



A Study Method that doesn't fail!

By Chylon

Introduction

What I thought to do is share some tips and strategies that might help you in school that significantly helped me once I learned them.

Generally your grades are based on fewer things in college as I'm sure you've already discovered and if you blow one thing, your grade could seriously suffer IF you only have three things (like 2 mid-terms and a final exam) that your grade is based on. There are still many chances when you're in High School. When your grade is based on only a couple of things, this can cause a great of anxiety for students UNLESS they are prepared. Sometimes there isn't anything more that you can do to change your grade – like an extra assignment that you won't have time for anyway.

The subjects that hurt people the most in College are Math and Writing. Other than Math and Writing the thing people suffer from the most is poor study habits and skills. Hopefully this little booklet will help.

The 6 skills that will help tremendously are:

1. Learn how to speed read,
2. Learn EXCELLENT memory tricks,
3. Make sure you can type well,
4. Have an EXCELLENT study method,
5. Grow your vocabulary, and
6. Time Management and other Tips!

Speed Reading

While there are a lot of books on the subject, there are just a few strategies that will really help and are easy to explain and to incorporate. If you will do them, they will double your speed without a lot of trouble and/or hard work.

The first one is to recognize there are several written words that help frame what you are reading that you don't have to think about them very hard. They are words like: a, to, go, for, the, under, over, about, with, without, go, stop, you, your, be, it, and, are, on, off, etc. In fact, they are only about 150 words in the English Language. If you look at this letter itself, you'll see a lot of them. Many of the words are one syllable words although there are a few 2 syllable words in the overall list. You know what these words are; you don't have to think about them hard. By the way, if you don't have to think about these words when you type, you'll type a lot faster as well.

The second thing will take a little bit of practice to undo. Most people actually mouth the words in their mouth and/or their throat when they read. That habit will slow you down a lot! Practice reading where you don't mouth the words or vocalize them in your throat in any kind of way. Chances are you will increase your reading speed by 30 to 50% by this activity alone. There are a couple of strategies that will help with the reading practice. One way is to read something that doesn't

really matter if you get 100% comprehension from what you're reading. Magazines and Newspapers are good for this practice. Another strategy is to read something that you've already read (so you KNOW what it is about) and don't vocalize or mouth the words.

The third strategy to help your reading speed is to FORCE with your eyes to look at more words at a time. The object is to see if you can see an entire line of reading (assuming it is a 6 inch line of reading) with two or three glances on the line. Some things are written so that you should be able to see the entire line with one glance – newspapers and other things written in columns are good for this. One of the strategies you can use to develop the skill of seeing more words with one glance is with children's books – like Dr. Seuss books. Open the page, look at the words, and cover them as fast as you can. Then ask yourself what did you really see? It isn't to go through the books and read because you already know the words – it's an exercise for you to SEE them. Then go harder and harder children's books. It really won't take very many because the training you do to make your eyes work will get easier with mindful application. Magazines and Newspapers will continue to help developing your speed because you're not likely to be tested on them so you don't have to worry if you miss something. It will help if you think of trying to get as much information as you can as though you were going to be tested, but FORCE yourself to go fast as you can and retain as much as you can.

You are going to be challenged to expand and learn a lot of information quickly. It will ALWAYS slow you down when you encounter words you don't know and college reading is certain to have new words. You don't want to interrupt your intense reading by stopping and looking up the words (or figuring them out by context) because it will slow you down and yet, if you don't know the words, you won't retain as much. More on strategies that will help you build your vocabulary later.

There are reading differences in other ways. It makes sense that a History book isn't going to be the same thing as reading a book for a Technical Computer Programming Class – you're sure to experience more words you don't know in the technical computer programming class as a general rule. Generally speaking, you'll have different reading speeds to deal with depending on the type of class and the work you'll need to do for the class. History is passive by comparison to Computers which is generally very active. Some of this will involve Time Management – more on this later.

The final speed reading strategy is to be MINDFUL about what you're reading. This means taking all the strategies, and FORCE your mind to be about it and make it work for you. Whatever the subject; whatever the class; whatever the teacher, etc., it can be done and very successfully. If you read 250 words a minute right now, and it takes you 4 hours to read the assignment, consider if you read 1000

words a minute, you'll be done in one hour! You'll get time back and it is significant!

