

# STUDY SKILLS WORKSHOP



**Ways to improve your college study skills.  
(Some new stuff, some obvious stuff!)**

## Bill Gates on REAL Life

To anyone with kids of any age, or anyone who has ever been a kid, here's some advice Bill Gates recently dished out at a high school speech about 11 things he did not learn in school. He talks about how feel-good politically correct teachings created a full generation of kids with no concept of reality and how this concept set them up for failure in the real world. Here's what he said:

**RULE 1:** Life is not fair--get used to it.

**RULE 2:** The world won't care about your self-esteem. The world will expect you to accomplish something BEFORE you feel good about yourself.

**RULE 3:** You will NOT make 40 thousand dollars a year right out of high school. You won't be a vice-president with a car phone, until you earn both.

**RULE 4:** If you think your teacher is tough, wait till you get a boss. He doesn't have tenure.

**RULE 5:** Flipping burgers is not beneath your dignity. Your grandparents had a different word for burger flipping--they called it opportunity.

**RULE 6:** If you mess up, it's not your parents' fault, so don't whine about your mistakes, learn from them.

**RULE 7:** Before you were born, your parents weren't as boring as they are now. They got that way from paying your bills, cleaning your clothes and listening to you talk about how cool you are. So before you save the rain forest from the parasites of your parents' generation, try delousing the closet in your own room.

**RULE 8:** Your school may have done away with winners and losers but life has not. In some schools they have abolished failing grades and they'll give you as many times as you want to get the right answer. This doesn't bear the slightest resemblance to ANYTHING in real life.

**RULE 9:** Life is not divided into semesters. You don't get summers off and very few employers are interested in helping you find yourself. You have to do that on your own time.

**RULE 10:** Television is NOT real life. In real life people actually have to leave the coffee shop and go to jobs.

**RULE 11:** Be nice to nerds. Chances are you'll end up working for one.

# How to Get the Most From Lectures

Modern society is bombarding us with so much information that we are conditioned to be passive, to be entertained, and to be an audience.

## **To be an active student we have to overcome our spectator training.**

Come to class with all homework finished. Sit in the front seats of the room.

Pay attention to cues, gestures, board work, repetition, emphasis, and transitions.

Ask questions or make remarks if possible.

Use the 15-minute preview and review solution described below.

***Research on memory and retention shows that we forget 40-70% of what we have learned in 1 hour and up to 80% within 24 hours.***

These five steps can more than double your effectiveness for retention.

### **1. Preview material.**

Before lecture, thumb through the chapter on the topic for the day.

After class, ask the teacher what will be covered next time, or check out the syllabus

Generate interest and motivation for your studies.

### **2. Take notes with organization built in.**

Use a note taking system that works with your study style.

Create a hierarchical organization of keynotes.

### **3. Outline key points.**

As soon as possible, create a short outline.

Use the left margin to identify key points.

### **4. Review immediately.**

Within 24 hours, review your outline and notes.

Add comments to the margin

### **5. Review again.**

***For note-taking tips, attend one of our Note-Taking Workshops!***

# The SQ3R Reading Method

I must Create a System,  
or be enslaved by another Man's

Wm. Blake  
1757 - 1827

## Broken down

<b>Survey! Question! Read! Recite! Review!</b>	
Before you read, <b>Survey</b> the chapter:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the title, headings, and subheadings</li><li>• captions under pictures, charts, graphs or maps</li><li>• review questions or teacher-made study guides</li><li>• introductory and concluding paragraphs</li><li>• summaries at beginning or end of chapter</li></ul>
<b>Question</b> while you are surveying:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Turn the title, headings, and/or subheadings into questions;</li><li>• Read questions at the end of the chapters or after each subheading;</li><li>• Ask yourself, "What did my instructor say about this chapter or subject when it was assigned?"</li><li>• Ask yourself, "What do I already know about this subject?"</li></ul> <p><b>Note:</b> If it is helpful to you, write out these questions for consideration. This variation is called SQW3R</p>
When you begin to <b>Read:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Look for answers to the questions you first raised;</li><li>• Answer questions at the beginning or end of chapters or study guides</li><li>• Reread captions under pictures, graphs, etc.</li><li>• Note all the underlined, italicized, bold printed words or phrases</li><li>• Study graphic aids</li><li>• Reduce your speed for difficult passages</li><li>• Stop and reread parts which are not clear</li><li>• Read only a section at a time and recite after each section</li></ul>
<b>Recite</b> after you've read a section:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Orally ask yourself questions about what you have just read and/or summarize, in your own words, what you read</li><li>• Take notes from the text but write the information in your own words</li><li>• Underline/highlight important points you've just read</li><li>• Use the method of recitation which best suits your particular learning style but remember, the more senses you use the more likely you are to remember what you read Use various <b>learning styles</b> i.e.: seeing, saying, moving, hearing, writing!</li></ul>

