

## **ADVISORY GROUP LESSON Study Skills**

### **1. 9:47-9:52:** Five Minute CIRCLE:

Today's advisory we will be discussion study skills. In a circle, briefly go around the group and have each student identify a way in which they like/don't like to study ( what works or doesn't work, flash card, loud/quiet space, memorizing, group review etc.....)

### **1. 9:53-10:14:** Today's Focus:

#### **Study Skills**

- A.** Handout "Study Skills" Quiz and notes and Ask each student to answer the 21 questions.
- B.** Once completed, have students identify their Study Skill Strengths and Weaknesses.
- C.** Ask students to read out loud and discuss the "Help" strategies on the handouts.
- D.** Have a discussion: Do you agree with these strategies? Do you use these strategies?
  - i.** Have you ever been taught how to study?
  - ii.** How do you study for different types of assessments?
  - iii.** Where do you like to study? Do you need noise or quiet?
  - iv.** Do you study differently for different courses?
  - v.** Where/how can you find assistance with improving your study habits

## Grade 9-Study Skills Lesson Handouts

1. Y\_\_ N\_\_ I spend more time than necessary studying for what I am learning.
2. Y\_\_ N\_\_ It's common for me to spend hours cramming the night before an exam.
3. Y\_\_ N\_\_ If I dedicate as much time as I want to my social life, I don't have enough time left to focus on my studies, or when I study as much as I need to, I don't have time for my social life.
4. Y\_\_ N\_\_ I often study with the TV or radio turned on.
5. Y\_\_ N\_\_ I struggle to study for long periods of time without becoming distracted or tired.
6. Y\_\_ N\_\_ I usually doodle, daydream, or fall asleep when I go to class.
7. Y\_\_ N\_\_ Often the notes I take during class notes are difficult for me to understand later when I try and review them.
8. Y\_\_ N\_\_ I often end up getting the wrong material into my class notes.
9. Y\_\_ N\_\_ I don't usually review my class notes from time to time throughout the semester in preparation for exams.
10. Y\_\_ N\_\_ When I get to the end of a chapter in a textbook, I struggle to remember what I've just got done reading.
11. Y\_\_ N\_\_ I struggle to identify what is important in the text.
12. Y\_\_ N\_\_ I frequently can't keep up with my reading assignments, and consequently have to cram the night before a test.
13. Y\_\_ N\_\_ For some reason I miss a lot of points on essay tests even when I feel well prepared and know the material well.
14. Y\_\_ N\_\_ I study a lot for each test, but when I get to the test my mind draws a blank.
15. Y\_\_ N\_\_ I often study in a sort of disorganized, haphazard way only motivated by the threat of the next test.
16. Y\_\_ N\_\_ I frequently end up getting lost in the details of reading and have trouble identifying the main ideas and key concepts.
17. Y\_\_ N\_\_ I don't usually change my reading speed in response to the difficulty level of what I'm reading, or my familiarity with the content.
18. Y\_\_ N\_\_ I often wish that I was able read faster.
19. Y\_\_ N\_\_ When my teachers assign me papers and projects I often feel so overwhelmed that I really struggle to get started.
20. Y\_\_ N\_\_ More often than not I write my papers the night before they are due.
21. Y\_\_ N\_\_ I really struggle to organize my thoughts into a logical paper that makes sense.

If you answered "yes" to two or more questions in any category listed below, we recommend finding further study guides and practice for those categories. No matter how you score it's always advisable to review all study guides to help you improve your study skills and academic performance. On the next page, review the help strategies to improve your habits

- Time Scheduling - 1, 2, and 3.
- Concentration - 4, 5, and 6.
- Listening & Note taking - 7, 8, and 9.
- Reading - 10, 11, and 12.
- Exams - 13, 14, and 15.
- Reading - 16, 17, and 18.

## Study Skills Advisory Lesson

## Help Me Listen Better

Critical listening is an important study skill. If you don't understand something you hear, you won't understand it when you're studying for a test. Here are some studying tips to help you get more from your listening. Note: Don't try to use all these suggestions immediately. Try one or two a week, and add new tips as you incorporate the previous ones into your study routine.

Listen with the intention of understanding. To learn, you have to understand what the teacher is saying. Use these strategies to engage your "listening ears:"

- Try to repeat what the teacher says in your mind.
- Ask yourself, Did that make sense? If not, ask for clarification.
- Nod. Moving your head in agreement can engage you, especially if you learn best through movement.
- Make connections between what the teacher says and what you already know. If you can't make a connection, ask the teacher to make one.

Listen for teacher cues. Be alert for key phrases that emphasize important information. When you hear key phrases, write down the information that follows. Here are some examples of key phrases:

- The most important points are
- The chief cause is
- The most significant effect is
- The main reason is
- Remember that
- There are five characteristics of
- The result is
- The key message is

## Help Me Take Better Notes

Good note taking is one of the most important study skills students need to succeed in school. These studying tips will help you get more out of lectures and class handouts.