The TIME requirements for study are generally going to be about the same for each class. Generally speaking, it takes most people about 3 hours of outside study time for EACH hour you're in class. The 'depend' factor for the time requirement will be YOUR personal view of the subject and the Professor and your study skills (more on this later). IF you like a subject and the Professor, you'll generally do better and it will be an easier class. Sometimes you have to take classes you don't particularly like. Sometimes you'll take a class that you want to take, but you won't like the Professor. Sometimes you'll take a class that you don't really want to take, but you'll have an excellent teacher. In all scenarios, you'll have to work through this.

Memory

Learn Excellent Memory Tricks – it's been said that working the brain is like working a muscle. It must be worked. When it comes to college, there are so many new things and they come so fast, that remembering them is quite the task. Read up and practice memory skills. The good thing about going to college right after high school is that you're already in a good practice because of the nature of school. The difference in college is there is so much more material to go through in less time.

Test yourself on memory things. Make games for yourself. Read things about developing your memory skills. Listen to people who talk about memory strategies. Having good memory skills in addition to reading fast is a sure guarantee to study less and get good grades and it will help you when you enter your career.

An excellent strategy is to be mindful and FORCE with your mind to remember. That said, don't worry if you understand something right now or not. The concern is to remember what you need for the test AND worry about getting understanding later. If it is important for you to know, the understanding will come eventually. Don't allow the fact that you don't understand right now to interfere with what you need to memorize for the test and don't let yourself get confused by other people's questions – stay FOCUSED.

One of the things you can do to help memory, is when you are studying, put on a perfume or use essential oils that you like. Use ones that you won't grow weary of. Then when you take the test, use the perfume or essential oil. Don't constantly change the smell. There are many essential oils that will help your memory, understanding, clarity, etc – because that is what they do. If you are going to use incense, my advice is to use one that is made from essential oils themselves and not synthetic. Don't use synthetic anything even in perfume (they are not cheap) – you will grow weary of it as time goes by. The sense of smell is a VERY powerful

memory trigger. Good learning includes incorporating as many senses as you can in the process – more about this in the study method section.

Another technique for enhancing memory is relaxation/meditation. In a relaxed but awoken relaxed/meditative state, your memory can behave photographically. It truly is an amazing thing when that happens. You'll see in your minds eye the exact of anything you do it with and in many cases you can remember EXACTLY things years from now. This relaxed meditative state will involve about 20 minutes of tensing and relaxing all your muscles. Start with the head down to the toes or start with the toes and work up to the head. This method is taught to people for many different reasons mostly for dealing with stress and for when women are pregnant about to have children. While it is powerful in dealing with these situations, it is also powerful for studying as well.

Look into yoga! You'll be TRULY amazed as to how much it will help you overall – including your health in addition to everything else. 15-20 minutes a day will help you get in a prime mental state to study and remember what you're learning and it will help you stay healthy. If this interests you, you might be able to add a class at your school.

Typing

On Typing – These days, most people have very poor penmanship. While I've seen your

handwriting, and it is VERY lovely and easy to read, most people's handwriting is terrible. In college, especially when you're always running on not enough time and often enough sleep, handwriting generally gets sloppier and Professors/Teachers would prefer to read something that is neater to read. Now even in the case of my handwriting, which is neat – it's just small, most still prefer to read what I type than what I write.

What is also true is you can generally type faster than you write if you'll take the time to develop the skill. Since computers are here and now, typing is here and now. This isn't something that is going to go away. Then too, these days it is much better to be a student with these tools at your disposal than what was available when your mom and I were younger. Believe me. Most people would have loved to have had computers when they were students.

That said it is very likely that you'll be a typist in some fashion or another either work or school. Let's face it - email is a wonderful thing personally. When it comes to school, typing a report on a computer is so much easier than it was on a typewriter – you can correct your mistakes so much easier. So take the time to learn to type well and fast! Get to where you can type about 60 words per minute minimum. That will also save you significant study hours over your college life. Some of that 3 to 1 hour will be recovered if you can type faster.

One strategy is to practice typing the words I mentioned in the speed reading section – the 150 words that help frame what you read. When you practice typing these words because you don't specifically have to think about them, your typing speed will increase IF you will practice these words instead of typing them one letter at a time. Your fingers know where these letters are on the keyboard. Don't let your mind get in the way of your fingers. This tactic alone, if you don't already use it, could increase your typing speed as much as 10-15 words a minute.

Study Method

Have an EXCELLENT Study Method – When I was in school, learning how to be a teacher, I wanted to do my teaching Units on How to Study and How to be a good Learner! My teacher wouldn't let me do it. I still think even after all these years I should have done it anyway. The reason is because of the fact that it doesn't matter how good a teacher is, a student needs to be a good learner. The problem is that there is so much stuff out there to learn, and the requirements upon teachers to teach material, they don't really have the time to teach students strategies on How To Learn! Ya have to KNOW how to learn.