**Review:**  
**an ongoing**  
**process.**

- Day One  
After you have read and recited the entire chapter, write questions for those points you have highlighted/underlined in the margins. If your method of recitation included note-taking in the left hand margins of your notebook, write questions for the notes you have taken.
- Day Two  
Page through the text and/or your notebook to re-acquaint yourself with the important points. Cover the right hand column of your text/note-book and orally ask yourself the questions in the left hand margins. Orally recite or write the answers from memory. Make "flash cards" for those questions which give you difficulty. Develop mnemonic devices for material which need to be memorized.
- Days Three, Four and Five  
Alternate between your flash cards and notes and test yourself (orally or in writing) on the questions you formulated. Make additional flash cards if necessary.
- Weekend  
Using the text and notebook, make a Table of Contents - list all the topics and sub-topics you need to know from the chapter. From the Table of Contents, make a Study Sheet/ Mind Map. Recite the information orally and in your own words as you put the Study Sheet/Mind Map together.
- Now that you have consolidated all the information you need for that chapter, periodically review the Sheet/Map so that at test time you will not have to cram.

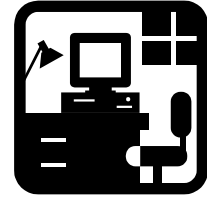
**See also:** Surveying text books: "Read more efficiently with Generation.Uz"  
<http://www.generation.uz/study/reading.htm>

\* Reciting the information you want to learn is a great way to reinforce your ability to remember facts and detail. The more senses you use in studying, the more the information will be imprinted in your memory. Reading out loud, hearing your words, using your vision, walking around and talking, using visual aids and explaining them out loud, all these methods are using multiple senses. These tactics allow for you to stay on task, break the monotony of sitting and reading and make for a more creative learning environment.

**How to mark your textbook!**

Do not highlight main points while you read. Most people make too many marks. Wait until you have finished a paragraph or section, then **mark**. Mark the text and the margin to outline the structure of the book. For each main point, indicate evidence, examples, steps, proofs, connections to other points, definitions and your own thoughts. The book holds information. Your marks create organization. **Mark to simplify review.**

## Study Area Analysis



List the three places you use most frequently for studying:

A. \_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_

C. \_\_\_\_\_

Now check the column that applies to each of these places:

T = True      F = False

	Place A	Place B	Place C
1. I am interrupted a lot while studying.	T F	T F	T F
2. The environment reminds me of things unrelated to studying.	T F	T F	T F
3. I can hear a TV or radio playing.	T F	T F	T F
4. I often answer the phone.	T F	T F	T F
5. I take a lot of breaks.	T F	T F	T F
6. My breaks tend to be long.	T F	T F	T F
7. I am easily distracted.	T F	T F	T F
8. I tend to start conversations.	T F	T F	T F
9. My friends and family interrupt me during my study time.	T F	T F	T F
10. My study area is conducive to good studying.	T F	T F	T F
11. I am satisfied with my study area.	T F	T F	T F

What do you need to do in order to change your study area?

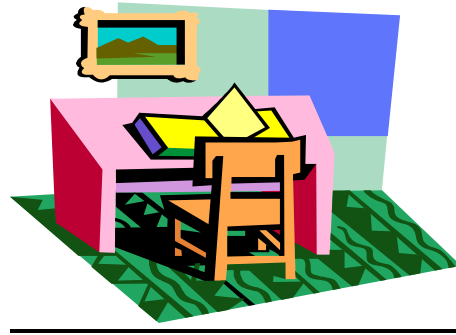
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# Create Your Own Study Area



Where do you study?

Check the list below and compare with how you have set up your study area.

