

23 TIME MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

STUDY WHEN:

- * Plan two study hours for every hour you spend in class.
- * Study difficult (or boring) subjects first.
- * Avoid scheduling marathon study sessions.
- * Be aware of your best time of day.
- * Use waiting time.
- * Use a regular study area.

STUDY WHERE:

- * Choose a place that minimizes visual and auditory distractions.
- * Use the library or empty classrooms. Get out of a noisy dorm.
- * Don't get too comfortable. Sit (or even stand) so that you can remain awake and attentive.
- * Find a better place when productivity falls off.

YOU AND THE OUTSIDE WORLD:

- * Pay attention to your attention.
- * Agree with roommates about study time.
- * Avoid noise distractions.
- * Notice how others misuse your time.
- * Get off the phone.
- * Learn to say no.
- * Hang a "Do Not Disturb!" sign on your door.
- * Ask: "What is one task I can accomplish toward my goal?"
- * Ask: "Am I beating myself up?" (lighten up, don't berate self).
- * Ask: "Is this a piano?" (or, "Are you a perfectionist?")
- * Ask: "How did I just waste time?"
- * Ask: "Would I pay myself for what I'm doing right now?"
- * Ask: "Can I do just one more thing?" (Stretch yourself).

Reproduced with the permission of Gregory Wells, Coordinator, William James Center, Davis and Elkins College, Elkins WV., NACADA Conf. 1987

The Cornell Note Taking System

Set Up Your Paper: Draw a line as indicated on the paper. Include the class lecture or book title on the first page, number each page in the upper right corner.

Recall Column

Record Column

----- 2 1/2"-----

Reduce ideas and facts to concise jottings and summaries as cues for **Reciting, Reviewing,** and **Reflecting.**
page.

6"-----

Record the lecture or book contents as fully and as meaningfully as possible. Record notes on the front of your paper **only.** **Lists and Diagrams** are recorded on the back of the page.

The format provides the perfect opportunity for following through with the 5 R's of note-taking. Here they are:

1. **Record.** During the lecture or reading, record in the main column as many meaningful facts and ideas as you can. Write legibly.
2. **Reduce.** As soon after as possible, summarize these ideas and facts concisely in the Recall Column. Summarizing clarifies meanings and relationships, reinforces continuity, and strengthens memory. Also, it is a way of preparing for examinations gradually and well ahead of time.
3. **Recite.** Now cover the column, using only your jottings in the Recall Column as cues or "flags" to help you recall, **say out loud** facts and ideas as fully as you can, not mechanically, but in your own words and with as much appreciation of the meaning as you can. Then, uncovering your notes, verify what you have said. This procedure helps to transfer the facts and ideas of your long term memory.
4. **Reflect.** Reflective students distill their opinions from their notes. They make such opinions the starting point for their own musings upon the subjects they are studying. Such musings aid them in making sense out of their courses and academic experiences by finding relationships among them. Reflective students continually label and index their experiences and ideas, put them into structures, outlines, summaries, and frames of reference. They rearrange and file them. Best of all, they have an eye for the vital-for the essential. Unless ideas are placed in categories, unless they are taken up from time to time for re-examination, they will become inert and soon forgotten.
5. **Review.** If you will spend 10 minutes every week or so in a quick review of these notes, you will retain most of what you have learned, and you will be able to use your knowledge currently to greater and greater effectiveness.

©Modified from Sources of the Academic Skills Center, Dartmouth College 2001

For a fuller description of the Cornell Note Taking System, see *Essential Study Skills* by Linda Wong.

DISCOVERING YOUR UPS AND DOWNS

The chart outlines a typical day. Below the chart is a list of activities. Think about when during the day you prefer to do a particular activity. Write the activity **number** in the preferred time slot. You may place an activity in more than one time slot.

5:00am – 7:00am	
7:00am – 9:00am	
9:00am – 10:00am	
10:00am – 12:00pm	
12:00pm – 1:00pm	
1:00pm – 3:00pm	
3:00pm – 5:00pm	
5:00pm – 7:00pm	
7:00pm – 9:00pm	
9:00pm – 11:00pm	
11:00pm – 1:00am	

When would you prefer to:

1. concentrate on memorizing
2. work on hard math problems
3. sit and relax
4. take a nap
5. do creative writing
6. do household chores
7. sit and talk with a friend
8. write a speech or plan a class presentation
9. exercise or work out
10. do easy review work
11. do problem-solving kinds of homework
12. type or copy notes
13. move around; too restless or sleepy to sit
14. eat
15. organize your notebook, notes or study materials

Find your Time Management Patterns:

On your chart, STAR	1, 2, 5, 8, 11	These activities require alertness and concentration. These times are good for your most serious studying.
On your chart, CIRCLE	10, 12, 15	These activities require less focus and concentration.
On your chart, BOX IN	3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 13, 14	These activities can be done easily with little concentration. These are your down times; try to avoid putting your study times here.

IMPROVING YOUR CONCENTRATION

Identify Your Distractors

- Internal Factors (reoccurring thoughts, emotions, etc.)
- External Factors (noise, people, environment, etc.)

Techniques For Staying on Task

1. Set a goal on how much you want to study before you begin and stick to it. (i.e.- # of pages read, etc.)
2. Use the "Checkmark Technique" to keep track of how often you get distracted. Each time you divert your attention from your work, give yourself a checkpoint. At the end of your study session, count your check marks, and make a goal to reduce the checks next study session.
3. If while you are studying, you are constantly thinking about things you have to do, make a "To Do List". This should be done before you begin to study and then if something enters your mind while studying you can write it down on your list. When you have finished studying, you can begin to work on the tasks on your list.
4. Feeling overwhelmed with your study tasks? This is a major internal distractor. Try chunking or separating your assignment into smaller parts. Every task can be broken down into simpler ones and completed one at a time. The short time span will help you to stay focused and allow you to accomplish more work during your study session.
5. For other internal distractors, try the "tunnel vision technique". As soon as your mind begins to wander, bring these thoughts to a halt and get back on task. Think of nothing but the goal you have set and the information to be learned.
6. Try to study your most difficult coursework first. Completing the hardest material first, can improve your motivation to continue studying and keep you focused on your academic information.
7. As an assessment tool, try to summarize materials read or reviewed during your study session. The summary will allow you to determine how focused you were during the session and reinforce your understanding of the information.

❖ LEARNING BY LISTENING ❖

You can learn a lot through listening. In college, it will be a prime source of information. Unfortunately, people do not instinctively listen well. Quite the reverse! Listening is a skill which must be developed.

If you apply the following suggestions, you will find yourself listening more effectively, both in class and out.