Anyway, I had a Professor by the name of Bill Gordon. He was absolutely wonderful as a teacher/mentor and he gave me some very profound advice with respect to a study method. The

information is stuff that I use still as my approach to learning everything even today.

When he was an undergraduate, he was on the baseball team. As such, practice and games took him out of class and sometimes out of state. Sometimes he was gone for days at a time. Yet, he had to make the grades because that's the way it works in college sports. Anyway, he told me was that he had to come up with a more effective way of studying and learning because of the nature of his academic life knowing that he might not be one of the lucky ones to play Professional Baseball.

What he told me was to incorporate as many senses as you can in your learning and the more senses you can incorporate, the better you will learn and remember (as a Psychology Professor his interest and specialty was memory and learning). It was good advice. By the way, he went on to graduate school all the way to his PhD. Eventually he became the Chairman of the Department that led to being the Dean of the College and he ended up being the President of the University. He quit being the President of the University here at UNM and was offered the Presidency at Duke University which he took and will probably retire from.

With what he told me and the things that I was already working on, I came up with a strategy that sounds like it will be more time consuming than not doing it. Once you get the hang of it, you'll be

surprised at how much more it will take off that 3 to 1 study requirement clock.

If you will take the time and learn this method and then compare the time you spend versus what your classmates need to spend, the time you spend will be significantly different. You'll spend less time studying and what you'll have is more time to do the fun stuff that goes together with the college years without all the anxiety that other people have when they want to play and don't take the time to study.

When you sign up for your classes get the books as soon as you can. If you've taken the time to work on Speed Reading, the first task for an effective Study Method is LEARN THE WAY THE BOOK WORKS. Take the time to READ, don't survey, the preface, the introduction, table of contents, see if there is a vocabulary section, appendix, index, etc. These things will give you an excellent overview. Then look at the way the sections and chapters are divided. That should be done as soon as you can get your books.

Once your teacher gives you a syllabus or course outline, be sure to study it carefully. Take the time to read it and bounce back to the book(s) in the process for your own familiarity. Get a study calendar (unless you have a computer with Outlook or something like it – more information below in the Time Management section) and note ALL the important dates in your calendar for every class and

assignments if they are listed on the syllabus or course outline and do this right away. As you get assignments and due dates, be sure to log them as well.

Next, survey the assigned reading as soon as you can and preferably BEFORE the class starts officially on the section. Survey means take about 20 minutes and scan the chapter(s) you're going to be expected to read. Look over the chapter objectives if they are there, read through the questions at the end of the chapter if available, read the summary, etc. Look over the maps and charts, section headings. If you come across words you don't know, write them down (look the definitions up after you survey). Note: if you take over 20 minutes, you're really taking too long. This should be a relatively quick thing to do.

After you've done the survey part, look up the definitions of the all the vocabulary words you found in the survey and write them down. Remember if you don't know the meanings of words, you will go much slower. Once that is done, you'll have a good handle on what the meaning is when you do the next step.

Since you've already surveyed the chapter, you have a pretty good idea of what you're supposed to be learning by reading the information; however, don't just read the information. Take notes of your reading as you read. When you take notes of what

you read, you are using more cognitive skills and your senses in the learning process.

DON'T MARK IN YOUR BOOK! The reason is that you're not using as many senses in your learning to make it work for you. Then too, you won't like a book that is marked in if you purchase a used book. IF the only book you can get is marked in, it doesn't mean the previous owner of the book made the best of grades. Ignore the markings. Make the information your own and the best way to accomplish it to take notes of the chapters.

A suggested color coding for taking notes:

Blue – for your own notes.

Black – notes from lectures.

Red – when you have a question or don't understand something

Green – when you get the answer.

Once you take the notes of the chapters, THEN answer the questions and solve the problems, if available, at the end of the chapters.

Note: Some books don't provide questions at the end of Chapters. A real good strategy if this is the case, is to think of the types of questions that YOU can make into test questions. Take the time and study test questions in general. Test questions almost always look like: True/False, Short Answer, Matching, Definition, Multiple Choice, and Essay and Short Essay. After a while, you'll get pretty

good at predicting what College Professors will do IF you study test questions and make it a part of your study time overall. Anticipate how a teacher/professor can make a test question out of something. By the way, sometimes there are old tests available so that you can look at examples. Talk to students who've taken the class before. Maybe there is an organization that you can check into that will have examples of old tests.

