When a teacher gives you a homework assignment for the day write it in your daily planner for that day. Create a box next to the assignment that you can check off once the assignment is completed.
- If the teacher announces a quiz, test, paper, etc., write it immediately in your calendar for the day it is announced. Also mark "Study for test" on the two days prior to the test in your list of things to do for those days. This also helps balance your personal time with your academic time.
- Using a planner allows you to see the amount of time you need to do homework and study on each given day. Now you will be better informed on how to handle your daily scheduling.
- Also use the daily planner for all your personal events, sports schedules, etc.

(8) COMMUNICATE with your teachers

- Meet with your teacher before/after class or school and discuss what troubles you are having with any material. If you are receiving bad grades and do not talk to your teacher than your teacher will think that you don't care. So when you grade could be a D- rather than F, or a C- rather than D, why should they care which one they give you? Plus, they are not mind readers, how are they supposed to know how to help you if you don't communicate?

(9) SEEK HELP from those around you

- If you are unable to see your current teacher, seek out another teacher who teaches that subject. You can also contact the teacher who teaches the honors portion of the same class.
- Find out who the A students are in the class and find out what is working for them. You're both getting the same lecture and material, but they're getting the better grade – find out what habits, tricks and techniques keep them on top of their grades.
- Get tutoring in the library after school from 3:00-4:00 with TASP.

(10) BELIEVE in yourself

- You can't achieve anything unless you begin to believe in yourself. Think about times when you have been successful at anything. Think about people who have things much worse than you, but still continue to strive. Think about the people you love, respect and look up to in life. Imagine where all this can take you – if you believe!