



**Enhanced Learning**  
**Educational Services**  
*"the study skills specialist"*

# **YEARS 7&8**

# **TOOLS FOR SUCCESS!**

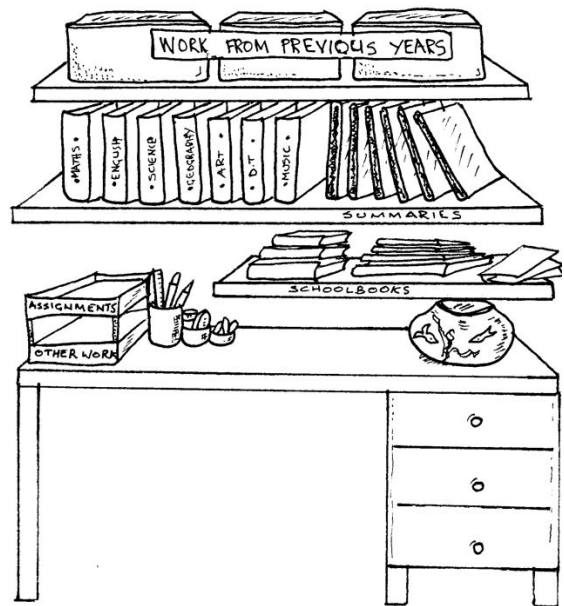
**Student Handout**  
(You will need a pen!)



Your Name:.....

## 1. HOW CAN YOU IMPROVE YOUR HOME STUDY ENVIRONMENT?

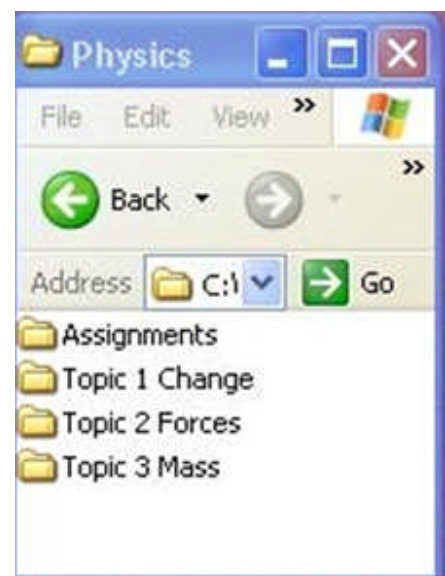
- Do you have a good sized work space? Y / N
- Do you have adequate storage or shelving space? Y / N
- Do you have an appropriate chair? Y / N
- Do you have adequate ventilation (fresh air)? Y / N
- Do you have good strong lighting and a desk lamp? Y / N
- Do you have a visible calendar or term planner showing when things like assignments are due? Y / N
- Do you have somewhere to keep assignments or projects you are working on? Y / N
- Do you have somewhere to keep anything for school that you don't need to take to school the next day? Y / N
- Do you have somewhere to keep past tests, assignments, books, papers so they are all together and filed for each subject? Y / N
- Do you have an 'ergonomic' workspace for working with your computer? Y/N



*What could you do to improve your home study environment?*

## 2. HOW CAN YOU BE MORE ORGANISED AT SCHOOL?

- How well do you manage all the digital resources for school?
- How do you use and manage your locker at school (if you have one)?
- How do you manage any loose papers you are given for school? Do you paste them in or scan into your computer? Do you have a folder/file for sheets that can't be pasted in? Do you put the date on loose papers?
- Do you use a consistent pen colour in your work and make headings in your computer documents clear?
- Are you on your time to your classes?
- Do you take the correct books and equipment to your lessons?
- Do you write your homework into your diary or online planner at the end of your lessons?



