



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

GRADE 9 IMPROVING YOUR RESULTS



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.

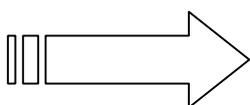
EFFECTIVE LEARNERS are people who:

| | | |
|---|--|---|
|  | | Lead a _____ and _____ lifestyle. |
|  | | _____ actively in the classroom. |
|  | | _____ about anything they can't do. |
|  | | _____ up work they miss immediately. |
|  | | Use _____ time and _____ time effectively. |
|  | | Manage their _____ and _____ well. |
|  | | _____ and _____ each time they finish a topic. |
|  | | Think about what _____ them from learning and _____ something about it. |

Scale: 1 all the time, 2 most of the time, 3 sometimes, 4 not often, 5 never

Many students don't realise that much of the study they do actually takes place long before the test is even announced. In the classroom and at home, how you learn along the way, can have a huge impact on the results you achieve.

Look at the questions where you scored 3, 4 or 5. What is the number one thing you could start doing that would help you end up with better results?



The main things I could start doing to help me improve my results are....



MANAGING YOUR WORKLOAD

How much time????????? _____
What should you be doing in that time?????????

1. Do _____ first.
2. Then work on _____ or prepare for tests.
3. On nights that you have less homework, get _____, file and _____ and do INDEPENDENT LEARNING.



The 'NMLN' TECHNIQUE ('no more late nights')

Eg: You have just found out that you have a Mathematics test on Tuesday 11th & an assignment due on Friday 21st.

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

| ASSIGNMENT | MATHS TEST |
|--|------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do research, collect materials • Organise the information • Do 1st section • Do 2nd section • Put in pictures • Finalise presentation | |

Step 2. Plan in your diary (paper or online) when you will try to do each step for tests & assignments.
This is a DO list, not just a DUE list! Use your diary as a project management tool.

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

Step 3. Highlight or mark as complete the work you complete that day. Cross out incomplete work or work you did not have time for and allocate it to another day. For online diaries you should be able to just transfer the work to the next day. This way you never have to look back to see what you need to do.

Circle your answers:

- Do you break the work to be done for tests and assignments into pieces or chunks? Y / N
 Do you put a plan in your diary (paper or online) of when you will try to do each step? Y / N
 Do you highlight or tick or mark complete 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

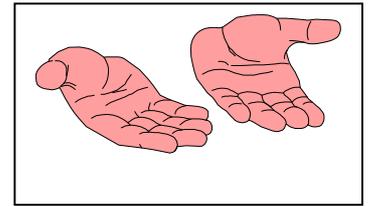
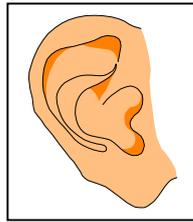
What could you do to improve the way you plan for tasks & use your diary or planner?

👉 YOUR BRAIN AND STUDY

As humans, we have a physical **BODY**, which houses and protects our **BRAIN**:



We use parts of our body, and the senses available to us, to collect and take in information. Senses we might use at school tend to be:



Once our senses collect the information, it is stored in the sensory bank of our mind:



From the sensory bank, two things can happen. Information can:

Be....
FORGOTTEN

OR

Enter your
SHORT TERM MEMORY
which holds:

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.

Information in your short term memory can then either
OR

Enter your **LONG TERM MEMORY**
which holds:
at least 1 000 000 000 facts

Steps to Studying

1. Make study notes (do this as early as possible).
2. Learn the notes (don't just read them, test yourself on them).
3. Do lots of practice questions.



MAKING STUDY NOTES

Good summaries are essential to ensure that you fully understand a topic and to make it easier to study for tests or examinations. A summary is an overview of the topic you have studied and is a great way to see how the pieces of the topic fit together. It is important that the summary is comprehensive and includes all you will need to know on this topic. This system is used at the completion of the topic.

STAGE 1 : BIRD'S EYE VIEW

- Gather all the notes, textbooks and materials on the subject and look through these (looking at the headings and subheadings and how the topic hangs together).
- Do a 1 page mind map of the topic.

Do this stage as soon as you complete the topic. It will only take a half hour or so.