1. Determine why what the speaker is saying is important to you. If you don't have an immediate, vivid reason for listening to a speaker, you are an unmotivated listener.
2. Remember: the responsibility for interest and understanding lies with you, not with the speaker. Learning is up to the learner. If you simply want to sit passively and blame the speaker for your lack of success, then you're not a serious learner.
3. If you can't hear, arrange things so you can. Move away from sources of noise-human or mechanical. Sit where you can see the speaker easily, and where other distractions are at a minimum.
4. Listen to what the speaker is saying. Don't tune the speaker out because you don't like something about him/her or the message. Be sure you understand something before you reject it.
5. Look for the speaker's pattern of organization. In a lecture, a speaker is generally referring to notes or some other source of information. You can understand much better if you are able to recognize what the speaker's driving at and how the speaker's getting there.
6. Look for the main idea or ideas of the presentation. Facts are important only as they support the speaker's points. If you have trouble distinguishing between the important and the trivial, a friend or a tutor in the Academic Skills Center can help you.
7. Don't let your mind wander. Your thoughts move far more rapidly than the swiftest mouth, and the urge to stray is tempting. Your attention span can be increased, however, through deliberate effort. Continue to practice the habit of attention and don't be discouraged by early failures.
8. Take notes while you listen. even if you recognize everything being said, jot it down, because you won't remember it later unless you do.

NINE WAYS TO AID YOUR MEMORY

It is more natural to forget something than to remember it. If you intend to remember something, apply as many of the following techniques as possible.

1. **Be flexible.** Experiment with many learning procedures. Be willing to abandon outmoded and faulty learning procedures so you will be free to acquire new and more efficient methods.
2. **Overlearn.** In order to retain anything learned, you must practice and reorganize it into your current ongoing activity. One way to do this is to incorporate the learned material as part of your present habit system. Use it in speaking and writing. Act out the material as a rehearsal of a part in a play—a process known as role-playing. This is especially helpful in learning a foreign language.
3. **Schedule.** Schedule your study time so that the time at which something is learned or relearned is close to the time at which it will be used.
4. **Rephrase and explain.** Try a little role-playing. Take the point of view of the teacher, for a change. Rephrase and explain the material, in your own words, to a classmate. Allow your classmate to criticize your presentation. Then let the classmate be the teacher, while you criticize. If you can't explain something, you don't really know it.

Many students adopt the so-called warm-body attitude toward learning. A "warm" feeling toward one particular answer becomes the basis for its selection, regardless of whether one really knows why the answer is correct. This attitude is the result of classroom examining procedures in which true-false and multiple-choice items are used exclusively for testing. Testing in this manner encourages the attitude that mere recognition of the most probable answer constitutes learning.

Even though a particular course may not require adequate recall by using more penetrating recall-type questions, don't allow yourself to fall into this warm-body learning trap. Insist on testing yourself! If you can explain the material, most certainly you can pass any "objective" test calling for superficial recognition. However, the reverse is most certainly not true. Learning only to a point of recognition, and depending on your ability to ferret out the correct response, is insufficient for total-recall kinds of tests. Sooner or later this habit will result in total failure in a demanding test situation.

5. **Eliminate accidental and unrelated associations.** A study situation in which a phone is constantly jangling produces breaks in the mental association process. Remove the receiver. The only suggestion that can be made for the elimination of television during the study period is to donate the set to a family that is not involved in higher education.
6. **Eliminate previous mistakes.** Take note of all previous mistakes and make every effort to eliminate them from future practice. It has been shown experimentally that consciously reviewing mistakes, making note of exactly why they were incorrect, helps to reinforce the correct response. This process is sometimes referred to as negative practice.
7. Decide on an **order of importance.** Some things are more important than others. In a particular study unit, decide what these are and organize the important material into an outline or framework. "Over-learn" this particular framework.

8. Become **emotionally involved**. Assume the attitude that you fully believe the viewpoint of the author. Strive for perfection. You may never achieve it, but you will most certainly improve your performance. Learn to discuss your current beliefs calmly with people holding different attitudes. Cite authorities to back up your position.

9. Use **mechanical memory aids**. When material is complicated, it may be necessary to use mechanical memory aids. For example, suppose you had reason to believe that a certain table showing all of the endocrine glands of the body with their secretions and functions would be called for in an examination. In order to be sure that you would be able to recall all of the glands, you memorized the first letter or syllable of each gland, and organized them into three very strange words: **Anpothy Paramed Adcorpan**, the novelty of which aided recall. This could be deciphered as follows: **An**=anterior pituitary, **po**=posterior pituitary, **thy**=thyroid, **par**=parathyroid, **amed**=adrenal medulla, **adcor**=adrenal cortex, **pan**=pancreas, etc.

TAKING LECTURE NOTES

- I. There are many reasons for taking lecture notes.
 - A. Making yourself take notes forces you to listen carefully and test your understanding of the material.
 - B. When you are reviewing, notes provide a gauge to what is important in the text.
 - C. Personal notes are usually easier to remember than the text.
 - D. The writing down of important points helps you to remember them even before you have studied the material formally.

- II. Instructors usually give clues to what is important to take down. Some of the more common clues are:
 - A. Material written on the blackboard.
 - B. Repetition
 - C. Emphasis
 1. Emphasis can be judged by tone of voice and gesture.
 2. Emphasis can be judged by the amount of time the instructor spends on points and the number of examples he or she uses.
 - D. Word signals (e.g. "There are **two points of view** on . . . " "The **third** reason is . . . " " In **conclusion** . . . ")
 - E. Summaries given at the end of class.
 - F. Reviews given at the beginning of class.

- III. Each student should develop his or her own method of taking notes, but most students find the following suggestions helpful:
 - A. Make your notes brief.
 1. Never use a sentence where you can use a phrase. Never use a phrase where you can use a word.
 2. Use abbreviations and symbols, but be consistent.
 - B. Put most notes in your own words. However, the following should be noted exactly:
 1. Formulas
 2. Definitions
 3. Specific facts
 - C. Use outline form and/or a numbering system. Indentation helps you distinguish major from minor points.
 - D. If you miss a statement, write key words, skip a few spaces, and get the information later.
 - E. Don't try to use every space on the page. Leave room for coordinating your notes with the text after the lecture. (You may want to list key terms in the margin or make a summary of the contents of the page.)
 - F. Date your notes. Perhaps number the pages.

SAVING TIME ON NOTETAKING

Here are some hints regarding taking notes on classroom lectures that can save time for almost any student. Some students say that they plan to rewrite or type their notes later. To do so is to use a double amount of time; once to take the original notes and a second to rewrite them. The advice is simple: DO IT RIGHT THE FIRST TIME!

Second, there are some students who attempt to take notes in shorthand. Though shorthand is a valuable tool for a secretary, it is almost worthless for a student doing academic work. Here's why. Notes in shorthand cannot be studied in that form. They must first be transcribed. The act of transcribing notes takes an inordinate amount of time and energy but does not significantly contribute to their mastery. It is far better to have taken the notes originally in regular writing and then spend the time after that in direct study and **recitation** of the notes.

Third, do not record the lesson on a cassette tape or any other tape. The lecture on tape precludes flexibility. This statement can be better understood when seen in the light of a person who has taken his/her notes in regular writing. Immediately after taking the notes this person can study them in five minutes before the next class as s/he walks toward the next building, as s/he drinks his/her coffee, or whatever. Furthermore, this student, in looking over his/her notes, may decide that the notes contain only four worthwhile ideas which s/he can highlight, relegating the rest of the lecture to obscurity. Whereas the lecture on tape has to be listened to in its entirety including the worthwhile points as well as the "garbage," handwritten notes may be studied selectively. A student who takes the easy way out - recording the lecture on tape as he or she sits back doing nothing - will box him or herself into inflexibility.

