Top 5 Study Skills Habits

Want to develop great habits for learning? Here's what you need to do:

1. ENGAGE: Don't just be a bystander, instead be an active participant in your own learning, taking responsibility for what you need to do to achieve your academic best.

This means:

___ You involve yourself in all of your lessons, staying on task, participating in discussions and trying to absorb as much as you can during your classes (and that means less to learn later).

___ You complete all of the set work for your subjects (your teacher gives you this for a reason) and you try and keep up to date in this work.

___ You seek help on anything you don't understand or can't do. This might be from a teacher, a friend, online sources, additional books or study guides. You also do this nice and early, you don't let the problems pile up.

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2. ORGANISE: Being organised means that you can find things when you need them, you don't forget about work to be done and you don't have last minute panics. Much less stressful.

This means:

___ You have a good system for managing all of the paper for school, you file away completed work and sort and organise all of the papers you are given.

___ You do the same with your digital resources: well named folders and logical filing structures. You do a back-up on a regular basis.

___ When you are given an assessment task you make a plan for when you will do the work for this task and you adjust the plan along the way as things change.

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3. THINK AHEAD: Part of 'stepping up' is that you don't just wait for someone to tell you to do something. You think ahead and work strategically.

This means:

___ If you know there will be exams (and there are always exams) then don't wait until exam time to get your act together. Make your study notes as you go. Every time you finish a topic make study notes for that topic and file it away at home.

___ Make your study notes as you go. Don't fall too far behind. Yes I know I have already said this, but it is so important I am saying it twice. Keep improving and condensing your notes throughout the year.

___ In fact it needs to be said three times. Keep up to date in your study notes. Worst case scenario - catch up every school holidays.

4. STRIVE FOR EXCELLENCE: You want to be able to differentiate yourself from all of the other students, so think what you can do to make your work stand out from the crowd.

This means:

___ You take the time to be thorough when working on essays and assignments. This means lots of planning and brainstorming to start and then multiple drafts over a period of time for editing and proofing (it's good to give the subconscious time to process and evaluate between drafts).

___ You look for additional source material, you read widely and you do more than what is asked of you. But you ensure that in specific tasks you are focused on answering the question and providing depth to your response.

___ You make the most of any feedback you are given (either along the way or after the task) to make adjustments to your approach to your work to improve your outcomes.

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5. STUDY SMART: Many students are incredibly ineffective in the way they study. They just stare into their books hoping what they need to learn will magically jump into their heads. If you aren't doing it yet, then it is time to study smart.

This means:

___ You test yourself over and over on the material you need to be able to recall in exams. You don't just read it and hope you will be able to remember it.

___ You then check for understanding, are you able to apply the information you have in your head to different types of questions? To do this you do as many practice questions and past examination papers as you can. You get hold of as many different questions as possible to do as practise.

___ You do these past papers under examination conditions! This means that you stick to the time limits and don't look at notes or answers until the end. This gives you a reality check about your performance and helps you rehearse for the time pressure of exams. You use these practise papers as a tool to help you pinpoint areas of weakness that you then address.

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