STAGE 2 : UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL

- For each heading, create linear notes (point form, lists and tables, charts, diagrams wherever possible).
- Using the computer can be a good way to help organise and reduce the notes. Save the drafts under version1,2,3 etc. This stage takes the longest.

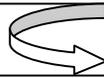
Start working on this stage over the next few weeks after you have done the mind map. Just do a bit whenever you have less homework that night. You'll find your marks will improve and you will be better prepared and less stressed at exam time.



STAGE 3 : CHECK-UP

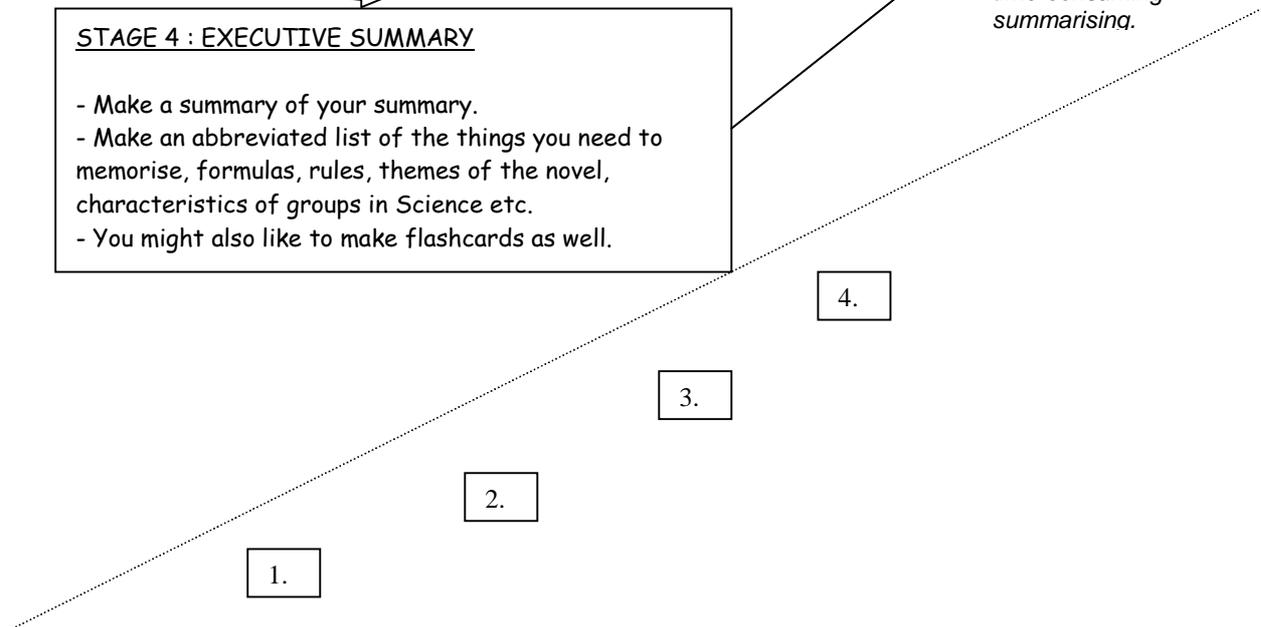
- Once you have completed the notes, leave them for a few days (or longer) then come back and read through them again and read through your textbook as well.
- Check you have included everything that should be in there and add in any notes or points.

Leave these stages until you get close to an exam period and do them then. It is a good way to refresh your memory without having to do huge amounts of time-consuming summarising.



STAGE 4 : EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Make a summary of your summary.
- Make an abbreviated list of the things you need to memorise, formulas, rules, themes of the novel, characteristics of groups in Science etc.
- You might also like to make flashcards as well.



INTRO TO STUDYING EFFECTIVELY

There are two main areas to focus on when studying for an examination after you have done the study notes.

1. Understand, learn and remember the content, rules, theory and definitions.
2. Practise the skills of the subject by attempting past questions, essays etc.

At first you will have to do more 'learning' than 'practising'. As you become more familiar with the material, you will start to do more things from the 'practising' side of studying.

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

Learn the content

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

Practise the skills

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

Describe how YOU learn and memorise content:

Describe where you get questions from to do practise:

Do you do questions from a wide range of resources?

