

HOW TO STUDY IN MIDDLE SCHOOL: BASIC SKILLS FOR SERIOUS SUCCESS

MODULE 1: ORGANIZATION IN MIDDLE SCHOOL

Organization Introduction

Organization Lesson 1: Why you need this focus

Would you consider yourself an organized person right now? Why or why not?

How important would you consider organization in your normal life?

What do you think is the biggest hindrance right now for your own organization?

If there were one thing that could make the biggest difference in helping you become an organized person this year, what do you think it would be?

Organization Lesson 2: The two biggest grade-killers

How many zeroes do you think had last semester? _____

How often do you get a late grade? Once a semester? Once a month? Once a week? A few times a week?

How do you think late or missing assignments have impacted your grades in the past?

How would it impact your year if you had no missing or late assignments?

Why do you think you should work on this area? Answer this as personally as possible.

Organization Lesson 3: Most people try this...

What was the approach StudyRight suggested most people try to use to get organized?

Describe a 'Subject-First' organization strategy in your own words:

Before watching the next video, can you guess what one of the potential problems with a 'Subject-First' organization strategy might be? Write it down.

What is the primary way you file your assignments right now? (For example, what is the first thing you think about when looking for where to place that assignment. If you have a subject-first setup, the first thought is, "what class is this homework for?" What is it for you?)

Organization Lesson 4: Problems with subject-first organization

What are the two main goals of any organization system?

- 1.
- 2.

Which of the two main goals of any organization system does a 'Subject-First' organization system not do very well?

Describe in your own words the pitfalls of having a 'Subject-First' organization system.

Organization Lesson 5: Improving your strategy

What is the main key of making your organization system effective?

What are two ways you think you might be able to remove decision making from your organization system (hint: think about decisions you can make automatic rather than having to decide when you get an assignment)?

- 1.
- 2.

How many decisions do you make for organizing right now every class period? Think about it, and actually try to count them. Every time you have to go to your locker, find an old paper, write notes, file your in-class work, returned work, or new homework that needs to be completed, are you having to think, "this should go here?"

How do you think removing some or all of the decisions you have to make could help you stay in better control of your work?

Organization Lesson 6: The 5 Assignment Statuses

Describe the difference between subject-first and assignment-first organization.

What are the 5 assignment statuses? (don't look back at your notes -- see if you can remember them off the top of your head; then, if you still need help, you can look back)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Explain each of the 5 assignment statuses in your words:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Why do you think this strategy simplifies a subject-first system?

Organization Lesson 7: Setting up one binder (Part A)

What are the 5 assignment statuses? Just a review question, but make sure you remember them:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Draw a diagram of the 3 out of the 5 locations for assignment statuses in the single binder:

What are some of the other benefits of having one binder for all of our work?

Which of the locations should be organized by subject?

What questions do you have about this strategy? Make sure to ask someone or shoot info@studyright.net an email.

Organization Lesson 8: Setting up one binder (Part B)

Where do you put your old graded assignments?

Why move assignments from our binder into our filed assignments folder?

How many note-taking locations should you have? ____

How many note-taking locations do you have right now? ____

How do you think this strategy could impact your grades?

This is just a question to think about, but how could this strategy impact your organization at home in your room, or your locker, or other parts of your life? Spend a moment brainstorming.

Organization Lesson 9: Stopping losing things & missing due dates

Why is using a consistent system important for organization?

Describe in your own words the term "a system of organization":

How many systems do you have in place for staying organized right now?

Would you consider yourself a piler or a filer?

What -- if anything -- is the biggest challenge for you getting an effective organization system in place?

What is one thing that will help you overcome your biggest challenge to getting organized?

Organization Lesson 10: Staying organized for the whole semester

How often have you started a semester organized?

How often have you finished the semester as organized?

Why, in your opinion, does organization get difficult over the long-haul?

What is the biggest key Skylar mentioned for staying organized?

What gets in the way of your being consistent?

Organization Conclusion:

MODULE 2: TEXTBOOK READING IN MIDDLE SCHOOL

Introduction

Textbook-Reading Lesson 1: Why this matters

How many of your classes right now have textbooks? (Or, if it's the summer, how many do you expect?)

What would you like to see improved in the way you read a textbook currently?

How much reading do you do for class every week would you say? How much of it do you remember right now (as in a percentage)?

How would it impact your grades if you could remember 10% more of what you read in textbooks?

Textbook-Reading Lesson 2: Textbooks vs. Novels

Would you consider yourself “a reader” right now? Why or why not?

How would you summarize the differences between reading a novel and reading a textbook?

Novels:

Textbooks:

Have you thought about reading a textbook like this before, or have you seen it as basically reading the same way as reading a book for pleasure?