*What do you need to do to be more organised at school?*

<b>HOW CAN YOU KEEP ORGANISED AND WORK WELL AT HOME?</b>	<b>Circle Yes or No. If NO tell your parents why not.</b>
Do you work in distinct blocks of time for schoolwork and turn off all distractions during this time?	Y / N
Do you unpack your bag totally before you start work and spend 10 minutes or so before you start any work getting organised?	Y / N
Do you look through all your books (or computer files) and see if any sheets need to be pasted in or scanned (or files organised on your computer)?	Y / N
Do you see if there are any notes or information you need to pass on to your parents?	Y / N
Do you see if there are any assignments or tests that need to be filed into your subject folders that you keep at home or printed out?	Y / N
Once you have dealt with all the loose papers or organised the files on your computer, do you work out which resources you need to use that night and which can be put away for tomorrow?	Y / N
Do you check your diary or online planner to see what you need to get done that night?	Y / N
Do you make a plan each afternoon of what you'd like to get done that night and what order you will do your work in?	Y / N
Each time you are ready to start a piece of homework, do you take out everything you need or open all the files you need and then once you have finished file it all away before organising the things you need for the next piece of homework?	Y / N
Do you do homework first, then work on any assignments or prepare for any tests?	Y / N
If you don't have much homework or assignments etc to do, do you spend some time making study notes or working on things you find difficult (ie doing independent learning)?	Y / N
At the end of the night do you keep track of the work you have done and reschedule if necessary?	Y / N
At the end of the night, do you work out what you need to take to school tomorrow and pack everything you'll need into your bag?	Y / N



*What do you need to do to improve your organisation and make the way you work at home more effective?*

### **3. HOW MUCH TIME DO YOU HAVE AVAILABLE AND HOW WILL YOU FIT IN ALL YOUR SCHOOLWORK?**

Students who get **GOOD RESULTS** and have much less **STRESS** each year try and complete a set amount of work as a minimum each night (or over the week). They might need to do extra work some nights if they are really busy. These students decide in advance how much time they will spend on schoolwork each night and use the extra time after they have finished homework etc. to do things like assignments or work on study notes. It might not be the same amount of time each night but they have a definite amount of time allocated for schoolwork each day (or over the whole week).

Waiting till you get home and then seeing what you feel like doing doesn't really work. Instead you need to choose one of the following:

- Have set times allocated each day to your work (like a study timetable).
- Make a plan each afternoon before you start.
- Plan to complete a certain number of 20 or 30 minute blocks each night and cross off when you have done them.

Let's see what YOUR schedule is like this year. Fill in activities, travelling, dinner, TV etc.

	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri		Sat	Sun
Before school						8-9		
3.30-4						9-10		
4-4.30						10-11		
4.30-5						11-12		
5-5.30						12-1		
5.30-6						1-2		
6-6.30						2-3		
6.30-7						3-4		
7-7.30						4-5		
7.30-8						5-6		
8-8.30						6-7		
8.30-9						7-8		
9-9.30						8-9		
9.30-10						9-10		

Time per day/week for schoolwork:

What are your main distractions?



*What do you need to do to improve the way you manage your time at home and deal with distractions?*

## 4. HOW CAN YOU MANAGE YOUR WORKLOAD (ASSIGNMENTS AND TESTS)?

Step 1. Break the work to be done into pieces or chunks.

<b>ASSIGNMENT</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do research, collect materials</li> <li>• Organise the information</li> <li>• Do 1<sup>st</sup> section</li> <li>• Do 2<sup>nd</sup> section</li> <li>• Put in pictures</li> <li>• Finalise presentation</li> </ul>	<b>MATHS TEST</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finish chapter</li> <li>• Make study notes</li> <li>• Learn formulas</li> <li>• Do chapter review</li> <li>• Work on hard sections</li> <li>• Re-do questions in text</li> <li>• Do revision sheets</li> </ul>	
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Step 2. Plan in your diary or online planner when you will try to do each step.  
This is a DO list, not just a DUE list!

Sat 1 Do research, collect materials for assign	Sat 8 Finish 1 <sup>st</sup> section of assignment	Sat 15 Put in pictures assignment
Sun 2	Sun 9 Start 2 <sup>nd</sup> section of assignment	Sun 16
Mon 3	Mon 10	Mon 17
Tues 4 Start 1 <sup>st</sup> section of assignment	Tues 11	Tues 18 Finalise presentation assignment
Wed 5	Wed 12 Finish 2 <sup>nd</sup> section of assignment	Wed 19
Thurs 6	Thurs 13	Thurs 20
Fri 7	Fri 14	Fri 21 <b>Assignment Due Today</b>

Step 3. Highlight the work you complete that day. Cross out incomplete work or work you did not have time for and allocate it to another day. This way you never have to look back to see what you need to do.

