



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

GRADE 7

STEPS TO SUCCESS!



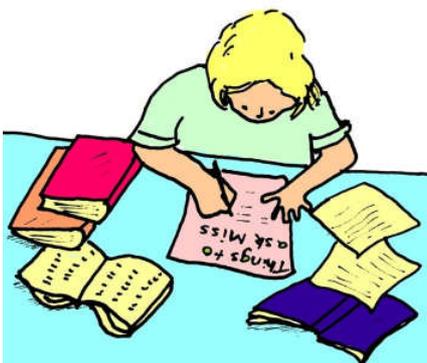
Your Name:.....
(You will need a PEN!)

Note: We will not complete this entire booklet during the session. Some of it is set up for you to work through at home or your teacher may ask you to bring the booklet back to school to complete the remainder at another time.



STEP 1: HOME STUDY ENVIRONMENT AND ORGANISATIONAL SKILLS "QUICK CHECK UP"

Do you have a good sized work space at home?	Y / N
Do you have adequate storage or shelving space or storage at home?	Y / N
Do you have a supportive chair at home?	Y / N
Do you have adequate ventilation (fresh air) in the space where you work at home?	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 are due on the wall at home?	Y / N
Do you have somewhere at home to keep assignments or projects you are working on?	Y / N
Do you have somewhere at home to keep the books you don't need to take to school the next day?	Y / N
Do you have somewhere at home to keep past tests, assignments, old exercise books so they are all together for each subject?	Y / N
Do you paste in any loose sheets that you can into your book (or alternatively you may file these into folders)?	Y / N
Do you avoid putting loose sheets in your bag or just loose in your books?	Y / N
Do you organise the files on your computer so things are easy to locate?	Y / N
Do you keep your locker at school tidy and organised (if you have one)?	Y / N
Do you date all of your work and sheets?	Y / N
Do you use a consistent pen colour in your work at school?	Y / N
Do you make headings in your notes clear?	Y / N
Do you have all the stationery you need to stay organised?	Y / N
Do you set up folders on your computer for each subject to manage your electronic resources?	Y / N
Do you give your computer files names that make it easier to remember what they are?	Y / N



What could you do to improve in these areas?



STEP 2: MANAGING YOUR TIME AND YOUR WORKLOAD

Try these questions to start thinking about how you currently manage your time at home.

1. What is your approach to completing your homework?
 - a) I like to do it as soon as I get home so my work is finished early.
 - b) I prefer to have a bit of relaxation time first before I start my homework.
 - c) I tend to leave it until the last minute and then rush to complete it.
2. Can you estimate fairly accurately how long a piece of work will take you?
 - a) Yes, definitely.
 - b) Sometimes I can.
 - c) No, I can't estimate how long things take or I never think about it.
3. How much time (on average) would you spend on homework each night?
 - a) Over an hour.
 - b) Between half an hour to an hour.
 - c) Less than half an hour.
4. Do you record your homework into your diary or online planner and check each night what you need to do?
 - a) Yes, definitely.
 - b) Sometimes I do.
 - c) No, I either don't write it down or I don't have a diary or online planner.
5. What is your approach to working at home:
 - a) I sit down for certain periods of time and focus on completing my homework.
 - b) Sometimes I sit down and concentrate on a piece of work.
 - c) I do bits and pieces of my homework over the whole night.



Have regular times set aside for schoolwork and work for a set amount of time each day:

What work should you be doing?

1. Organise all the papers from the day and any files on your computer. Paste in any loose sheets and file away others (have folders at home to file away work that won't fit into your school books).
2. Spend 5-10 minutes reviewing notes from the day by highlighting key points from the day's lessons.
3. Next work on the homework from the day.
4. Then work on assignments or prepare for any upcoming tests or quizzes.
5. Available time after this should be used to work on study notes, review difficult areas or reading.

Distractions	Actions to deal with distractions and procrastination:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use Rewards to motivate yourself.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Set time limits for tasks & breaks.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Work with a friend.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Take snacks with you so you are not getting up all the time.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Put technology distractions out of sight.

What have you tried to deal with your distractions? Has it worked?

Write down 2 suggestions from your friends:

The best technique?