NOTE MAKING

Learning to make notes effectively will help you to improve your study and work habits and to remember important information. Often, students are deceived into thinking that because they **understand** everything that is said in class they will therefore remember it. This is dead wrong! Write it down.

As you make notes, you will develop skill in selecting important material and in discarding unimportant material. The secret to developing this skill is practice. Check your results constantly. Strive to improve. Notes enable you to retain important facts and data and to develop an accurate means of arranging necessary information.

Here are some hints on note making.

1. Don't write down everything that you read or hear. Be alert and attentive to the main points. Concentrate on the "meat" of the subject and forget the trimmings.
2. Notes should consist of key words or very short sentences. If a speaker gets sidetracked it is often possible to go back and add further information.
3. Take accurate notes. You should usually use your own words, but try not to change the meaning. If you quote **directly** from an author, quote **correctly**.
4. Think a minute about your material before you start making notes. Don't take notes just to be taking notes! Take notes that will be of real value to you when you look over them at a later date.
5. Have a uniform system of punctuation and abbreviation that will make sense to you. Use a skeleton outline and show importance by indenting. Leave lots of white space for later additions.
6. Omit descriptions and full explanations. Keep your notes short and to the point. Condense your material so you can grasp it rapidly.
7. Don't worry about missing a point.
8. Don't keep notes on oddly shaped pieces of paper. Keep notes in order and in one place.

9. Shortly after making your notes, go back and rework (not redo) your notes by adding extra points and spelling out unclear items. Remember, we forget rapidly. Budget time for this vital step just as you do for the class itself.
10. Review your notes regularly. This is the only way to achieve lasting memory.

©Academic Skills Center, Dartmouth College 2001

Vary Your Reading Rate

Good readers are flexible in their reading attack. Unlike the plodder, who reads consistently at 200 words per minute, or the superficial reader, who may read everything rapidly, well-trained readers have the capacity to adjust their speed to the material.

Rate adjustment may be overall adjustment to the article as a whole, or it may be internal adjustment within the article.

Overall adjustment is the basic rate at which the total article is read.

Internal adjustment is concerned with the necessary variations in rate that take place as each part of the material is read.

To illustrate this, suppose you plan to take a 100-mile trip. Since this is a relatively hard drive, with hills, curves, and a mountain pass, you decide to take three hours for the total trip, averaging about 35 miles per hour. This is your **overall** speed adjustment. However, in actual driving, you may slow down to no more than 15 miles per hour on some curves and hills, while on relatively straight and level sections you may drive up to 50 miles per hour. This is your **internal** speed adjustment. In short, there is no set rate which the good reader follows inflexibly in reading a particular selection, even though an over all rate is set for the total job.

Base your rate adjustment on:

1. Your purpose. What do you want to get from the material?
2. The nature and difficulty of the material.
3. The amount of previous experience you have had with this subject.

Your reading purpose: Circumstances will determine why you are reading and how much you have to get out of your reading. For example, a chapter may have been assigned in class, or you may be gathering material for a speech, or you may be trying to impress your friends by your knowledge of Shakespeare. You need to be eminently clear not only on such **general purposes** but also on **specific purpose**.

To "get the gist," read very rapidly.

To understand general ideas, read fairly rapidly.

To get and retain detailed facts, read at a moderate rate.

To locate specific information, skim or scan at a rapid rate.

To determine value of material, skim at a very rapid rate.

To preread or postread, scan at a fairly rapid rate.

To read for enjoyment, read rapidly or slowly, depending on what you want.

To build general background, read rapidly.

Nature and difficulty of material: First of all, this involves an overall adjustment in rate to match your thinking ability. Obviously, overall level of difficulty depends on who's doing the reading. While Einstein's theories may be extremely difficult to most laypeople, they may be very simple and clear to a professor of physics. Hence, the laypeople and the physics professor must make different overall adjustments in rate of reading the same material. General reading which is difficult for you will require a slower rate; simpler material will permit a faster rate.

©Academic Skills Center, Dartmouth College 2001

A few broad suggestions may help you to select your rate(s) within the particular article:

Decrease speed when you find the following:

1. an unfamiliar word not made clear by the sentence. Try to understand it from the way it's used; then read on and return to it later. You may wish to underline the word so you can find it again quickly.
2. Long and uninvolved sentence and paragraph structure. Slow down enough to enable you to untangle them and get an accurate idea of what the passage says.
3. Unfamiliar or abstract ideas. Look for applications or examples which will give them meaning. Demand that an idea "make sense." Never give up until you understand, because it will be that much easier the next time. Find someone to help you if necessary.
4. Detailed, technical material. This includes complicated directions, abstract principles, materials on which you have scant background.
5. Material on which you want detailed retention. The key to memory is organization and recitation. Speed should not be a consideration here.

Increase speed when you find the following:

1. Simple material with few ideas new to you. Move rapidly over the familiar; spend most of your time on the few unfamiliar ideas.
2. Unnecessary examples and illustrations. These are included to clarify ideas. If not needed, move over them rapidly.
3. Detailed explanation and elaboration which you do not need.
4. Broad, generalized ideas. These can be rapidly grasped, even with scan techniques.

Skip that material which is not suitable for your purpose. While the author may have thought particular information was relevant, his/her reason for writing was not necessarily the same as **your** reason for reading.

Remember to keep your reading attack flexible. Shift gears from selection to selection. Use low gear when the going is steep; shift into high when you get to the smooth parts. Remember to adjust your rate **within** a given article according to the type of road you are traveling and to your

purposes in traveling it. Most important, remember: Reading this paper hasn't done you and good. Not yet. You must **practice** these techniques until a flexible reading rate becomes second nature to you.

©Academic Skills Center, Dartmouth College 2001

WRITING THE RESEARCH PAPER

In between the choosing of a topic and the final typing of the last revision lie a series of skills which, if learned thoroughly, might well be the most important and most permanent academic possession acquired in four years of college. Specifically, you need to learn how to: delve deeply into a topic; find and select raw data; reflect, speculate, and mediate upon implications and relationships; glimpse and follow insights; establish logical categories; organize an outline; think and write with clarity and precision; and **revise**.

Make the writing of every paper an exercise to develop these skills.

Steps In Writing The Research Paper

1. Choose your subject
2. Narrow your subject
3. Provide a focus for narrowing material
4. Find references and select bibliography
5. Gather notes
6. Categorize notes
7. Decide upon an approach and point of view to gain control over your material
8. Draw up a detailed outline
9. Write a detailed outline
10. Make a clear copy
11. Leave for a day
12. Edit your work-go over you paper four times
 - a. First, reposition paragraphs and sentences
 - b. Second, add and delete material to achieve balance and to advance the stated objective of your paper
 - c. Third, look to insert transitional words and phrases
 - d. Fourth, read the paper aloud
13. Make a copy
14. Know rules for using quotations
15. Know rules for using footnotes
16. Know how to make a bibliography

Choosing Your Subject

Choose a subject which **interests** you. The outstanding American expert on Tibet spends half of her time in Washington as advisor to governmental agencies, yet she has never traveled beyond the boundaries of the United States. when asked how she became so well versed on Tibet, she answered, "I'm simply fascinated by the subject, and have read everything I could get my hands on."

