

Study Skills

Best Practices for High School Students

*Melrose High School
Guidance Department*

Overview

- **Overall Good Practices**
- **Organization**
- **Time-management**
- **Note-taking**
- **Reading Strategies**

Good Practices

- Sleep
- Good nutrition
- Come prepared to class
- Choose your seat to maximize learning (not socializing)
- Pay attention in class
- Avoid procrastination
- Use AIM, Facebook, texting, etc. as a reward for studying (not while you are studying!)

More Good Practices...

- Study as you go
- Review nightly
- Highlight notes
- Ask for assistance immediately when a concept is not clear
- “Too much too fast...It won't last!”

Organization

- **Assignment notebook**
 - Write something in it every class, every day
 - Homework
 - Quizzes/Tests
 - Long-term assignments
 - Study for _____
 - Read pages _____ for _____

Organization

- **Folders**

- **For each unit / section**
- **Create a file system**
- **Label folders accurately**

Organization

- **Binders**
 - **One for each subject area**
 - **Use dividers**
 - **One section in each binder for...**
 - **Homework**
 - **Notes**
 - **Handouts**
 - **Tests/Quizzes**
 - **Extra paper**

Organization

- **Binders (continued)**
 - **Write the date on all papers**
 - **Most recent materials go on top**
 - **Keep flashcards or index cards in binder pocket**

Time Management

- **Keep track of how long it takes to complete tasks**
- **Create your own “mini-deadlines” for studying and for larger assignments**
- **Be aware of the best study times in your schedule**
- **Use free time to review and complete assignments due tomorrow (not today!)**
- **Schedule Breaks / Reward yourself**
- **Do it early! Don't procrastinate!**

Note Taking

- **Types of Notes:**
 - **Two-Column (Question / Answer)**
 - **Outline**
 - **Margin notes**
 - **Mapping**
 - **Lists**
 - **Post-it notes, highlighters, tabs**
 - **Summarizing**

Outline (Example)

5 Kingdom Classification

- **Monerans**
 - 1 celled organisms
 - No nucleus
 - 2 phyla, bacteria, and blue-green bacteria
- **Protists**
 - Single celled organism
 - Have nucleus
- **Fungi**
 - Cell walls absorb food from surroundings
 - No chlorophyll – can't make food

2 Column Notes (example)

- What are the 5 Kingdoms?
 - Monerans
 - Protists
 - Fungi
 - Plants
 - Animals

Note Taking From a Book

- **Date, page number, title, and/or chapter title at the top**
- **Use topic headings or add in topics**
- **Use your own words: Think about what you are reading, what it means, and re-write in your own words**
- **Look for main ideas versus details**
- **Pay attention to bold words and definitions**

Note Taking in Class

- Date and topic at the top
- Anything on the board is important
- Listen for key words from teacher (i.e. “The first reason...” or “This is important”...)
- Pay attention to repetition and emphasis
- Use your own words
- Use abbreviations when necessary
- Try to listen and understand as you go
- Only write down what you need, not everything
- Leave room in your notes to go back and clarify

Reading Strategies

- **Scan for information**
- **Use textbook resources (i.e. glossary, index, bold words, chapter review/questions)**
- **Highlight handouts (read with a pencil or highlighter in your hand)**
- **Create summaries, list of characters, timelines**
- **Ask questions in class about reading**
- **Relate what you are reading to your life or prior knowledge**
- **Read actively to understand content, not just as something to finish**