- Work in 20-30 minute blocks.
- During that time remove ALL distractions.
- Keep your school work and your personal activities separate.
- Plan what you want to get done before you start.
- Allocate a set amount of schoolwork to each day:

Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
Slot 1:						
Slot 2:						

MANAGING THE WORKLOAD

Read through the list below. Tick which of the following you are currently doing on a regular basis for assignments/speeches/projects etc.

Put a tick in either the YES, SOMETIMES or NO column.

	Yes	Some times	No
You make sure the instructions for the assignment are written down in your diary or online planner or else you keep safe the sheet outlining the assignment.			
You start the assignment (even if it is only a little bit of work on it) on the day it is given to you.			
You think about what will need to be done to complete the assignment and try and chunk the work to be done into smaller pieces.			
You either plan when you will work on the assignment or else you work on it gradually rather than leaving it until the last minute.			
If you are unsure about something in the assignment, you check with your teacher and ask them some questions.			
If you need to do research for the assignment, you try to use lots of different sources: books from the library, encyclopaedias, the Internet.			
You aim to try and finish the assignment at least a few days BEFORE the due date so that if anything goes wrong you have some extra time.			
If you are working on the computer you either make a back-up (another copy of your file) or at least print out what you have done as you go in case there are any problems.			
You pay attention to the presentation of the assignment and strive to ensure everything is neat, tidy and looks professional.			
When you have finished the assignment, you check that you have completed everything you were asked to do, you read through it to look for any errors or anything that can be improved.			
You don't leave your assignments until the night before they are due!!			

Remember: Whenever you are told about a large piece of work, think about the steps that you will need to take to complete the task, think about how long each step will take and allocate the steps into your diary or online planner across the time that is available to complete the task.

If you are feeling overwhelmed, write out a list of everything you have to do under these headings:

URGENT: Needs to be done asap.	COMING UP: Assessments or assignments that you should start preparing for	POSTPONE: Things that you simply don't have enough time for now and can be left for the holidays.
--------------------------------	---	---

Take the urgent tasks and record in your diary or online planner when you will do them.

Now take the tasks coming up and allocate those as well. Once you have a plan in place, even though it means lots of work, you will feel much better.

What could you do to improve your time management skills? What would make the biggest difference to your results if you implemented them?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



STEP 3: IMPROVING THE WAY YOU STUDY

Steps to Studying:

- A. Make study notes (do this as early as possible).
- B. Learn the notes (don't just read them, test yourself on them).
(For example: LOOK COVER WRITE CHECK SAY)
- C. Do lots of practice questions.

Making study notes:

Step 1	
Step 2	
Step 3	
Step 4	

Features of good notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

What about Mind Maps?

Mind maps can be used effectively to give you an overview of the topic. They work well when they are the first thing you do before you start summarising the topic. Your study notes could have a mind map of the topic (1 page), then point form notes about the topic (however many pages you need, but stick to the essentials).

Study is all about getting information you read or see or hear to move out of the short term memory, which will not retain the information for long periods of time, into the long term memory which has an amazing capacity to recall information stored.

?????
STUDYING

Many students spend either too long on learning and not enough on practising (in which case they know the information but can't apply it) or they spend too long practising but not enough time learning (in which case they can do the work provided they have their notes to refer to).



* most important point → just 'reading' through is the slowest way to move info to long term memory.



* most important point → do as much practise as possible under EXAM CONDITIONS to see what you really know!

How do you study for tests and exams?

How do your friends study for tests and exams?

After you have done the study notes, you then need to do activities from both sides:

Make lists of key points of part of a topic	
	Have a parent or friend test you
3Rs - Read, Recite, Recheck (look, cover, write, check)	
	Put up formulas and rules around the house
Form pictures in your mind of the information	
	Speak out loud the info you've read to check recall
Type what you remember without looking at notes	
	Write out lists of questions as you read and answer them
Write out info over and over	
	Write out what you remember in your own words
Organise notes using colour, highlighting and structure	
	Form discussion or study groups
Make up rhymes or songs to help you remember	
	Make and use flashcards or index cards
Use mind maps, sketches, flowcharts and diagrams	
	Teach what you have learnt to someone else
Make recordings of the info you need to learn (or songs!)	

Which study techniques do you use?

Can you think of any other study techniques?

What new techniques could you try?