A research paper, then, is an opportunity to further your interest in some subject or area.

Narrowing Your Subject

The most common criticism of research papers is , "topic too broad." You may well wonder, "Well, how can I be sure that I have sufficiently narrowed my topic?" A Cornell English professor

has this sure-fire method: put your subject through three significant narrowings, i.e., moving from one category to a class within a category, each time.

For example, here are some sample narrowings for papers of 10 to 12 pages:

1. Public opinion polls: accuracy of polls: the accuracy of such polls in national elections: factors which determine the accuracy of public opinion polls in national elections.
2. The climate of opinion between World War I and World War II: the **moral** climate, etc.: the **particular** arguments involved in the debate over Prohibition: the arguments for Prohibition used by the "Drys" in support of the 18th Amendment and their arguments in the late 1920's and early 1930's to prevent repeal.
3. Discrimination against African-Americans: Northern attitudes vs. Southern attitudes: the particular **geographical** distinction: how Mason and Dixon's Line became a line of demarcation.
4. The Civil War: crucial battles: **one** battle: Napoleonic strategy and the battle of Fredricksburg.
5. Comparative religion-two religions; Judaism and Christianity; "salvation" in Judaism.

Provide A Focus For Gathering Material

To avoid the gross error of making your paper a mere accumulation of facts, you must crystallize a genuine question, and your facts must then be used to answer this question. Whether it can be **definitely** answered or not is unimportant.

A detailed outline at this stage is not usually possible since you are not sure of the material that you will uncover. Nevertheless, the specific question in mind will give you the needed focus for gathering pertinent material.

Select A Bibliography

College libraries, or any good library for that matter, contain many valuable sources of reference material. It will pay you in the long run to find out just what these sources are and how you can learn to use them with the maximum efficiency. Don't make the mistake of waiting until just a few days before your paper is due to make your first acquaintance with the many reference books your library contains. A few minutes spent in the library at the beginning of the term, when you are not under pressure to finish a paper, will help you in the future.

The "backbone" of all libraries is the card catalogue system, which tells you not only what books the library possesses, but also where you can find them. Look, therefore, through the library's card file and record all pertinent references on separate 3x5 slips of paper.

Efficiency will be increased if all the information is systematically recorded in the following ways:

- A. Record the name of the library where the reference is located. Many universities have special libraries located in separate schools on campus.

B. Record the short title of your subject. This will be important when working on current and subsequent papers.

C. Record the library call number. You will not have to refer to the card catalogue whenever you want to use the same book again.

D. Record accurately the full reference in exactly the same form that you plan to use in the bibliographic portion of your paper. This insures your including all the essential parts of the reference; also, the correct form will make easier the mechanics of typing.

E. Record briefly your opinion of the reference; e.g., "not useful-does not discuss principles"; "excellent for case studies of poor readers at the secondary-school level."

Another valuable source of reference material which is somewhat like the card catalogue system is the periodical indexes, such as the **Reader's Guide** and **Poole's Index To Periodical Literature**. Often, there will be special indexes which list new books and articles for one field; for example, the **Psychological Abstracts** for the field of psychology, and the **Educational Index** for the field of education. Of course, do not overlook the general encyclopedias, such as the **Britannica Americana** and the **New International**, nor the more specialized works like the **Encyclopedia of Banking and Finance** and **Who's Who In America**. Finally, there are the yearbooks, of which the **World Almanac** and the **Book of Facts** are notable examples.

One frequently overlooked source of information is the personal interview. Every campus and town has its share of experts and authorities. If possible, arrange for an interview and be prepared to take notes.

Gathering Notes

1. Use note paper of uniform size. The 3x5 slips of paper are suggested because they are uniform, less bulky, and less expensive than cards.

2. Use only one side of the slip, and then record only one topic on each slip.

3. Identify the reference information on the note slips by writing the author's last name, or the title of the reference in the top left corner of the note slip. The page number or numbers should appear in parentheses at the end of the item of information. This system will enable you to find quickly again the exact page if further information is needed.

4. Write notes in your own words. This will help insure that you understand what you are reading. Furthermore, you will be putting the information into a form which can be used in your paper. Always distinguish clearly between your words and the author's. Failure to do so might lead you unwittingly into plagiarism.

5. Just as in taking notes on a textbook, always skim the article or chapter you are reading before writing the notes.

6. Notations should be concise, yet sufficiently detailed to provide an accurate meaning.

7. Taking time to write notations neatly will avoid the time and frustration of later deciphering.

8. Use ink. Notes written in pencil will become blurred through handling and sorting.
9. If you need direct quotations, use only a few of the outstanding phrases or sentences. Most students tend to quote too much and too often.
10. Abbreviate only the common words, otherwise much time will be lost in "figuring out" unfamiliar "shorthand."
11. When ideas and insights occur, write them on separate note slips under the caption "my own."

Categorizing Notes

Having recorded only one topic on each slip now permits you to arrange your slips into separate topic stacks. Also, having written on only one side of the slip enables you to see your full notes without turning slips back and forth. Now you will appreciate that you really were not "wasting" paper when you left the reverse side of each slip blank.

Deciding On An Approach

To gain control over your material the crux of some matter must be dug out and presented in a way that illuminates the issue; some analysis or appraisal ought to be given. A reader who is presented with an assortment of facts-no matter how neatly arranged-asks, "So what?" and rightly so. You ought to have clearly in mind before you begin writing what you want this material to add up to. Remember, the predication is as important as the "subject."

Drawing Up A Detailed Outline

Only by working out a detailed outline can you order and control your data so that it can be marshaled to support your stated objective. Worked into the outline, also, should be your approach, point of view, and strategy.

In the process of writing an outline, you will acquire the prerequisite of all good writing-you will be forced to "think through" your material. This "thinking through" is what the professional writers call "digesting" your random facts. Once you do this, then you will quite naturally, as you write, draw from a reservoir of facts rather than stringing together a compartmentalized series of "snippets" which are usually someone else's paraphrased words. As a final "bonus" effect, the detailed outline will save you time during the revision stage since your facts will be in the right order from the beginning.

Writing The First Draft

With the outline before you, write as rapidly and spontaneously as possible. Recording your thoughts as they go through your mind will help to insure continuity. It is when you stop to ponder alternatives that gaps in continuity occur. Though this manner of writing often results in too much material, don't be concerned because it is easier to cut than to add.

Make A Clear Copy

The first draft is usually rough-full of deletions, additions, and directions which are understandable only to the writer. If left in this state for even a day, much time might be lost in trying to recall exactly how you meant to blend in some of the hastily written interlineation. Furthermore, if you retype or rewrite while the material is still very fresh, some spontaneous revision may take place. The result, of course, will be a clear copy which will be ready for revision after a "cooling off" period of a day or so.

Leave For A Day

The "cooling off" period is important. During the writing stage, your mind is so full of associations with the words which you have written that you are liable to impose clarity and step-by-step sequences where these do not, in fact, exist; that is, your mind can fill in and bridge the gaps.

After your mind has dropped some of these associations, then when you read your manuscript, you will have to "read" the words to gain meaning. You can now easily spot the glaring errors- you can be critically objective.