- **If it's on the board, write it down.** Teachers use the board and projectors to present important information. If they emphasize a point by writing on the board or using a projector, it's important enough to go into your notebook.
- **If it's on a handout, take notes in the margins.** Don't rewrite information that's already been prepared for you in a handout. Instead, add notes to yourself and clarifications the teacher offers in the margins.
- **Write down definitions and examples.** Pay special attention to definitions and examples that illustrate and explain new concepts.
- **Don't try to write down everything the teacher says.** You'll never keep up. Aim for notes that paraphrase the main concepts. Write down words the teacher emphasizes, key questions, and important points.
- **Make up symbols and abbreviations.** This can be fun, plus you'll save time when you use your own shorthand system for taking notes. This [downloadable.pdf](#) from the University of Central Missouri and [this link](#) at the University of North Dakota can help you get a start.
- **Pay extra attention at the beginning and end of class.** Teachers usually introduce the lesson at the start of the class. If you keep the agenda in mind as the class continues, you'll follow the lesson more easily. Teachers often review important concepts at the end of class. During this review, be sure you've got the important concepts in your notes.
- **Review your notes.** Students who review their notes the same day they take them—even for just five minutes—remember more than students who don't look at their class notes until they're studying for a test.
- **Keep track of dates.** Put the date on every page. If your binder pops open and your notes spill out, the dates will help you get the pages back in order. Dates can also help you remember exactly when you learned something.

## Help Me Read Smarter

You've got to have a clear understanding of material you read for school to succeed at high school academics. These studying tips will help you understand and remember what you read in textbooks.

1. **Preview the book.** Read the contents page. Are there chapters? What are the titles? Is there a glossary that defines terms at the end of the book? Is there an index at the end of the book that lists topics and the pages you can find them on? Remember: the words in the glossary and the topics in the index are listed in alphabetical order.
2. **Turn to the assigned chapter.** What is the title? What can you learn from the headings? Often headings give the important ideas that will be covered in the chapter. Look at the illustrations and read the captions to get a fuller idea about the chapter. Are there graphs, charts, maps, diagrams? What do they show? Graphic aids can sum up some kinds of information more clearly than words alone can. Are there study questions at the end of the chapter? Look for the answers as you read.
3. **What are you supposed to learn?** Did your teacher give you an assignment sheet? Comprehension questions? A graphic organizer? Before you begin reading, make sure you've got all the worksheets you need. Then fill them in as you read.
4. **Underline, highlight, and write in the margins.** If you are allowed to write in your book, highlight important ideas and write comments and questions in the margins. If you aren't, write comments and questions in a notebook along with the corresponding page numbers.
5. **Take notes.** Paraphrasing key concepts will help you figure out how well you understand what you're reading. Summing up the most important ideas will help you recall what you read.
6. **Draw a picture.** Sometimes the best way to summarize information is by drawing a picture. Here's an example. Learning about photosynthesis? Draw the sun and its rays hitting the leaf of a plant. Add details to show the process the plant uses to turn light energy into glucose, oxygen, and water. You can draw diagrams to compare and contrast or to show cause and effect relationships, scale, a series of events, a complex system, or a cycle.
7. **Stop if you don't get it.** If you don't understand a passage, reread it. Try to use the context—the words and sentences around the part you don't understand—to figure it out. If you're still puzzled, decide how important that information seems to be. If it's important, ask the teacher or another student to explain the information to you.
8. **As you read and after you've finished, ask yourself questions.** Try these: What main point is the author making? Does this information support the author's argument or contradict it? Why is this fact important to the author's overall message? What did I learn that I didn't know before? If somebody asked me to explain what I just read, what would I say?
9. **Adjust your speed.** Is the material difficult to understand or packed with facts? Slow down. Speed up if the material is familiar and easy to understand.

## Help Me Take Tests with Confidence

### Ten Ways to Be Test Wise

To reduce test anxiety, add these strategies to your high school study skills.

1. **Review your notes** for about five minutes every night. Frequent review helps your brain store information in long-term memory.
2. **Take notes on assigned readings.** Organizing and summing up information helps you remember it.
3. **Use mnemonic devices.** Words or rhymes can help you remember facts. For example, the word *homes* can help you recall the names of the Great Lakes (Huron, Ontario, Michigan, Erie, Superior).
4. **Find out as much as you can about what the test will cover.** Listen carefully for hints in the days before the test. Teachers often stress and review information that will be worth big points on a test.
5. **Ask about the question formats.** Will there be multiple-choice questions? Short answers? Essays? Will you have to draw a diagram? A time line? Make up practice questions about the test material in the format you expect to encounter. Then answer them. If you're not sure what kind of questions will be on the test, assume you will have to write an essay. Pulling together the information necessary to answer an essay question will help you answer a question in any format.
6. **How important is the test?** If it's a quiz worth a tiny fraction of your final grade, don't spend days studying for it. Set your priorities based on a test's importance to your grade.
7. **Bring everything you need to the test.** For example, if you need a calculator, don't depend on your best buddy to have an extra.
8. **Read the test directions carefully.** What does the question ask you to do? Compare and contrast? Show all your work? Give examples? Stick to what the question requires—no more and definitely no less.
9. **Answer the easy questions first.** Your confidence will rise, and you can use that momentum as you focus on the harder questions.
10. **Ask for help.** If you don't understand a test question, ask your teacher to clarify it for you.