- A comfortable chair and a table to spread books and papers out on.
- At least two sources of light, one being natural light (sun light).
- Pens, pencils, paper, calculator and other tools to do your work.
- A thesaurus and dictionary.
- A room kept at a comfortable temperature.
- A quiet area that is away from the maddening crowd.
- The area is neat and orderly.
- An area where the TV and telephone cannot distract you.
- A “DO NOT DISTURB” sign for your door saying that you are studying.

If you cannot study effectively at home, perhaps the library or a different space would be a better alternative. If you can find a place to study without distraction for an hour, it is better than two hours of studying with interruptions.

**Think about your study area and consider how you can improve it.**

Are you studying in a place conducive to learning? If you study in bed, you are more than likely going to fall asleep. So avoid getting too comfortable. And use only one area for studying. This will train your mind and body to be alert and ready every time you arrive. You will be saying to yourself, “Time to Study!”

## STUDY SKILLS 101

- I) Plan two hours study time for every hour you spend in class. This is a good general rule few students follow. The results are evident at exam time.
- II) Study difficult (or boring) tasks first. The most difficult subjects require more energy. Study those when you are at your most attentive.
- III) Avoid scheduling marathon study sessions. Three three-hour sessions are more productive than a full nine hour session. Take breaks every hour or so and work on various subjects, but to avoid confusion, do not studying similar courses back to back. (Pay attention to your attention. When your mind wanders, bring it back. This is a good sign a break is needed.)
- IV) Be aware of your best time of day. For some it may be early morning while the city still sleeps. For others, maybe afternoon after being active for a few hours. It is important to be rested before studying. If reading tires you, stand up and read, sit in a chair (rather than on your bed) or read at another time when you don't feel like dozing off.
- V) Make sure you have food and water in you. Your body needs energy to think. Stretch a little and get your blood moving.
- VI) Use waiting time. (i.e. waiting for the bus, doctor's appointment, between classes, etc.) This is where flashcards really come in handy!
- VII) Learn to say no. 99% of the people you know want you to succeed. They'll understand if you can't make it to dinner because of your finals.
- VIII) Get a study buddy or form a study group. Working with others reinforces information, makes learning fun and increases learning. Forming a study group has some basic guidelines:
  - 1. Locate a good meeting place where it's convenient and comfortable.
  - 2. Plan meeting dates ahead of time. Each group member should have a phone number list. One person should be the leader.
  - 3. Learning the material should be the common goal. Participates should come prepared with completed relevant assignments and chapters read before hand.
  - 4. Delegate work.
  - 5. Help each other by proof reading work, and correcting homework problems. This helps you see how others approach their work.
  - 6. Share and compare notes.
- IX) Go into your study session with a positive attitude. You will get more accomplished.

## Cell Phone Etiquette for Students

Listen up!

- Turn off cell phones BEFORE you enter the classroom. You can also set it to “SILENT” or to “VIBRATE”, however, if you set it to the latter, make sure to not place the phone on your desk. The loud vibrations against the desk are just as annoying and disruptive as having your phone on!
- In case you are awaiting an urgent call, inform your instructor before class, then set your phone to “VIBRATE” mode and place it in your pocket or lap so you can “feel” when someone calls and can easily access it more quickly. When it rings, quietly get up and leave the classroom before answering. If possible try to sit near the aisle and/or door.
- Texting is just as rude as taking a phone call during class. Remember: you are in class to learn not to socialize.
- Cell phones should never be on in the library. Treat it like you would a classroom. Take your phone call outside.
- When outside or elsewhere on campus, talk with a low voice. The microphones in cell phones are sensitive. There’s no need to shout. It not only is rude and bothers those around you but can be cause for safety. Do you really want strangers privy to your intimate details?
- Attend face-to-face business absolutely. It is impolite to be on the phone when someone is taking your order in the cafeteria, purchasing at the bookstore, making an appointment to meet with a counselor, or anyone else expecting your full attention.

Remember: cell phones are a wonderful convenience. However, they are equipped with features for those not-so-convenient times, like the classroom, the library, or counseling appointments. **It’s okay to turn off your cell phone and let the call go to voicemail!** That’s what it is there for!