The Importance of Editing Your Own Work

The editing function is one of the few really important big things that you can learn in college- the ability to view your own production with enough courage to anticipate (and be concerned about) the potential reader's reaction. This means polishing, boiling down ideas, struggling to say things clearer and clearer, perhaps starting over, or writing even 3 or 4 drafts.

Your Final Copy

1. In preparing the finished draft of your research paper, use only one side of white paper. Although a few instructors will specify precisely what size paper to use, the most commonly used paper measures 8 1/2 x 11 inches.
 2. Type your paper without any strike-overs (erase errors thoroughly and neatly) and be sure to double space.
 3. Leave generous margins at the top, bottom and about a one and one-half inch margin on both sides to provide room for the instructor's comments.
 4. Put your dictionary to good use by checking spellings and divisions of words you are not sure of.
 5. Hand in the paper on time. It is not uncommon for instructors to deduct points for late papers.
- ©Academic Skills Center, Dartmouth College 2001

How to AVOID CRAMMING for Tests

Basic Principles about Review

©Academic Skills Center, Dartmouth College 2001

I. **ORIGINAL LEARNING** must take place. You have to learn the material before you can review it.

II. **EARLY REVIEW** is most efficient, most productive.

A. Before you attempt to learn new material in class or through reading:

- Glance over previous chapters or notes.
- Run through your mind what you know already.

Since memorization of new material is most effective when it is associated with the material already known, this process brings all available mental "hooks" to the surface.

B. Immediately after learning:

- Rework your notes, adding material that comes to mind. (Don't recopy; this is wasteful.)
- Order and organize what was learned. (Star, use arrows, additional comments, etc.)
- Integrate new material with what you already know.

Forgetting is most rapid right after learning. Review helps combat this. Relearning is easier if it is done quickly. Don't wait until it's all gone.

III. **Space** initial early reviews to support original learning. Several brief periods spread over 5 or 10 days is usually enough to ensure good recall for intermediate review.

IV. **Intermediate review** is important when work is spread out over several months or longer. For example, when the final is 4 months away, follow this schedule:

- original learning
- immediate review of limited material same day (5-10 minutes)
- intermediate review of material covered so far, after 2 months
- final review, before exam

Intermediate and final reviews should stress understanding and organization of material.

V. **Final review is a REVIEW**, not "cramming" of unlearned material. No new learning takes place except to draw together the final main currents of thought.

- Be brief. Review entire semester's work in 2-4 hours. (Set a limit and stick to it.)
- 5. Outline and organize from memory. Don't bother copying.
- Recite (in writing or out loud to a friend or self)

VI. **USE SPACED REVIEW** rather than **MASSED PRACTICE**. 60 minutes used in 3 groups of 20 minutes each is more effective than 60 minutes used all at the same time.

- break up learning period for any one subject
- 10. avoid fatigue
- review and strengthen previous learning
- increased motivation, better concentration

Six Reading Myths

©Academic Skills Center, Dartmouth College 2001

MYTH 1: I HAVE TO READ EVERY WORD

Many of the words used in writing grammatically correct sentences actually convey no meaning. If, in reading, you exert as much effort in conceptualizing these meaningless words as you do important ones, you limit not only your reading speed but your comprehension as well.

MYTH 2: READING ONCE IS ENOUGH

Skim once as rapidly as possible to *determine the main idea* and to identify those parts that need careful reading. Reread more carefully to plug the gaps in your knowledge.

Many college students feel that something must be wrong with their brain power if they must read a textbook chapter more than once. To be sure, there are students for whom one exposure to an idea in a basic course is enough, but they either have read extensively or have an excellent background or a high degree of interest in the subject.

For most students in most subjects, reading once is not enough. However, this is not to imply that an unthinking Pavlovian-like rereading is necessary to understand and retain materials. Many students automatically regress or reread doggedly with a self-punishing attitude. ("I didn't get a thing out of that paragraph the first time, so if I punish myself by rereading it maybe I will this time.") This is the hardest way to do it.

Good reading is selective reading. It involves selecting those sections that are relevant to your purpose in reading. Rather than automatically rereading, take a few seconds to quiz yourself on the material you have just read and then review those sections that are still unclear or confusing to you.

The most effective way of spending each study hour is to devote as little time as possible to reading and as much time as possible to testing yourself, reviewing, organizing, and relating the concepts and facts, mastering the technical terms, formulas, etc., and thinking of applications of the concepts—in short, *spend your time learning ideas, not painfully processing words visually.*

MYTH 3: IT IS SINFUL TO SKIP PASSAGES IN READING

Many college students feel that it is somehow sinful to skip passages in reading and to read rapidly. We are not sure just how this attitude develops, but some authorities have suggested that it stems from the days when the Bible was the main book read, savored, and reread. Indeed, the educated person was one who could quote long passages from these books from memory.

Today proliferation of books and printed matter brought about by the information explosion creates a reading problem for everyone. Furthermore, much of this printed material offers considerably less than Shakespeare or the Bible in meaning or style. You must, of course, make daily decisions as to what is worth spending your time on, what can be glanced at or put aside for future perusal, and what can be relegated to the wastebasket.

The idea that you cannot skip but have to read every page is old-fashioned. Children, however, are still taught to feel guilty if they find a novel dull and put it down before finishing it. I once had a student who felt she could not have books in her home unless she had read every one of them from cover to cover. Studies show that this is the reason many people drop Book-of-the-Month Club subscriptions; they begin to collect books, cannot keep up with their reading, and develop guilty feelings about owning books they have not had time to read.

The idea that some books are used merely for reference purposes and are nice to have around in case you need them seems to be ignored in our schools. Sir Francis Bacon once said that some books are to be nibbled and tasted, some are to be swallowed whole, and a few need to be thoroughly chewed and digested no matter how trivial the content. No wonder many people dislike reading.

MYTH 4: MACHINES ARE NECESSARY TO IMPROVE MY READING SPEED

Nonsense! The best and most effective way to increase your reading rate is to consciously force yourself to read faster. Machines are useful as motivators, but only because they show you that you can read faster without losing understanding. Remember that they are inflexible, unthinking devices that churn away at the same rate regardless of whether the sentence is trivial or vital, simple or difficult. They are limited too, for if you are practicing skimming, you are looking for main ideas so that you can read more carefully. Since these may not be located in a definite pattern (e.g. one per line) nor be equally spaced so that the machine can conveniently time them, machines may actually slow you down and retard the speed with which you locate the ideas that you need for understanding. If you find yourself in need of a pusher, use a 3x5 card as a pacer, or use your hand, or your finger. However, there is one caution you should observe if you try this. Be sure that your hand or finger or card is used to push, not merely to follow your eyes.

MYTH 5: IF I SKIM OR READ TOO RAPIDLY MY COMPREHENSION WILL DROP

Many people refuse to push themselves faster in reading for fear that they will lose comprehension. However, research shows that there is little relationship between rate and comprehension. Some students read rapidly and comprehend well, others read slowly and comprehend poorly. Whether you have good comprehension depends on whether you can extract and retain the important ideas from your reading, not on how fast you read. If you can do this, you can also increase your speed. If you "clutch up" when trying to read fast or skim and worry about your comprehension, it will drop because your mind is occupied with your fears and you are not paying attention to the ideas that you are reading.