**Circle your answers:**

- Do you make sure that the due dates stand out in your diary or online planner? Y / N
- Do you break the work to be done for tests/assignments into pieces or chunks? Y / N
- Do you put a plan in your diary or online planner of when you will try to do each step? Y / N
- Do you highlight or tick or cross out the work you complete each day? Y / N
- Do you reschedule the work you did not complete, ie move it to another day? Y / N

*What do you need to do to improve the way you plan out and manage the work for your assignments?*

## 5. HOW DO YOU MAKE SUMMARIES AND STUDY NOTES?

Follow these steps to make summaries:

1. Look through all material on the topic; your classnotes, worksheets, textbook.
2. Make a list of the main headings or sections.
3. Create a mind map overview for the topic.
4. For each heading, read through the information and highlight the key points.
5. Write down the key ideas in point form (in your own words if you can!).
6. Try and put information into lists or tables when you can.
7. Re-do a particular section if you feel the information is not clearly organised.

To make effective study notes:

- use point form notes as much as possible, avoid long sentences
- rephrase the information in your own words
- only include relevant information
- make notes neat, legible, easy to read, well set out with a logical structure
- improve layout with wide margins, different colour and headings, box key points, numbering etc
- loose leaf sheets are useful as can rewrite sections, add in extra information
- summarising is a never ending process, keep refining, improving, adding in
- your summary must be comprehensive and include all information needed
- mind maps: one page visual overview of the topic

Once you have made the study notes, to use them when studying:

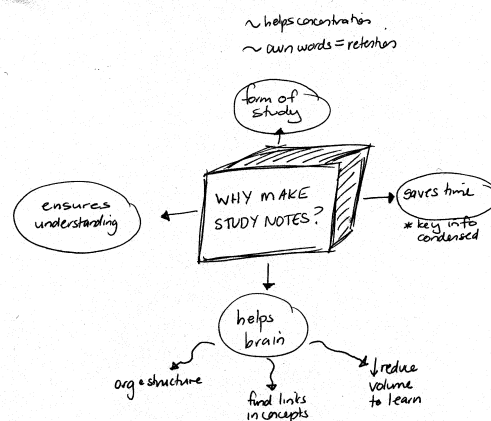
- Read through a section, put it aside and see what you can write down without looking.
  - Read a section out loud, put it aside, see what you can say out loud without looking.
  - Pace around your room reading a section, go to your computer, see what you can type out onto a blank word file (without looking back at the notes!).
- Then check and see what you remembered correctly and what you need to review again.

### Circle your answers:

Have you ever made study notes before? Y / N  
If no, add this to your action plan.

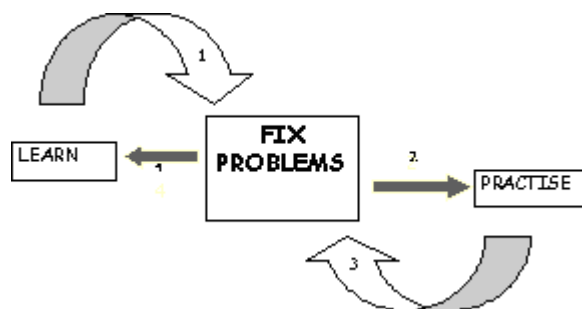
If yes:

- Do you try and make the notes early so you have time to learn them before the test? Y / N
- Are your notes brain-friendly, clear headings and structured and highlighting etc.? Y / N
- Can you think of some ways you can improve your notes? Y / N



*What do you need to do to improve the study notes you do or to ensure you make notes on a regular basis?*

## HOW DO YOU STUDY EFFECTIVELY?



### THE 'THREE MUSKETEERS' TECHNIQUE

Tick which of the things below you do to prepare for tests or exams:

#### MUSKETEER 1 - Organising the information

- make summaries and study notes
- make a recording of the information you need to remember
- write out lists of formulas or rules
- make signs to put up around the house of info you have to learn

#### MUSKETEER 2 - Moving the information into long term memory

- read through and review the study notes or textbook and test yourself on them
- listen to the recordings of information you have made and try to recite the info
- read the info then write out what you remember without looking (do this over & over)
- read the info then speak out loud what you remember without looking (over & over)
- test yourself or have someone test you on what you remember
- teach or explain the information to someone else

#### MUSKETEER 3 - Practising the skills of the subject

- do as many different question types or examples as possible and check answers
- do past or practise exam or test papers under examination conditions (no looking!)
- re-do past topic tests
- re-do hard questions in the textbook

Remember: When studying, keep a list of questions or things you need to ask your teacher about.

#### FLASHCARDS

Buy or make some index or palm cards. Write questions on the front and answers on the back then use them to test yourself! Keep reviewing until you can answer each question perfectly – make sure you shuffle up the cards.

*What do you need to do to improve the way you study for tests and exams?  
What new techniques could you try?*

#### MNEMONICS

When you are trying to remember a list of things, take the first letter of each and make a 'nonsense' word to jog your memory of each of the items during the test. You can also make up a rhyme or story instead of a 'nonsense' word.

**Making study notes is only the first part! There is a lot more to successful study!**

Make lists of key points of part of a topic		<p><b>Which study techniques do you use?</b></p> <p><b>Can you think of any other study techniques?</b></p> <p><b>What new techniques could you try?</b></p> <p><b><u>DON'T FORGET:</u></b></p> <p><b>LOOK</b></p> <p><b>COVER</b></p> <p><b>SAY</b></p> <p><b>WRITE</b></p> <p><b>CHECK</b></p>		Re-do class exercises from the textbook
	Have a parent or friend test you		Spend time working out what it is you do NOT know yet	
3Rs - Read, Recite, Recheck (look, cover, write, check)				Ask your teacher for extra worksheets for revision
	Put up formulas and rules around the house		Do as many qus as possible under exam conditions	
Form pictures in your mind of the information				Keep a list of areas you need to revise further
	Speak out loud the info you've read to check recall		Buy study guides or extra textbooks to try other qus	
Type what you remember without looking at notes				Practice writing under exam conditions (or sample essay plans)
	Write out lists of questions as you read and answer them		Do any chapter reviews or summary questions	
Write out info over and over				Do past test papers under exam conditions
	Write out what you remember in your own words		Correct all of your work, Re-do the ones you got wrong	
Organise notes using colour, highlighting and structure				Target the areas you are weak on with extra practice
	Form discussion Or study groups		Re-do past topic tests	
Make up rhymes or songs to help you remember				Create a test and swap with a friend
	Make and use flashcards or index cards		Add points into your summary book based on your practise	
Use mind maps, sketches, flowcharts and diagrams				Keep a list of things you need to ask your teacher about
	Teach what you have learnt to someone else		Do questions and submit to teachers for marking	
Make recordings of the info you need to learn			Be conscientious about chasing up everything you don't understand	



## PLANNING YOUR STUDY TIME FOR EXAMS

- Remember the 3 steps to study:
  - Make study notes early.
  - Learn the notes by testing yourself on them.
  - Do lots and lots of questions as practise.
- Most students in Year 7/8 generally need to do 1-1.5 hours of schoolwork each night.
- As exams approach, you may need to do a bit more each night - especially if you are still getting homework (although much of the homework may be designed to specifically help you prepare for the exams).
- It is best to work in half hour blocks, taking a break between study sessions.
- Remove all distractions during the half hour block (ie no TV, no music, turn off Facebook etc.).
- Choose 2-3 subjects to work on each night.
- Each afternoon, decide which subjects you will work on that night and what you'd like to try and get done in the study block for that subject.
- You might like to draw up a timetable planning which subjects you will work on each night before the exams start.
- In each study block spend some of the time 'learning' and some of the time 'practising'.
- Make sure you get at least 8 hours sleep in order to ensure you retain the info you studied.

