

# **Study Skills Session**

# Independent Learning

- Experience shows that those students who make a 'good' start at the beginning of Year 12, go on to be successful in their A level courses.
- Establishing good practice and habits early is essential.

During your time in the sixth form, you will hear the expression '**independent learner**' a great deal, but what do you think teachers mean by this?

# Independent Learning

- Proactive
- Purposeful
- Organised
- Analytical and problem solving
- Self-reflective
- See mistakes as part of learning process
- Growth mind-set
- Persistent and resilient
- Self-motivated
- **RESPONSIBILITY FOR OWN LEARNING/STUDIES**

Independent learning does not mean working on your own. Your tutor, teachers, HOY are always here to offer support and guidance.

Which attributes of being an independent learner do you feel you possess now and which three attributes do you feel you need to develop?

# Effective Learning

- You must "get" something before you can "forget" it!
- Often, when we say, "I forgot," what we mean is "I didn't pay attention and understand it."
- Good students do not necessarily study more than poor students; they use their study time more effectively.
- Top students use the strategies of effective learning: **concentrating, comprehending, and remembering.**

# Concentration

- When we say **concentrate**, we mean sustain your attention and focus in one direction with no distractions.
- When you complain that you "can't concentrate," you usually mean you can't keep your attention on your studies. You're probably concentrating, but on other things.
- To overcome distractions that interfere with your studies, identify the distraction.

***Can you think of any such distractions?***

# Situations to avoid...

It is commonly agreed amongst experts that the following situations do not provide good study environments:

- Working with headphones on (background music is better)
- Studying in front of a TV/iPad
- Trying to work with peers who are not taking the same courses as you, or does not 'feel like studying'
- Studying near any activity you enjoy
- Working with social study groups (focused, organised study groups can provide the best of all study environments)
- Having access to a mobile phone and monitoring social media

# Comprehending

- How **WELL** you learn something, **NOT** how fast you learn it, is the critical factor in remembering.
- **Comprehending** means your ability to translate information into meaningful ideas you understand.
- Taking, annotating and reviewing notes are essential.
- To support **comprehension**, students should try to adopt certain strategies:
  - Using prior knowledge to make connections
  - Predicting
  - Interpreting
  - Summarising
  - Reflecting
  - Critical thinking
  - Evaluating Information

## Improving comprehension - *Which of these do you do...*

- Attend lessons with the intent to listen.
- Actively keep up with the assigned and suggested readings.
- Use your study sessions productively and effectively.
- Review and annotate class notes.
- Spend extra time on material with which you know you find challenging.
- Take breaks during long study sessions. Allow yourself a 10 to 15 minute breaks for every 50 to 70 minutes of studying.
- Organise yourself from day 1 – create a folder of summary notes, PLCs, practice questions, past papers, wider reading/research.
- Review and improve homeworks, assignments, assessments etc. and correct any errors.



# Reviewing

- Ideally you should not wait more than 12 hours before reviewing your class notes.

**When reviewing and  
annotating a text/your  
class notes, what should  
you do?**

- Some parts may be difficult to understand. You should fill these gaps while reviewing.
- When you do this first review (the one within the first 12 hours), you should fill these gaps during the first review.
- A second review should be done, consisting of covering up notes and using subheadings and recall questions to trigger memory or completing exam practice (application of knowledge).

# Note Taking and Annotation

## **Review and annotate your notes by:**

- What is it? Having a conversation with a text
- Clarifying anything that is not clear
- Filling in any missing information
- Writing questions you may have
- Highlighting most important/key points
- Mark points you want to revisit
- Adding any images or thoughts that will make the text more meaningful

A **yellow highlighter** allows you to mark exactly what you are interested in.

Equally important, the yellow line emphasises without interfering.

Highlighters in blue and pink and fluorescent colours are more distracting.

The idea is to see the important text more clearly, not give your eyes a psychedelic exercise.

While you read, highlight whatever seems to be key information. At first, you will probably highlight too little or too much.

# Time Management

- You will be rewarded for the amount of time you dedicate to your academic studies.

**The more**

**of success!**

- Time management in your environment so that you can

**What do you think are  
elements of good time  
management?**

control of your

- Work productively during school periods, this will mean that you have less to do at weekends and in the evenings - time that is wasted during the school day must be replaced/caught up on!

**There are no short cuts!**

- Time away from study is important for your wellbeing. You will enjoy this time more if you know that you are working to the best of your ability and doing everything you can to ensure success.

# 9 Elements of Good Time Management

Prioritisation

Goal-setting

Managing interruptions

Scheduling

Avoiding procrastination

Organised environment

Reviewing progress

Being realistic

Multitasking

# Study Sessions

- There is no such thing as a 'FREE' period!
- As a general rule, each hour you spend in class should be matched by at least one hour of independent study.
- Plan your study sessions.
- Set yourself a clear, structured and achievable target.
- Not to solely complete homework – independent/further study! *What is the difference?*
- Avoid distractions – phones!
- How much time do you actually spend working vs. procrastination? Always be honest with yourself!
- Are you working smart? *What is meant by this?*

**Improved progress and success at A Level is NOT about working harder or longer, it is about working SMART!**

- Are you chunking your revision?
- Are you setting yourself achievable goals?
- Are you doing regular exam practice?
- Are you improving and/or re-writing assessed pieces of work?
- Are you using your study sessions effectively and not simply to complete homework?
- Are you using the subject Google Classroom pages?
- Are you using your subject PLCs?
- Are you being proactive in communicating with your teachers about what you need to do to improve your progress?

Cornell Note Taking. Look at the video to see one way to take notes

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WtW9IyE04OQ>