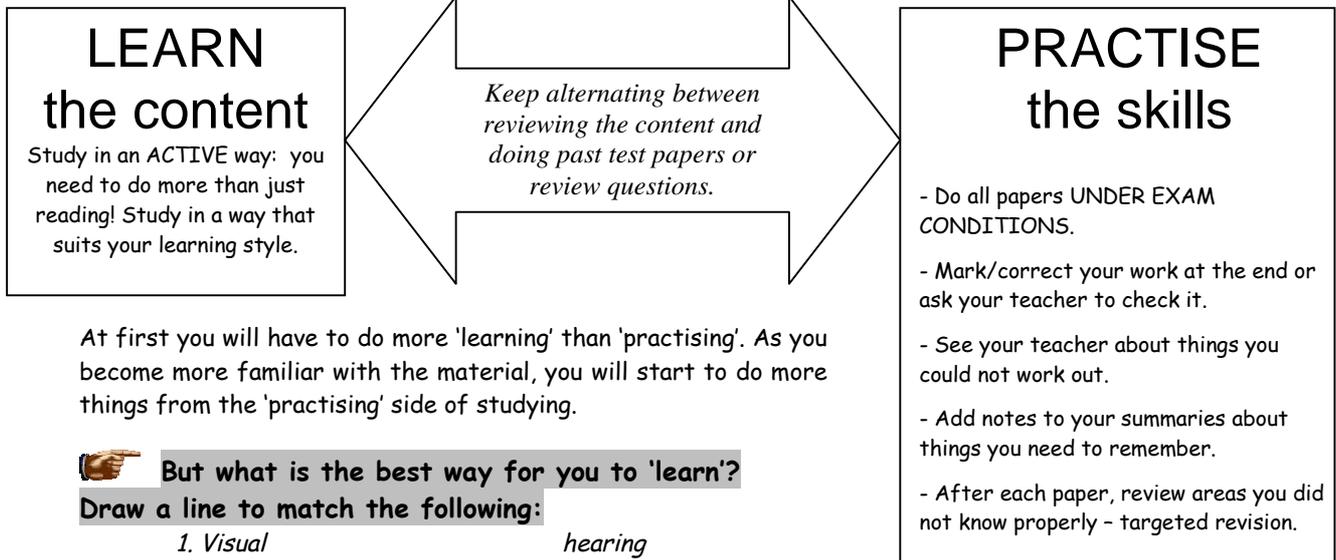
Do you test yourself to see what you can remember or do you just read it over and over?

Do you do practise under exam conditions ie time limits and no looking at notes or answers till the end?

👉 MAKING STUDY ACTIVE USING LEARNING STYLES

There are two main areas to focus on when studying for an examination.

- Understand, learn and remember the content, rules, theory and definitions.
- Practise the skills of the subject by attempting past questions, essays etc.
(note: do practise under time limits and without looking at your notes so you can simulate exam conditions)



At first you will have to do more 'learning' than 'practising'. As you become more familiar with the material, you will start to do more things from the 'practising' side of studying.

👉 **But what is the best way for you to 'learn'?**
Draw a line to match the following:

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------|
| 1. <i>Visual</i> | hearing |
| 2. <i>Auditory</i> | doing |
| 3. <i>Kinesthetic</i> | seeing |

Let's try and work out which one dominates you most:

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Number of 1s ____ Number of 2s ____ Number of 3s ____ You are mainly: _____

