

# Study Tips

written by: Kellie Hayden

Whether it is back to school time or any time of the school year, studying equals academic success. However, some students do not know how to study. After watching countless middle school students struggle over the years, I've created a top 10 list of what students can do to improve study habits.

## **10. Select a consistent place to study.**

Some people need total quiet while others can study well with music in the background. The key is to find a comfortable place and study there regularly, such as the kitchen table, a desk, a favorite chair, bed, etc.

## **9. Don't wait until the last minute.**

Study a little every night instead of cramming late the night before the test. A good night's sleep helps. Bleary eyes and a tired body do not.

## **8. Buy an agenda book and use it**

Most students have an agenda book, but they don't write anything in it. On Monday, write down all of the week's assignments. Most teachers have them posted in the classroom.

## **7. Dedicate a space for every class in your book bag.**

In the department store aisles, there are boxes and boxes of binders, folders and organizational tools. For every class, dedicate a binder, folder or notebook. There should be a place for class notes, handouts and homework assignments. Some of the larger binders can accommodate all classes. It is really a matter of personal choice; just keep papers separated by class.

## **6. Stay organized throughout the year.**

Most students have many binders and folders, but they do not use them. Many stuff every single paper from school into one binder. Half of their papers become misplaced or lost. Do not use the "shove" method when papers are returned, i.e. shove everything in one binder. Place them in the correct folder. If you are using a three-ring binder to keep papers organized, take the time to open the metal prongs and place them securely in it. If someone helps you organize your papers, take the time to continue putting everything in its place.

## **5. Make study cards.**

On the front of a note card write the word or idea. On the back, write the definition or important information. Have a friend or parent ask you about the word and/or provide a definition.

## **4. Make your own study guide.**

One great way to study is to make a list of the important information from a chapter and write it in your own words. Copy down any words that are written in bold or in italics. Look at chapter headings, section headings and review sections at the end of a chapter for other important information to add to your study guide. Merge this information with class notes.

## **3. Talk about assignments with friends.**

Discussing assignments with friends is another great way to study. This is very helpful when studying for novel tests. Friendly discussions about books help deepen understanding.

## **2. If you are struggling, ask for help.**

Start by talking to the teacher. The guidance counselor generally has a list of tutors in the area. Some high school students need to complete community service hours to be in clubs or in honor societies. You may be able to get a free tutor.

## **1. Make academics a focus in your life.**

Studying takes time and effort. Get organized, ask for help and put forth effort aimed at improving your study habits now.

The lessons taught in middle school are building blocks for high school and college. Starting good study habits now will help you later in life. It does take more effort to study and to become organized; however, academic success will make you feel good about yourself and your parents smile.