If you concentrate on your purpose for reading -- e.g. locating main ideas and details, and forcing yourself to stick to the task of finding them quickly -- both your speed and comprehension could increase. Your concern should be not with how fast you can get through a chapter, but with how quickly you can locate the facts and ideas that you need.

MYTH 6: THERE IS SOMETHING ABOUT MY EYES THAT KEEPS ME FROM READING FAST

This belief is nonsense too, assuming that you have good vision or wear glasses that correct your eye problems. Of course, if you cannot focus your eyes at the reading distance, you will have trouble learning to skim and scan. Furthermore, if you have developed the habit of focusing your eyes too narrowly and looking at word parts, it will be harder for you to learn to sweep down a page of type rapidly.

Usually it is your brain, not your eyes, that slows you down in reading. Your eyes are capable of taking in more words than your brain is used to processing. If you sound out words as you read, you will probably read very slowly and have difficulty in skimming and scanning until you break this habit.

Steps to Follow in Skimming for the Main Ideas

- First, read the title of the chapter or selection carefully. Determine what clues it gives you as to what the selection is about. Watch for key words like "causes," "results," "effects," etc., and do not overlook signal words such as those suggesting controversy (e.g. "versus," "pros and cons"), which indicate that the author is planning to present both sides of an argument.
- Look carefully at the headings and other organizational clues. These tip you off to the main points that the author wants you to learn. You may be accustomed to overlooking boldface headings and titles which are the obvious clues to the most important ideas. If you concentrate on the details and ignore the main ideas, you will have much more difficulty retaining the information you read.

Remember that authors of college textbooks want you to recognize the important concepts. They use:

- Major headings and subheadings to convey major points.
- Italicized words and phrases so that crucial new terms and definitions will stand out.
- Lists of points set off by numbers or paragraphs that begin with the phrases such as "The three most important factors . . ." etc.

- Redundancy or repetition. By stating and restating the facts and ideas, the author ensures that you will be exposed in different ways to the concepts she feels are the most crucial for you to understand. She hopes that on at least one of these exposures you will absorb the idea. Therefore, it is vital that you recognize when an important concept is being restated in slightly different words and when you have completely mastered the idea.

-Martha Maxwell

©Academic Skills Center, Dartmouth College 2001

3 R's for Academic Survival

Here is a lean and wiry system containing all the essential techniques for mastering textbook assignments. This is an "exam passer".

.....

- R1 **READ.** Read the chapter paragraph by paragraph. Read and re-read until you can answer the question: "What did the author say in this paragraph?"
- R2 **RECORD.** Once you are able to **describe** what is in the paragraph, you will want to retain that learning by **underlining, making notes in the margin, or making notes in your notebook.**
- R3 **RECITE.** Cover up your notes or printed page and **recite** aloud. Remember! If you can't say it now, you won't be able to say it tomorrow in class, nor write it in a week on an exam; so while you still have a chance, try and try again, until you can say it.

.....

SQ3R Method for Thorough Study

Step 1: SURVEY - Look over material critically. Skim through the book and read topical and subtopical headings and sentences. Read the summaries at the end of chapters and books. Try to anticipate what the author is going to say.

WRITE these notes on paper, in sequence; then look over the jottings to get an overall idea or picture. This will enable you to see where you are going.

Step 2: QUESTIONS - Instead of reading paragraph headings such as "Basic Concepts of Reading," change to read, "What are the Basic Concepts of Reading?" These questions will become "hooks" on which to hang the reading material.

WRITE these questions out; look over the questions to see the emphasis and direction; then attempt to give plausible answers before further reading.

Step 3: READ - Read with smoothness and alertness to answer the questions. Use all the techniques and principles demonstrated in class.

WRITE notes, in your own words, under each question. Take a minimum number of notes-use these notes as a skeleton.

Step 4: RECALL** - Without looking at your book or notes, mentally visualize and sketch, in your own words, the high points of the material immediately upon completing the reading.

- a. This forces you to check understanding.
- b. This channels the material into a natural and usable form.
- c. This points up what you do not understand.
- d. This forces you to think.

Step 5: REVIEW - Look at your questions, answers, notes and book to see how well you did recall. Observe carefully the points stated incorrectly or omitted. Fix carefully in mind the logical sequence of the entire idea, concepts, or problem. Finish up with a mental picture of the WHOLE.

****Note:** More time should be spent on recall than on reading.

ACTIVE STUDY

Adapted from: Ann Algier, Everything You Need To Know About Learning

- **Introduction**

Learning takes time. Very few people have photographic memories. Learning requires repetition- meaningful repetition. This is why active study techniques are so vitally important. The "recording disk" of the brain accepts new material much faster if it "hears," "sees," "feels," "tastes," and detects motion (kinetic energy) during input or recording time. Then too, the more times around the learning circuit, the longer lasting the impression. If you are able to place abstract ideas into diagrammatic form, you will remember the concept.

- **Mnemonics**

Material that is difficult to master can be organized by finding the key words in each point, noting the first letter, and arranging the letters into a sense or nonsense word (the sillier, the better). Examples:

- What are the qualities of a scientist? (mnemonic answer: PIPOC)
P ersistence
I ntelligence
P atience
O riginality
C uriosity
- Why did the U.S. enter World War I? (mnemonic answer: SPRENCZ)
S ubmarines, Germans lifted restrictions on use of
P ropaganda, British control of
R ussians overthrew the tsar
E conomic ties of U.S. with Britain and France
N eutrality, German violations of U.S.
C ultural ties with Britain
Z immerman telegram

Note: in example 2, the student has devised a mnemonic based on key words. If you have a basic understanding of each point, you ought to be able to write a complete essay from the mnemonic SPRENCZ. Example 1, however, represents the type of mnemonic a student could use to learn a short list of items for an objective test. If you need to memorize a long list of items such as the states in the union, alphabetize and learn in small "chunks." You can always depend on the alphabet. Break down a list, rearrange, put on a study card and master. In the example of learning the states in the union, it is easier to remember that there are four states whose names begin with "A," no "Bs," one "D," etc., then to try to memorize the list.