**DON'T FORGET:
Look
Cover
Write
Check
Say**

	Re-do class exercises from the textbook
Spend time working out what it is you do NOT know yet	
	Ask your teacher for extra worksheets for revision
Do as many qus as possible under exam conditions	
	Keep a list of areas you need to revise further
Buy study guides or extra textbooks to try other qus	
	Practice writing under exam conditions (or sample essay plans)
Do any chapter reviews or summary questions	
	Do past test papers under exam conditions
Correct all of your work, Re-do the ones you got wrong	
	Target the areas you are weak on with extra practice
Re-do past topic tests	
	Create a test and swap with a friend
Add points into your summary book based on your practise	
	Keep a list of things you need to ask your teacher about
Do questions and submit to teachers for marking	
	Be conscientious about chasing up everything you don't understand



IMPROVE TEST-TAKING TECHNIQUES

Time Management

Allocate your time before you go in by working out how much time you should spend on each section. Keep an eye on the clock so that you don't get bogged down or spend too much time on one question.

EXAMPLE. Your exam is 1.5 hours or 90 minutes long.

Part A is 30 marks, Part B is 50 marks and Part C is 40 marks. Total 120.

To calculate time allocated:

$$30/120 \times 90 = 22.5 \text{ minutes}$$

$$50/120 \times 90 = 37.5 \text{ minutes}$$

$$40/120 \times 90 = 30 \text{ minutes}$$

You may decide to spend 20 minutes on Part A, 35 minutes on Part B and 25 minutes on Part C so you have 10 minutes left for checking.

*SECTION MARKS / TOTAL MARKS * TOTAL TIME*

YOUR COMMON MISTAKES:

- Strategy? What works best for you? Doing easier questions first to get the most marks possible and building your confidence? Or from start to end?
- Mental Blanks? Leave the question, mark it clearly and move on, let your subconscious work on it, then come back later and try again.
- Running out of time? Look for where you can get the most marks in the time left.
- Feeling Stressed? Close your eyes for a few seconds, take a few deep breaths to increase your oxygen intake, stretch your fingers and shake them out then move to a new question. Try and do a question you feel confident about.

See how many of these questions on the next page you can answer:

1. When in exams should you use pencil and why?
2. What does looking at the mark a question is worth tell you?
3. Why should you not use liquid paper?
4. Why do you need to write neatly?
5. If there are formulas you think you might forget, what should you do?
6. How can you make sure you don't run out of time?
7. Which questions should you do first in exams?
8. If you finish early, what should you do?
9. If you are running out of time what should you do?
10. What should you do at the start of an exam?
11. What should you do if you have a mental blank?

YOUR TO DO LIST FOR TESTS AND EXAMS

1. FACT FINDING about the test (what format, what topics are being tested)
2. ORGANISE your notes / summaries (start making study notes now!)
3. MANAGE TIME and plan what to do (make a rough plan of what you would like to do each week)
4. NOW STUDY and make it active! Use all three types of preparation



YOUR HOME STUDY ENVIRONMENT

1. LIGHTING

Can you use natural lighting in the afternoon rather than turning on a light?	
When you do turn on the room light, is it a strong bright light?	
Do you have a desk lamp that shines directly onto your work (but not your eyes)?	
Do you leave the room light on as well as your desk lamp when working?	

2. VENTILATION

Are you able to open your window and have fresh air in your study space?	
If you can't open your window, do you go outside for some fresh air regularly?	
Do you take nice deep breaths when you are working and fill your lungs up?	
When it is cold, do you put on more clothes rather than turn on a heater?	

3. WORKING SPACE

Do you have a large and clear working or desk space to use for homework?	
Do you have a chair that is comfortable but supports your back?	
Is the chair adjustable so you can reduce strain on your neck and shoulders?	
If you place your hands on the table, are your arms parallel to the floor?	

4. STORAGE AND ORGANISATION

Is your stationery organised with the most used items near to hand?	
Do you have somewhere you can keep sheets, past tests, old workbooks etc?	
Have you got a clear desk space & a place to keep things you are working on?	
Do you have a noticeboard near or above your desk for important info?	

