

Learning Skills and Work Habits: Strategies for success at home.

Learning skills and work habits are integral parts of learning. Developing these skills will help you prepare for *all* challenges in life, at work, and at home. The following six skills that appear on your report card are explained in tables that indicate excellent achievement compared to unsatisfactory achievement. Each table is followed by suggestions for improving each skill set:

Responsibility:

Looks like...	Doesn't look like...
· fulfilling commitments · submitting all work on time · taking responsibility for own behaviour	· forgetting or losing school work · submitting work late · making excuses for missing work

- * Establish an area at home where all schoolwork is kept that's near a calendar of all due dates
- * For some, it helps to write the due date a day or two earlier than the actual date
- * Establish a habit of checking class websites for homework daily
- * Make a checklist of tasks to be completed each day

Organization:

Looks like...	Doesn't look like...
· creating and following a good plan of action · establishing priorities and managing time · gathering everything needed to work	· working on small tasks over big projects · spending a few hours online before starting · keeping a knapsack of random papers

- * For larger assignments, divide up the work and establish what needs to be done starting at the due date and working backwards in order to ensure the project is started on time
- * Keep a neat binder/drawer of all work, and spend some time every day making sure it's in order
- * Establish a specific time of day to do schoolwork *before* starting any entertaining activities
- * Keep a pencil case of useful tools and make sure to return all items there as you use them

Independent Work:

Looks like...	Doesn't look like...
· monitoring a plan to complete all tasks · using class time appropriately · following instructions without supervision	· sticking to an inflexible plan or none at all · chatting during work periods · waiting to be told to begin at each step

- * Check items off a list as you finish them, and re-evaluate your plan regularly, particularly if a new project is introduced.
- * Try to finish as much work during class as possible so you have more free time at night.
- * Read assignment instructions and the rubric before beginning the work, and then re-read each step as you're ready to begin

Collaboration:

Looks like...	Doesn't look like...
· taking on an equitable share of work · responding positively to others' ideas · resolving conflicts and finding agreement · sharing information and ideas	· avoiding work or doing all the work · criticizing ideas without just cause · insulting or ignoring group members · keeping your work private and separate

- * Where roles aren't assigned, take turns brainstorming ideas, then list pros and cons of each in order to come to a consensus about the direction of the project.
- * Find a balance between letting others shine, while ensuring one idea of yours is included.
- * Divide tasks based on the expected time and workload rather than the number of tasks, and require each group member to spend a specific amount of time on the project.
- * Set firm deadlines for each member for a first draft of the work.
- * Discuss problems with the entire group openly if something isn't working, and get help with mediation from the teacher before things deteriorate too far to save. ([more tips here](#))

Initiative:

Looks like...	Doesn't look like...
· looking for new opportunities for learning · willing to take risks with learning; curiosity · approaching new tasks with a good attitude · advocating for rights appropriately	· doing the bare minimum to get by · doing the same kind of task when possible · rolling eyes or complaining about work · ignoring any issues that arise

- * Find what interests you in this subject area. Some projects might be harder than others, but find a way to connect with the tasks. Recognize ways skills here can help you in tasks you enjoy.
- * Try doing a project in a new or different way as far as the teacher will allow.
- * Read or watch videos above and beyond what's assigned in the class. Explore other aspects of the ideas from class.

Self-Regulation:

Looks like...	Doesn't look like...
· setting goals and monitoring progress · seeking clarification whenever needed · recognizing strengths and limitations · identifying strategies to meet goals · persevering in the face of challenges · participating in class discussions	· ignoring or avoiding due date schedule · waiting for the due date to get help if at all · expecting work to not require any effort · having no concern with getting work done · giving up when it gets difficult · not being engaged during class

- * Aim to *do your* best, not to *be the* best. Feel proud whenever you put in your best effort.
- * Start major assignments right away to have time to get help as needed. Ask for help as soon as you're stuck (*after* you've read over the instructions a couple times).
- * Accept that we're all good at some things and weaker at others, but we can still work to improve the areas that give us the greatest difficulty.
- * Get help to work beyond your barriers. Ask for more opportunities to practice rather than looking for ways to be accommodated or to avoid doing the work at that level.