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Visual learners should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> organise notes using <u>COLOUR</u>, highlighting and structure use <u>MIND MAPS</u>, sketches, flowcharts and diagrams <u>VISUALISE</u> words or facts to be memorised make <u>MENTAL PICTURES</u> and associations <u>PRE-READ</u> textbook sections before class make <u>FLASHCARDS</u> : limit the amount of info so mind can make mental pictures put up <u>NOTES</u> or signs around the house as visual reminders translate words and ideas into <u>SYMBOLS</u>, pictures and diagrams read a section of your notes, then <u>WRITE OUT</u> what you remember without looking, check and see how good your recall is <p>Auditory learners should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> make <u>RECORDINGS</u> eg a qu. and answer recording <u>RECITE</u>, repeat and say it out loud to aid recall always <u>READ OUT LOUD</u> so you hear the words, not just look at them <u>EXPLAIN</u> it to the cat (or anyone who is around) make <u>DISCUSSION</u> groups with friends never miss a <u>CLASS</u>, you'll learn more in class make up a rhyme or <u>SONG</u> about the things you need to learn when trying to understand something, <u>TALK</u> your way through the info. | <p>Kinesthetic learners should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> do some <u>EXERCISE</u> first, <u>REMOVE DISTRACTIONS</u> then work for 20 mins do something active like ride an <u>EXERCISE</u> bike while reading <u>REWRITE</u> notes or <u>TYPE</u> into the computer to reinforce by sense of touch <u>PACE OR WALK</u> while studying or reading notes write notes or facts out <u>OVER AND OVER</u> to reinforce them sit near the <u>FRONT</u> of the classroom to help you stay focused take <u>NOTES</u> or draw diagrams of the info so you stay on track find ways to make it <u>TANGIBLE</u>, lots of <u>EXAMPLES</u> in study notes <u>ALTERNATE</u> between two tasks |
|--|---|

 **LEARNING STYLES**

Your Preferred Learning Style

A learning style is a way of learning. YOUR preferred learning style is the way in which YOU learn best. Three learning styles that are often identified in students are the **Auditory Learning Style**, the **Visual Learning Style**, and the **Tactile/Kinesthetic Learning Style**. Read about each of these learning styles to identify YOUR preferred learning style.

Are you a Visual Learner?

Visual Learners learn best when information is presented in a written language format or in another visual format such as pictures or diagrams. Do you do best in classes in which teachers do a lot of writing at the chalkboard, provide clear handouts, and make extensive use of an overhead projector? Do you try to remember information by creating pictures in your mind? Do you take detailed written notes from your textbooks and in class? If YES, you are probably a Visual Learner.

Are you an Auditory Learner?

Auditory Learners learn best when information is presented in an auditory language format. Do you seem to learn best in classes that emphasise teacher lectures and class discussions? Does listening to audio files help you learn better? Do you find yourself reading aloud or talking things out to gain better understanding? If YES, you are probably an Auditory Learner.

Are you a Tactile/Kinesthetic Learner?

Tactile/Kinesthetic Learners learn best in hands-on learning settings in which they can physically manipulate something in order to learn about it. Do you learn best when you can move about and handle things? Do you do well in classes in which there is a lab component? Do you learn better when you have an actual object in your hands rather than a picture of the object or a verbal or written description of it? If YES, you are probably a Tactile/Kinesthetic Learner.

*Your learning style is your strength. Go with it whenever you can.
Use it to help make your study more effective*



TEST-TAKING TECHNIQUES

- ___ I have enough sleep before the examination.
- ___ I have a decent and healthy breakfast the morning of the examination.
- ___ I arrive well ahead of time.
- ___ I don't stand around discussing what I did or didn't study before going in.
- ___ I bring all the correct equipment.
- ___ I read all instructions very carefully, taking note of any choices.
- ___ I glance quickly through the whole paper before starting the paper.
- ___ I do a short memory dump if needed as soon as I am allowed to write.
- ___ I know beforehand how marks are allocated & the time I should allot to each part.
- ___ I have a plan before starting of what to do first, eg. easy ones, first to last?
- ___ I don't use liquid paper, I just neatly draw a line through any mistakes.
- ___ I write neatly so my work flows smoothly when read by the examiner.
- ___ I do a plan before attempting essays.
- ___ If I finish early, I check and check again.
- ___ If I have a mental blank, I leave it and come back to it later.
- ___ I attempt every question, I don't leave anything out.
- ___ I do not spend too long on one question, ie not get bogged down.
- ___ I show all working in numerical questions and set out my working neatly.
- ___ I keep asking myself if I am actually answering the question.
- ___ I remember the small details, i.e. significant figures.
- ___ I draw clear diagrams that are a good size.
- ___ I read the question carefully, am careful of the wording, and highlight key points.
- ___ I actually answer the question rather than tell everything I know about a question.
- ___ I look at the marks to help determine the depth of my response to the question.

