

# STUDY SKILLS

## THE ASSIGNMENT BOOK

- 1. This book is your best friend. Keep it with you all day at school and take it home with you each afternoon.**
2. At the beginning of each day and at the top of each page of the assignment book, put the day and date. Use the pages consecutively.
3. Keep this book open on your desk so it is ready for recording assignments.
4. Write all the pages of the homework and any other important information that will help to direct you later when you might easily have forgotten the details you need. Always indicate "Due Date." Words like "read", "outline", "memorize", "do #1-9", "correct and return", etc. are all vitally important to completing your work successfully.
5. If you have no homework in a class, enter "none." No blank spaces!
6. At the end of each lesson, check to be sure that you have written all the information you will need to do the assignment.
7. Before you leave school, check your assignment book to see which books you will need to take home.
8. A good rule is to begin doing the assignment you consider to be the hardest while you are freshest.
- 9. After you finish each assignment, check it off in your book as "completed." If an assignment is due on a date later than the next day, be sure to bring it forward each day until it is completed. If there is a test scheduled for the near future, bring that reminder forward each day until the test has been given. This is very important!**
10. When your homework is finished, put your completed work in one folder or vinyl pocket designated for homework. Work scattered in the pages of a book makes locating it the next day too hard. Gather your books, papers, and your assignment book together for the next morning. Packing your backpack each evening will make the morning easier. Put your backpack by the door from which you leave in the morning.

## **SELF-CHECK:**

**At the end of each day, follow these steps:**

Look back at today's entries.

Do you have the date at the top of the page?

Did you write the source, the page, the question numbers, and the due date for each entry?

Did you check "completed" for each task you finished?

Did you bring forward to the next day any assignment due later than the next day?

If you have been notified of a test that is coming up, did you bring that forward? Do this on each day until the test has been taken. Apply the same routine for long term assignments until each has been turned in to the teacher.

Did you enter "none" for any subject for which there was no assignment that day?

Do not skip any pages in your assignment book. Use pages consecutively.

Are your entries clear enough for anyone else to read?

**If you have not followed each step, try to be faithful to these tomorrow and every day after!**

## Helpful Hints:

- Decide where and when your study efforts are most productive. Make these habitual.
- Gather around you all the supplies you will need to complete each task. Breaking your concentration to go in search of a ruler or stapler only extends the time you spend on your work.
- Have a designated folder or file for all your completed work. Papers that have been folded, soiled, wrinkled, torn, etc. make a very poor impression on your teacher before he/she even reads your work.
- Never put away a completed assignment without first checking for the heading on your paper. Be sure it is in the format required by that teacher. **ALWAYS PUT YOUR NAME ON YOUR WORK.**
- Choose one day every week to go through your backpack. Clean out all toxic waste and evaluate each loose paper just in case one that you need got away from you.
- If you have followed the directions for effective use of your assignment book, you should seldom have to turn in a late assignment. Forgetting it at home is a poor excuse. It should have been put in your completed work folder and immediately into your backpack.
- From which door do you exit as you leave for school each morning? That is where your packed and ready to roll backpack should spend the night. Your work is not finished until you do this. In the morning, there are too many things to do. You may not be at your best in the morning.
- Have you heard the old saying that you can take a horse to water but you can't make him drink? No one can make these steps a habit for you. You alone can make the best choices for you a part of your daily routine. **YOU CAN DO THIS! GOOD LUCK!**

## **WAYS TO IMPRESS YOUR TEACHER:**

- Look at your teacher when he/she is speaking.
- Politely use your teacher's name at least once a day when speaking to him/her.
- Make one good comment or observation in class each day.
- Arrive on time for class and smile! Look ready!
- Get ready to leave only when excused or when the bell rings.
- Never slam your book shut! A bad attitude earns you no points.
- Always say "thank you" when your teacher offers suggestions or helps you with a correct answer.
- ALWAYS HAND YOUR PAPER IN ON TIME. If you feel you need more help with the lesson or concept, indicate that, but always make an effort. Doing nothing earns you exactly that—NOTHING.
- If you do not understand something, ask the teacher for more explanation or more examples.
- If you make a mistake, neatly cross out the error with one thin line and continue. Do not smear and scribble over errors.

## MAKING STUDY CARDS FROM A TEXTBOOK

The method I offer here is one that has been proven helpful to many students. This method is especially applicable in the social studies and science content areas. You will need 3x5 index cards and legible printing or handwriting. (If you write so quickly that you cannot read your own writing, you are wasting your time. Make your efforts work for you.)

Each resource provides a page of **vocabulary** to be covered in the particular subject, or important **people** to be discussed, or **places** of significance to the study. In some cases, this information will be at the beginning, or perhaps on the review page near the end of the section. Any term in **bold print** is worthy of noting.

Each one of these terms deserves a separate index card. Write each on the front (blank) side of a card. On the back of each card, put the definition of the term or the explanation of its significance to the topic discussed. This process should be continuous as you read the book material the first time through.

Each time you read more about this term or person or place, add that information, in as few words as possible, as another “bullet” entry on the back of the same card. To do this efficiently, you must consider the importance of the information you have read. Let’s look at an example. Let’s pretend you are reading about King Henry VIII. His name would go on the front of the card. As you read, you discover that he was the king of England from 1509 to 1547. Your first bullet entry on the back of your card would look like this:

- King of England, 1509 – 1547

You continue reading and learn that he wanted his marriage to Catherine annulled because he wanted a male heir to his throne. Your next bullet might look like this:

- Wanted an annulment from Catherine for an heir

This information may then lead you to create another card for “annulment” on which you would define the term. Then continue reading. You will soon discover he demanded that he be named the head of the Church of England through a Parliamentary action called “The Act of Supremacy.” This would become a third bullet on Henry’s card:

- Act of Supremacy

Obviously, this last entry demands a new card to explain the term.

This ongoing process helps to identify the main ideas from your reading without having to go back and search through the material again.

Anytime you read an overall theme statement, such as “Certain rights were guaranteed to the English people by the Magna Carta” be sure to make a new card. Your card may read: Magna Carta: people’s rights. Your bullet entries on the back will list the rights granted to the people by this document. You will also find that you need: Magna Carta: King’s restrictions. List all these in bullet form on the back of this card.

These cards are then a continuous source of review. **DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE COMPLETION OF THE CHAPTER.** This method is most effective if employed with the first reading of the material. Begin learning the material from the first day the card is created. Test preparation will be greatly simplified.

This same process can be used when reviewing class notes.

Use idle time well (sitting in the car to and from places) by reviewing your cards. Look at the front of each and see if you can give the information on the back without looking at it. Or, try it backwards. When looking at the detail in bullets, can you name the related important person, place, or vocabulary term.

Remember: you learn through repetition. Make review of your study cards a part of your daily work.