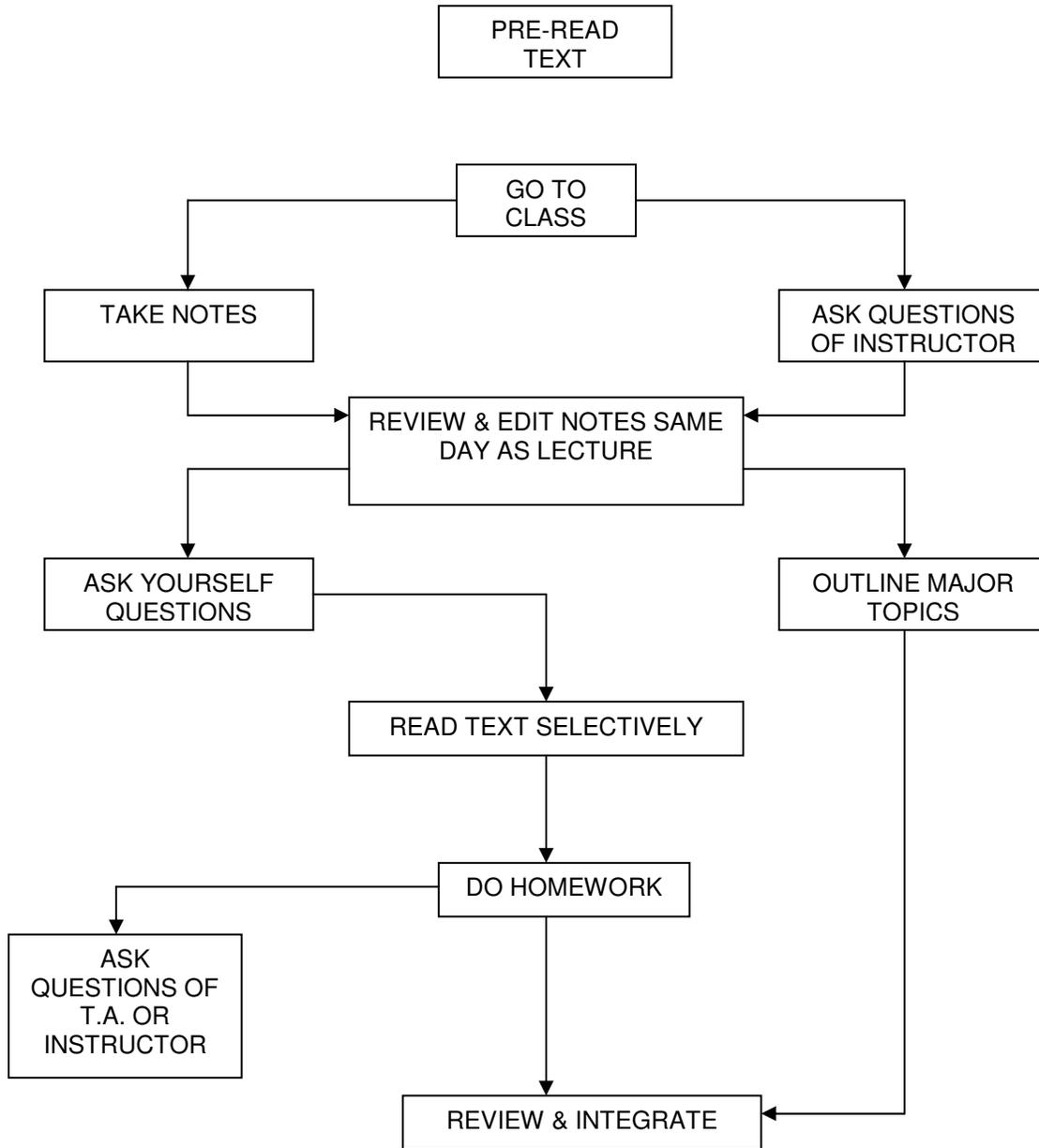
- **Study Cards**

In printing study cards, the student is using kinetic energy (energy in motion), thus making the impression stronger on the brain, and the student will be able to use the cards for overlearning. Another reason for having students make study cards is that they are convenient to carry and flip through for mastery. Reading the cards silently, however, is too passive. Go over the cards orally. A student will not master the cards by passively reading them. Learning requires the expenditure of energy. The student must be actively engaged in producing the sounds, using muscles and burning energy to make the sound.

- **Memory**

- General points to consider
 - The student must focus his or her attention on whatever needs to be remembered. If you intend to remember something, you probably will.
 - The student must be "sold" on the course. Why is this subject worth knowing? Correlative reading may enhance the student's interest. For example, historical novels are a marvelous way to learn history. The greater the knowledge, the greater the interest.
 - Help the students classify and associate. Many authorities feel that you will master information faster if you learn in groups of seven or fewer at a time.
 - Have the students overlearn through repetition.
- Association is a key to memory:
 - You remember approximately 10 percent of what you read.
 - You remember approximately 20 percent of what you hear.
 - You remember approximately 30 percent of what you see.
 - You remember approximately 50 percent of what you hear and see together.
 - You remember approximately 70 percent of what you say (if you think as you are saying it).
 - You remember approximately 90 percent of what you do.

A WEEKLY FLOW CHART FOR STUDYING



STUDY SKILLS CHECKLIST

This checklist helps you to find out about your own study habits and attitudes. Read each statement and consider how it applies to you. If it does apply to you, check **Yes**. If it does not apply to you, check **No**.

- | Yes | No | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| | | <i>How I manage time</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I spend too much time studying for what I am learning. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I usually spend hours cramming the night before an exam. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I can't find a way to balance my study time and my social life. |
| | | <i>How I concentrate</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I usually study with the radio and or TV turned on. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I can't sit and study for long periods of time without becoming tired or distracted. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I go to class, but I usually doodle, daydream, or fall asleep. |
| | | <i>How I listen & take notes</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My class notes are sometimes difficult to understand later. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I usually seem to get the wrong material into my class notes. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I don't look at my class notes after I've taken them. |
| | | <i>How I read my textbook</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | When I get to the end of a chapter, I can't remember what I've just read. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I don't know how to pick out what is important in the text. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I can't keep up with my reading assignments; I try to scan them before a test. |
| | | <i>How I understand what I read</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I often get lost in the details of reading and have trouble identifying the main ideas. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I don't usually change my reading speed when the text is difficult or unfamiliar. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I often wish that I could read faster. |
| | | <i>How I write essays and papers</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | When teachers assign essays or papers, I can't seem to get started. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I usually write my essays and papers the day before they are due. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I can't seem to organize my thoughts into an essay or report that makes sense. |
| | | <i>How I do exams</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I often lose points on essay exams even when I know the material well. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I study enough for my exam, but when I get to class my mind goes blank. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I don't usually study in an organized way and I often worry about the next exam. |

Scoring two or more "yes" answers in a category shows where you need the most help.

STUDY SKILLS RESOURCES

WEBSITES & BOOKS

www.ucc.vt.edu/stdysk/stdyhlp.html and

www.dartmouth.edu/~acskills/success/index.html

Great resources with Workshops and brief articles on a variety of study skills and time management topics.

www.utexas.edu/student/utlc/lrnres/handouts.html

Great selection of Study Skills handouts with links to other resource sites.

www.oakton.edu/resource/iss/stdyskls.htm

Provides online Study Skills Checklists in various areas.

www.studygs.net and www.how-to-study.com

These sites are dedicated to providing study helps.

Essential Study Skills by Linda Wong

A Guide to College Survival by William Brown and Wayne Holtzman

How to Study in College by Walter Pauk

Becoming a Master Student by David Ellis

WHAT CAN BE DONE ABOUT LISTENING

Ralph G. Nichols
The Supervisor's Notebook, Scott, Foresman & Co.
Vol. 22, No. 1, Spring 1960

The business of becoming a good listener primarily consists of getting rid of bad listening habits and replacing them with their counterpart skills.

TEN BAD LISTENING HABITS

Several years ago I identified what seemed to me to be the ten worst listening habits in America today. Though my discussion of them here is in relation to the ways they may affect us in a formal listening situation, the effects of these habits can be just as devastating in less formal listening situations at home, at school, in business or social groups.