Oh and one thing you can do is buy ALL the study guides that go along with the book. They help significantly if you're having a hard time understanding something and need the additional help and support. They can be expensive, but without doubt, they will not fail you from an overall time perspective. Importantly, don't wait till the last minute to get them because it will already be too late. IF you look over your book, and you think within yourself that you're likely to need extra help, don't wait because you probably will! Get the study guide right away. You can use them to help your comprehension, practice for test questions, learn how to make your own test questions, etc. Of course, if you don't need the study guide, that's ok too.

The last thing to do once you've done all these things is to survey the chapter again and look over your notes and see how much you understand and retain. You're done with the chapter, ready to go on to the next, and you're set until an exam comes up. This really should not take you more than 15-20

minutes to do both these things. If it does, bone up on some speed reading skills again.

If you've got the speed reading down, you will spend less time overall reading than most people AND when you take notes of the reading assignments, you'll have quite the handle on the material overall. In the end, you'll be surprised on how well this works towards the mid-term exams you'll surely take AND even though this sounds VERY cumbersome:

1. You've looked over the material faster than most and more than most,
2. You'll be surprised when you compare the time that you're studying overall to most other people.
3. When you can predict the test questions, you are very much ahead of the game and can be more successful – it's like a crystal ball.
4. You can also bend a *few* rules every once in a while and stay successful.

How to use as many senses? See where the smelling can come in? One thing that you can use for taste is a gum. I don't recommend a gum that is sugar free because the sugar free gums have aspartame in them and aspartame is neuro toxic over time. For hearing, I would encourage Classical Music. Studies consistently show that those who listen to Classical Music tend to do better in school.

All these things are important ESPECIALLY if you need to work and go to school.

Vocabulary

Grow Your Vocabulary. This cannot be stressed enough. In college, you are going to learn a lot of new words. When you encounter words you don't know, it will slow your reading down – especially if you try to figure out the meaning from the context at that time. You **MUST** expand your vocabulary if you are going to be able to read as fast as you'd like. When you read your books, write down all the words you don't know in the survey process, look them up and write them down. Don't just highlight or copy them – use as many senses as you can. Take the time to review the vocabulary words regularly. If you have a little recorder, say and record the words and review them on your way to school. This will help you read faster, work your memory, get your study method down more effectively, and it will save you a lot of time overall!

Time Management

Time Management is an important LIFE skill. In life, some things matter a lot and some things don't matter as much. Just remember – you won't grow older wishing you worked harder! You'll wish you worked smarter! Sometimes you just have to live long enough for something to really make sense. Sometimes you'll understand something one way and then life will happen and your understanding will grow. Sometimes a lot of things matter at the same time. Sometimes they don't.

It will not change the fact that managing time is where the successes and failures are made. People who manage their time effectively will generally make more money than those who do not! People who manage their money effectively will generally have more of it when they are older.

This is such a difficult area from a school perspective because you want to do well in everything and with good skills and fortune you will. Sometimes things don't work out that way. When you get the handle on your classes, you're going to know which ones will take more time than another. Plan for that accordingly and plan wisely.

What you don't want to do is jeopardize the classes that you can do well in IF you don't have to spend extra time because of problems in another. There are times that you'll be glad just to get a 'C'. There are times you won't be satisfied with a 'C' especially IF it is in the area you plan to do your career in.

For example, if your basic requirements mean that you have to take a Spanish class (something you don't do that well in) and you plan on majoring in Biology, you don't want your Biology grade to suffer because of the extra time you need to spend in Spanish. That is often a trap that people fall into. Don't let yourself fall for it. IF the best you're going to be able to do is a 'C' studying normally (most of the time the difference between a D and a C is about 15 minutes), don't sweat it. Make that

‘C’ be OK! And, make the ‘A’ in Biology. Don’t let yourself get the ‘B’ in Biology and ‘B’s’ in your other classes so that you can get a ‘B’ in Spanish because of the extra time you’ll study and cheat yourself from all the ‘A’s’.

One of the most successful strategies for Time Management is to make lists that you will do. Make the list of the things that you need to do that day AND DO THEM! Make your lists weekly and don’t let the week go by without accomplishing everything that you need to do. There is a BIG difference between needs and wants. Make sure that you are reasonable in the things that you need to do. In other words if you need to do something that really does take 2 hours, don’t allow yourself only 1 hour.