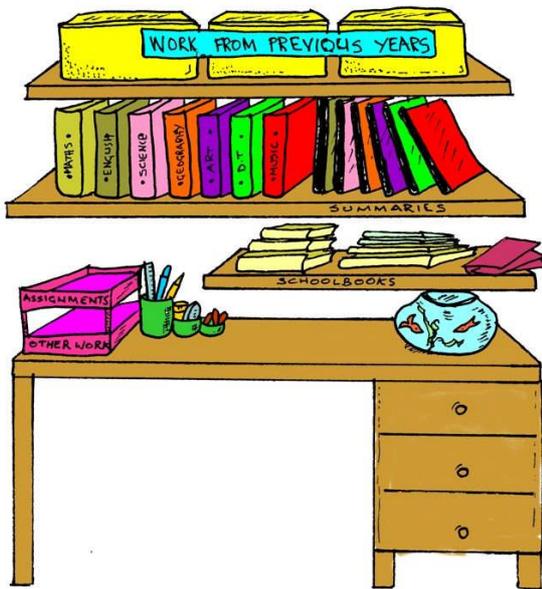
5. NOISE AND DISTRACTIONS

Can you keep your working space fairly quiet?	
Is your working space free from too many distractions?	
If you have lots of distractions (TV, Computer games etc) can you remove them (eg put your mobile elsewhere) or unplug them (like your TV) or disable them (like turn off Facebook) during the times when you will be doing schoolwork?	

Summary:

- Use natural lighting whenever possible.
- Have a desk lamp shining on your work and a room light.
- Ensure there is a flow of fresh air in your study space.
- If you can't have fresh air, go outside regularly for breaks.
- Make sure you have a large flat surface to work on.
- Have a chair at a height that allows you to rest your arms on your desk parallel to the floor with your feet flat on the floor.
- Keep the most commonly used stationery in easy reach.
- Have places to store and file papers and equipment.
- Put a noticeboard above or near your desk.
- Eliminate or manage distractions in your study area.

1. Decide whether you want to use exercise books or folders at school.
2. Decide where you are going to keep past tests, assignments, finished books or topics.
3. Decide where you are going to keep your daily schoolbooks.
4. Decide where you are going to keep things like assignments or work that takes longer than a day or so.



What are the top 3 changes you need to make to your home study environment?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

KEEPING ORGANISED AT HOME:

Each afternoon when you come home, spend 10 minutes before you start any work getting organised.



Tick which of the following you do each afternoon:

- 1. Take everything out of your bag and put it on your desk.
- 2. Deal with the loose papers. Look through all your books and see if any sheets need to be pasted in or if any returned assignments or tests need to be filed into your subject folders that you keep at home. (Are there any notes or information you need to pass on to your parents? Do you have loose sheets that need to be filed away?). If you use a laptop or iPad, organise all the files and resources from the day.
- 3. Once you have dealt with all the loose papers, do you work out which books you need to use that night and which books can be put away for tomorrow?
- 4. Do you place all the work to be done in a particular area? Some students stack all the work they need to do in a pile, while other students lay out each piece of work to be done on their bed.
- 5. Each time you are ready to start a piece of homework, take out everything you need and then once you have finished put it all away before taking out the things you need for the next piece of homework.
- 6. At the end of the night, work out what you need to take to school tomorrow and pack everything you'll need into your bag. Place the books you don't need to take into the space you have designated for this at home.

What could you do to be more organised at home?

SET YOUR TARGETS!

	Your Strengths (what you are good at in this area, what you did well in this area).	Your Weaknesses (what you need to work on or improve on in this area).	What you will start doing or changing this year to make the improvements needed.
<p><u>Classroom Skills</u> Do you listen to your teacher and not talk when you should be focusing? Do you work well in class and make the most of classtime? Do you participate and get involved in the lesson? Do you respect others' ideas?</p>			
<p><u>Homework Skills</u> Do you complete all the homework that is set by the due date? Do you try and put effort into your homework and do it properly? Do you ask your teacher for help if you can't do or understand some of the homework?</p>			
<p><u>Assignment Skills</u> Do you complete all assignments in time by the due date? Do you start assignments early rather than leaving them to the last minute? Do you break your assignments down into smaller more manageable steps?</p>			
<p><u>Study Skills</u> Do you start studying for tests early? Do you make study notes on a regular basis so they are ready at exam time? Do you do lots of revision questions, asking for help if needed? Do you test yourself on your study notes?</p>			
<p><u>General Skills</u> Are you on time for school and classes and bring everything needed? Are you able to turn off distractions when working at home? What else could you do to improve your results?</p>			