1. **Calling the Subject Dull**

Bad listeners often find a subject too dry and dusty to command their attention and they use this as an excuse to wander off on a mental tangent. Good listeners may have heard a dozen talks on the same subject before, but they quickly decide to see if the speaker has anything that can be of use to them.

The key to good listening is that little three-letter word **use**. Good listeners are sifters, screeners, and winnowers of the wheat from the chaff. They are always hunting for something practical or worthwhile to store in the back of their mind to put to work in the months and years ahead. G.K. Chesterton said many years ago that in all this world there is no such thing as an uninteresting subject, only uninterested people.

2. **Criticizing the Speaker**

It's the indoor sport of most bad listeners to find fault with the way a speaker looks, acts, and talks. Good listeners may make a few of the same criticisms but they quickly begin to pay attention to what is said, not how it is said. After a few minutes, good listeners become oblivious to the speaker's mannerisms or his/her faults in delivery. They know that the message is ten times as important as the clothing in which it comes garbed.

3. **Getting Overstimulated**

Listening efficiency drops to zero when the listeners react so strongly to one part of the presentation that they miss what follows. At the University of Minnesota we think this bad habit is so critical that, in the classes where we teach listening, we put at the top of every blackboard the words: **Withhold evaluation until comprehension is complete -- hear the speaker out.** It is important that we understand the speaker's point of view fully before we accept or reject it.

4. **Listening Only For Facts**

I used to think it was important to listen for facts. But I've found that almost without exception it is the poor listeners who say they listen for facts. They do get facts, but they garble a shocking number and completely lose most of them.

Good listeners listen for the main ideas in a speech or lecture and use them as connecting threads to give sense and system to the whole. In the end they have more facts appended to those connecting threads than the catalogers who listen only for facts. It isn't necessary to worry too much about fact as such, for facts have meaning only when principles supply the context.

5. Trying To Outline Everything

There's nothing wrong with making an outline of a speech -- provided the speaker is following an outline method of presentation. But probably not more than a half or perhaps a third of all speeches given are built around a carefully prepared outline.

Good listeners are flexible. They adapt their note taking to the organizational pattern of the speaker--they may make an outline, they may write a summary, they may list facts and principles -- but whatever they do they are not rigid about it.

6. Faking Attention

The pose of chin propped on hand with gaze fixed on speaker does not guarantee good listening. Having adopted this pose, having shown the overt courtesy of appearing to listen to the speaker, the bad listener feels conscience free to take off on any of a thousand tangents.

Good listening is not relaxed and passive at all. It's dynamic; it's constructive; it's characterized by a slightly increased heart rate, quicker circulation of the blood, and a small rise in bodily temperature. It's energy consuming; it's plain hard work. The best definition I know of the word **attention** is a "collection of tensions that can be resolved only by getting the facts or ideas that the speaker is trying to convey."

7. Tolerating Distraction

Poor listeners are easily distracted and may even create disturbances that interfere with their own listening efficiency and that of others. They squirm, talk with their neighbors, or shuffle papers. They make little or no effort to conceal their boredom. Good listeners try to adjust to whatever distractions there are and soon find that they can ignore them. Certainly, they do not distract others.

8. Choosing Only What's Easy

Often we find the poor listeners have shunned listening to serious presentations on radio or television. There is plenty of easy listening available, and this has been their choice. The habit of avoiding even moderately difficult expository presentations in one's ensure-time listening can handicap anyone who needs to use listening as a learning tool.

9. Letting Emotion-Laden Words Get In The Way

It is a fact that some words carry such an emotional load that they cause some listeners to tune a speaker right out: such as, affirmative action and feminist--they are fighting words to some people.

I sometimes think that one of the most important studies that could be made would be the identification of the one hundred greatest trouble-making words in the English language. If we knew what these words were, we could ring them out into the open, discuss them, and get them behind us. It's so foolish to let a mere symbol for something stand between us and learning.

10. Wasting the Differential Between Speech and Thought Speed

Americans speak at an average rate of 125 words per minute in ordinary conversation. A speaker before an audience slows down to about 100 words per minute. How fast do listeners listen? Or, to put the question in a better form, how many words a minute do people normally **think** as they listen? If all their thoughts were measurable in words per minute, the answer would seem to be that an audience of any size will average 400 to 500 words per minute as they listen.

Here is a problem. The differential between the speaker at 100 words per minute and the easy thought speed of the listener at 400 or 500 words per minute is a snare and a pitfall. It lures the listener into a false sense of security and breeds mental tangents.

However, with training in listening, the difference between thought speed and speech speed can be made a source of tremendous power. Listeners can hear everything the speaker says and not what s/he omits saying; they can listen between the lines and do some evaluating as the speech progresses. To do this, to exploit this power, good listeners must automatically practice three skills in concentration:

Anticipating the next point. Good listeners try to anticipate the points a speaker will make in developing a subject. If they guess right, the speaker's words reinforce their guesses. If they guess wrong, they'll have to do some thinking to discover why they and the speaker failed to agree. In either case, their chances of understanding and remembering what was said is nearly double what it would have been if they had simply listened passively.

Identifying supporting material. Good listeners try to identify a speaker's supporting material. After all, a person can't go on making points without giving listeners some of the evidence on which the conclusions are based, and the bricks and mortar that have been used to build up the argument should be examined for soundness.

Recapitulating. With the tremendous thought speed that everyone has, it is easy to summarize in about five seconds the highlights covered by a speaker in about five minutes. When the speaker stops to take a swallow of water or walks over to the blackboard to write something or even takes a deep breath, the experienced listener makes a mental summary. Half a dozen summaries of the highlights of a fifty-minute talk will easily double

Using Your Textbook

When you purchase a new book, there are several things you should do automatically.

I. Look in the front:

A. **Read** and think about the table of contents.

1. This will show you the overall organization of the course and help identify what's important.
2. It will get you interested in the material.

B. Glance over any preface or foreword to see what the book is trying to do.

C. Consider the title. This is often a significant statement about the book's "slant." Do you know the author?

II. Look in the back:

A. Glance at the index. This is a listing of subject and pages upon which they can be found.

1. You can tell from the percentage of known and unknown words how difficult the text will be for you.
2. You can see with great precision what the course is concerned with.
3. You can look up specific items of interest.
4. As a review for tests, you can easily look up unknown items since the page number is given.

B. Is there a glossary listing unknown words and their definitions?

1. The main concern of many courses is to teach the vocabulary of the subject. This is a vital section, not something to be ignored.
2. Make a page tab out of scotch tape, and undertake to study and learn these words during the term. Use the tab for easy reference during time between classes-time which might otherwise be wasted.

C. Determine what other possibly useful materials are in the back-**before** you need them. You don't have to read them now; just know that they exist .

III. Determine how a typical chapter is constructed. (All of the other chapters will be put together the same way. If one chapter has a summary, they all will; if one chapter has questions, they all will.) Use this knowledge when you have a reading assignment. Structure your approach accordingly.

IV. Don't be afraid to write in your book-vocabulary words, condensations of ideas, personal reactions, etc. Interact with the book the way you'd interact with a person. Your texts provide a valuable resource during and after your academic career.