Some people like to start with the easiest things first. Others like the hardest things. There are advantages and disadvantages to both. However, ALWAYS be prepared to allow for emergencies or situations to happen. If you do the easiest things first, you often get to see a lot of stuff done, but you wear out when you’re doing the harder stuff. If you do the hardest things first, you might not have the time left over to do the easiest.

In the real world, what that boss wants will come first (that is IF you want to keep your job) and sometimes the boss wants a lot of things first and that is a problem in life - too many priorities at one time, all important, all having quick deadlines.

In school, it's likely that you'll have assignments due at the same time or mid-terms, finals, etc. You have to organize, prioritize, and manage your time efficiently and effectively. Know your priorities and make sure you have enough time scheduled for them. IF you learn the suggestions/tips above, you will get time back where others have to spend it.

One thing to do in making sure you spend your time effectively is take your school calendar and log in your day – EVERY DAY. If you have your own computer and a program called Outlook (or something where you can keep a calendar, note tasks, contacts, and notes for important information), you can do the same thing as you would with your school calendar (this is one of the best computer programs there is for managing scheduling, times, activities, contacts, etc.).

The biggest concern is if your computer crashes and you don't have things written down anywhere as a backup. That would be a terrible problem if that were the case. My advice is that IF you choose to use a computer for keeping your information, **BACK UP REGULARLY** – it's **THAT CRITICAL**.

Log in your day and notate the approximate hours of what you did and when you did it – sort of like a journal. Put in when you go to class AND something that will jog your memory about the class. When you study, put a most important thing that will jog your memory about your study. If you

have an appointment, you should note it when you made it and after you've completed the appointment, note something that will jog your memory about it.

While this seems like a hard habit to get into, IF you will do this as you grow older and you're working, your bosses will see you as being a genius because you'll remember things that no one else will.

ALWAYS MAKE THIS SOMETHING THAT BELONGS TO YOU AND ONLY YOU!!!! Don't do it on someone else's computer – even if it's your work computer. Do it on your own computer as in that which actually belongs to you! My advice is don't even do it online. Make sure this is private!

When you are learning something and you are having a hard time 'getting it' – like a math problem. Math problems often have a final answer or a check figure for you. IF you work the problem and you don't get the answer/check figure, go over your work ONE time. Generally you will find an error; correct it and if the correction does not give you the correct answer/check figure, go over your work UNTIL you don't see where you can make any more corrections. Make a note of it and put the problem away for some time. If you go back and still cannot find your error, ask the teacher or a tutor for help. Don't let yourself get hung up for hours on end. **This is a MASSIVE TIME THIEF!** If you don't get something, after the strategies above, it isn't likely that you're going to get it without help! Go on to another problem, subject, etc.

Always have something to show to a teacher/tutor so that you can get the specific help you need for understanding and solving the problem. If you don't do anything at all, you cannot get good help – nor can you ask a good question. Don't go and see a teacher/tutor/boss for help unless you have done your own due diligence/homework. This also helps when you're in the work force as well.

Last but not least – other tips.

Another important tool is to take a day (whatever day you chose) and write down all the things that you'll need to do for the week. Plug in anything that is required and when it is due. Make your checklists for school and the other things that you need to do – work, get a haircut, etc. When you do this, you are in the position of staying on top of things rather than things getting on top of you – it's also good Time Management.

If you do your best, that's all you can do – there is nothing more.

If you plan your work and work your plan, you'll always do okay.

Always plan for something out of your control to get in the way of the time you'll need for your studies – like an emergency. They happen.

Having fun is good, but the priorities are always study first then have fun. People often agonize over

the test coming up, but they often partied and didn't study. This will cause anxiety – as it should. Don't let that be your story.

Some things are just hard!

Save your work always. Computers are great and make this easy, but make sure you ALWAYS backup.

Turn in your work on time in class.

If you need to see your professor/teacher, go; but go with something viable – don't waste his/her time and don't wait until you're in the worst trouble before you do.

Generally the difference between an 'A' and a 'B' is about 15-20 minutes.

Time management is a successful thing to do in school and in life.

These things will take some time to learn and develop. Practice them.

Take the time to improve some skill every vacation from school (like in-between semesters) that you have.

Hopefully you'll enjoy a great deal of benefit with the IPAQ's. They are computers that can be used for most things that you'll need to do on a day to day manner – probably all except for email. They will sync with your laptops. They are excellent time management devices for daily use and if used properly, you'll ALWAYS be able to be on top of things.