Now go back and highlight the main techniques that you need to focus on for these examinations. Write them on a card and put them above your desk so that your subconscious will keep absorbing them.

OVERALL CHECK-UP FOR YOUR STUDY SKILLS
Answer the Y / N questions (for 'sometimes' circle the middle).

Write 1-2 things you could do to improve in each area.

Classroom Skills

- Are you on time for classes? Y / N
- Do you bring the correct equipment to class? Y / N
- Do you listen to your teacher and not talk when you should be focusing? Y / N
- Do you work well in class and make the most of classtime? Y / N
- Do you participate and get involved in the lesson? Y / N
- Do you respect others' ideas? Y / N
- Are your notes, papers and locker for school organised and tidy? Y / N
- Would your teacher say you are a good student in class? Y / N

Homework Skills

- Do you record homework in your diary or online planner & check it each night? Y / N
- Do you complete all the homework that is set by the due date? Y / N
- Do you keep track of any work not completed? Y / N
- Do you try and put effort into your homework and do it properly? Y / N
- Do you ask your teacher for help if you can't do or understand some of the homework? Y / N

Assignment Skills

- Do you complete all assignments in time by the due date? Y / N
- Do you start assignments early rather than leaving them to the last minute? Y / N
- Do you break your assignments down into smaller more manageable steps and plan out what work you will do in your diary or online planner? Y / N

Working at Home Skills

- Have you got an effective home study environment? Y / N
- Are you able to turn off distractions when working at home? Y / N
- Do you have set periods of time allocated to schoolwork? Y / N
- Do you do a regular amount of work each night and are you doing enough work? Y / N
- Do you have ways to make yourself do the work when you don't feel like doing it? Y / N

Organisational Skills

- Do you paste in sheets fairly soon after you get them? Y / N
- Do you have a folder or file to put sheets that can't be pasted in your book? Y / N
- Do you have somewhere at home to file away past work? Y / N
- Do you have somewhere at home to keep all the work for each subject together? Y / N

Study Skills

- Do you start studying for tests early? Y / N
- Do you make study notes on a regular basis so they are ready at exam time? Y / N
- Do you do lots of revision questions, asking for help if needed? Y / N
- Do you do practice under exam conditions? Y / N
- Do you test yourself on your study notes? Y / N



MANAGING ASSIGNMENTS EFFECTIVELY

Use the following plan when you are given assignments and projects.
Tick which of the following you do.

THE DAY YOU ARE GIVEN THE TASK:

- Bring home the assignment information and find somewhere safe to keep this information. Maybe get a manila folder where you can keep your work on the assignment as it progresses.
- You should have a wall calendar or term planner above your desk where you can cross off each day as it passes. Write the assignment in on the date it is due so you can clearly see at a glance how much longer you have to work on it.
- Make sure you put the due date in your diary or online planner. Also, put in weekly reminders about the assignment for every week before the assignment is due.

(eg: Science Project due in 1 week,
History project due in
2 weeks).

THE PLANNING STAGE:

- Read carefully through the assignment information highlighting key words and phrases.
- Make sure you understand exactly what you need to do for this task.
- If you aren't sure ask your parents and/or see your teacher about the assignment the next day at school.
- Spend some time brainstorming ideas and thoughts for this assignment. Write down absolutely everything - don't discount any ideas at this stage.
- Now try and group related ideas and thoughts together.
- Write down the steps that will be involved in completing this assignment - exactly what will you have to do?
- See if you can estimate how much time each step will take.
- Lastly, make a plan for when you will actually do each piece of the assignment. Write these steps in your diary or online planner as homework, scheduling out between now and the due date exactly what you will do. Examine the example below:

| | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|-------|------------------------------|--|---|
| Mon Ask my teacher some questions | Tues | Wed Go to the library and collect books | Thurs | Fri | Sat Complete the first part of assignment | Sun |
| Mon | Tues Start the second part of assignment | Wed | Thurs | Fri | Sat | Sun Complete the second part of assignment |
| Mon Put in pictures | Tues | Wed Check through all of the finished assignment | Thurs | Fri ASSIGNMENT DUE | Sat | Sun |

The Perils of Plagiarism

- Have you heard of plagiarism before? Plagiarism is when you copy and use someone else's information or pictures or a person's work as your own without acknowledging where the information came from.
- If you use information from a book or the Internet, you need to either read it and then put it into your own words and ideas or else put quotation marks around it and write where it came from.