## Alcohol and its Repercussions on Student Success

1. Information learned is harder to recall because alcohol impairs your brain from transferring information from short term to long term memory.
2. Concentration in class and on homework becomes more difficult as your attention span is reduced after drinking.
3. Since alcohol disrupts the necessary sleep cycle, a decrease in cognitive abilities occurs as well as makes you susceptible to depression and anxiety.
4. Your body needs time to recover from a night of heavy drinking so the result is more missed classes and falling behind on assignments.

Adapted from *Alcohol and Academics*, **Academic Skills Center, Dartmouth College, 2001** and <http://www.alcohol.vt.edu/Students/academicSuccess.htm>



A 16th century brewery

For more information:

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Hayden Hall  
1000 West Foothill Boulevard  
Glendora, California 91741

**Telephone:** (626) 914-8671

## Are You an Alcoholic?

To answer this question, ask yourself the following questions and answer them as honestly as you can.

- Do you lose time from work [or school] due to drinking?
- Is drinking making your home life unhappy?
- Do you drink because you are shy with other people?
- Is drinking affecting your reputation?
- Have you ever felt remorse after drinking?
- Have you gotten into financial difficulties as a result of drinking?
- Do you turn to lower companions and an inferior environment when drinking?
- Does your drinking make you careless of your family's welfare?
- Has your ambition decreased since drinking?
- Do you crave a drink at a definite time daily?
- Do you want to drink the next morning?
- Does drinking cause you to have difficulty sleeping?
- Has your efficiency decreased with drinking?
- Is drinking jeopardizing your job or business [or education]?
- Do you drink to escape worries or trouble?
- Do you drink alone?
- Have you ever had a complete loss of memory as a result of drinking?
- Has your physician ever treated you for drinking?
- Do you drink to build up your self-confidence?
- Have you ever been to a hospital or institution on account of drinking?

If you have answered YES to any one of the questions, there is a definite warning that **you may be an alcoholic.**

If you have answered YES to any two, the chances are that **you are an alcoholic.**

If you have answered YES to three or more, **you are definitely an alcoholic.**

*(These test questions are used by John Hopkins University Hospital in Baltimore, MD in deciding whether or not a patient is an alcoholic.)*

### Have You a Desire to Stop Drinking?

If alcohol is a problem to you and if the questions (above) have convinced you that you are an alcoholic, perhaps you will say, "Yes, but I can quit by myself any time." More power to you if you can – **and do.** All of us who are now members of Alcoholics Anonymous said that once, or many times. "I can take it or leave it alone." So we took it. With the results that later we got into further trouble and eventually **reached an extremity when we had to admit we could not stop without help.**

We define an alcoholic as anyone whose drinking disrupts his/her business, family or social life and who cannot stop, even though (s)he may want to. We regard alcoholism as a malady or disease. We think of ourselves as sick people who cannot touch alcohol any more than a diabetic can eat sugar.

If you sincerely desire to stop drinking, Alcoholics Anonymous can help you. **The AA program works.** It has already helped millions who were as bad as or worse off than you.

*(Reprinted by kind permission of Alcoholics Anonymous)*

For help and resources, visit: [www.alcoholics-anonymous.org/](http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org/) or <http://www.al-anon.alateen.org/>

Or contact:

San Gabriel/Pomona Valley Central Office,  
849 E. Route 66, Ste. D  
Glendora CA 91740

Phone: (626) 914-1861

# TEN STEPS TO ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. **Set individual academic and personal goals. (Take a goal setting workshop to learn this valuable skill)**
2. **Choose courses carefully, especially during your first year. See a Counselor for an individualized Student Education Plan (SEP)**
3. **Know and use resources. (Instructors, Counselors, Library, Student Activities, Financial Aid, Career Transfer Center, DSP&S, EOP&S, CalWORKs, The Health Center, Tutoring, workshops...and more!)**
4. **Meet and get to know faculty. (GO to office hours and meet your instructors. Class gets better when you know your instructor and your instructor knows you!)**
5. **Learn actively. GO to class! Be a part of the class discussion!**
6. **Manage your time well. Be prepared. Take a Time Management Workshop.**
7. **Know and actively use reading skills. This saves a lot of re-reading.**
8. **Develop strong listening and note-taking skills. FOCUS!**
9. **Develop and improve your writing and speaking skills.**
10. **Get involved in co-curricular activities; learn skills and gain experience.**



Adapted from: An article of the same title by the Academic Skills Center, Dartmouth College ©2001