In your own words, explain how you can avoid plagiarism:

The Perils of the Internet

Some things to be careful of on the Internet:

- Make sure the information is from a reliable source: anyone can put web pages on the Internet.
- If you use information from the Internet, follow the rules outlined in the box opposite.
- Don't just rely on this as your one source of information. Use the school library as well!

In your own words, explain what to look for to make sure the information you find on the Internet is reliable and accurate:

Each afternoon when you first arrive home, complete these 5 steps before you do anything else!

1. **Unpack your bag.** Take everything out, file away sheets, put the work in piles on your desk.
2. Look in your **homework diary** or **online planner** to check your homework for the evening.
3. **Estimate** how long each piece of homework will take and record this.
4. **Prioritise** your homework and assignments and in your diary or online planner record numbers next to each piece to indicate which is most important through to which is least important. If there is no homework that is more urgent or important than any other piece, then decide what order you will do the homework and record these numbers in your diary or online planner next to the homework.
5. Decide **what time** you will work on each piece of homework that night and record this too.

*Describe what your routine is like in the afternoon.
What do you do when you get home from school?*

Tick which of the following you are doing to manage your workload effectively:

Recording everything in your diary or online planner and checking it regularly, keeping track of the work you need to do.

Making a plan each afternoon of everything you want to get done, prioritising it & estimating how much time each will take.

Having set periods of time to do work in eg 4-5pm so you are more likely to sit down and do it.

Breaking big pieces of work into chunks and scheduling them over the available time in your diary or online planner.

Doing more than just the homework, spending some time whenever there is not as much homework doing study notes or reviewing areas you find difficult.

When things get hectic, making the effort to get up earlier or work at lunch time etc to stay on top of things.

Asking for help earlier if you are stuck on an assignment or feeling overwhelmed rather than just leaving it to get worse.

Unpacking your bag each afternoon when you get home and get everything organised before you start work.

Doing your work in distinct blocks of time for schoolwork and turning off all distractions during this time.

At the end of the night keeping track of the work you have done and rescheduling if necessary.

At the end of the night, working out what you need to take to school tomorrow and packing everything you'll need into your bag.

What could you do to improve in the areas above?



GETTING GOOD MARKS IS NOT JUST ABOUT STUDY!

The most recent research about the brain has shown that the best students are those who also have a balanced lifestyle. Today take a moment to reflect about how balanced your lifestyle is in each of these areas:

WHAT DO YOU EAT?

Do you eat fresh fruit, vegetables, proteins (meat, chicken, fish), carbs (bread, rice, pasta) and dairy (milk, cheese). Do you have minimal junk food and fatty food. Without good fuel your brain will be sluggish!

I would describe my eating habits as

WHAT DO YOU DRINK?

Do you drink lots of water during the day (around 1.5L?). Do you have minimal soft drinks, sugary drinks etc? Your brain needs water for your memory to work properly!

I drink.....



HOW MUCH SLEEP DO YOU GET?

The last stage of memory takes place while you are sleeping! This is also when the brain processes and prepares for the next day. Everyone is different, but most people need around 8 hours of sleep. How do you feel when you get up in the morning?

If I was asked if I get enough sleep for my body I would say.....

HOW MUCH EXERCISE DO YOU DO?

Exercise helps you de-stress, is good for your physical health, but the latest research shows it is actually good for your brain – it improves memory and improves thinking ability. If you don't play a sport, make sure you at least walk/run 3 times a week for half an hour.

In a normal week my exercise is.....

HOW BALANCED IS YOUR LIFE?

All work and no play is not good for your brain! The brain needs time to recharge and it is essential you spend time with friends and family, time relaxing and doing things you enjoy. Of course some students spend too much time doing this and not enough schoolwork!

If I had to say how balanced my life was I would say it is.....