If you were going to focus on reading for information, what would you change about the way you read textbooks right now?

Textbook-Reading Lesson 3: The key to effectiveness

What was the main key to effective textbook reading that Skylar mentioned?

Do you typically read for comprehension or completion?

How is your current reading strategy impacting your grades?

What keeps you from reading for comprehension right now? What one thing could you do to decrease that challenge this week?

Textbook-Reading Lesson 4: The way most students do it

Describe a recent time you can remember when you were reading a chapter and realized that, while you were really far into the chapter, you didn't remember what you had read (think about where you were, what you were reading, why you were distracted).

If most of the reading students do is starting at the beginning and moving to the end, how do you think Skylar might encourage you to do this differently? Since we haven't seen the next video, we know you are guessing here -- but try your best to think about a simple way to read a textbook more effectively.

How often do you get distracted when reading a textbook?

How do you think distractions impact your reading strategies?

Textbook-Reading Lesson 5: The easiest strategy

What does “reading backwards” NOT mean?

What do you think some of the benefits to reading like this might be?

Have you ever read the end of a book or found out the end of a movie before watching the entire movie through? How did it change the way you read each chapter/watched each scene?

Why do you think reading backwards might have an impact on your reading comprehension?

Textbook-Reading Lesson 6: Reading backwards

What are the four chunks Skylar mentioned in every textbook chapter?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

What order should you read the textbook chunks?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Skimming means glancing through the chapter, looking for big concepts, repeated ideas, bold words, things like that. How comfortable are you with skimming the body of a textbook chapter? We know this is a new skill for a lot of us, but it's a helpful one if you can learn to do it now.

How do you think a reading strategy like this could impact your ability to remember what you read? Why?

Believe it or not, despite the significant benefits in retention and speed from this reading strategy, a lot of students still don't take advantage of it. Why do you think that is?

What will be the biggest hurdle keeping you from reading a chapter like this?

Textbook-Reading Lesson 7: Pre-reading

What strategy did Skylar recommend to get a boost in how much you remember from reading?

What would be the impact of improving your memory on reading assignments?

Why do you think most students don't pre-read their textbook chapters?

What is going to help you be motivated to apply this pre-reading strategy?

How often do you try to answer questions in the chapter? Did hearing these stats make you want to do it more frequently?

Textbook-Reading Lesson 8: The biggest hurdle

On a scale of 1 to 10, how distracted are you right now? _____

What are the biggest distractions for you when you're trying to read at home?

Why do you think you are so distracted?

What do you think the impact on your grades is from distraction?

What one thing could you do to decrease half of the distractions around you when you're studying?

Make a plan for decreasing distractions of *at least* 3 action steps. If you are serious about wanting to get better in this area, you need to plan for success.

Textbook-Reading Conclusion

MODULE 3: TEST PREP IN MIDDLE SCHOOL

Test Prep Lesson 1: The importance of prep

How do you currently get prepared for exams?

If someone asked you how to prepare best for an exam, what strategy would you suggest to them?

What is your ideal result from getting prepared for exams?

Do you think the way you take tests is a good reflection of how intelligent you are? If not, why?

What do you hope to get from studying ways to improve your test prep?

Test Prep Lesson 2: Effective test prep

What are the three steps we suggested you should follow?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Which of the three steps is your strongest?

Which of the three steps is your weakest?

What is one way you think you could improve your weakest area?

How are you going to make sure these next videos are valuable for you?

Test Prep Lesson 3: Good strategy

What was the most important skill Skylar suggested you should do?

Why is copying someone's review sheet not helpful?

Which matters more, internalizing the material or having everything written down?

When making your own review sheet, don't just rewrite everything. Instead, do these two things:

* FOCUS on the _____ & _____

* FOCUS on _____ or _____

What was your biggest takeaway from this chapter?

What impact will making your own review sheet have on your week?

Test Prep Lesson 4: Why students struggle

What is the difference between short-term and long-term memory approaches?

Which of those two is most like your approach?

Why is cramming harmful for you?

It's bad for your _____.

It ups your _____ level.

which can decrease your _____ & your over all _____

It hurts your _____.

*** NOTE: It takes MORE *amount of time* to cram for a test to get the same amount of knowledge as studying with the long term approach. (Ex. You will remember more from studying in a 2 hours period that was spread out in a couple days, than spending 3 hours of cramming the night before.)

Are there any positives to cramming? Why is it still so hard to not cram, do you think?

Test Prep Lesson 5: Long-term approaches

Describe in your own words how to build a long-term approach into your test prep.

How much of your study time do you schedule out in advance?

What are some of the impacts of spreading out your study sessions?

Why is this difficult to do?

If you consistently had a long-term approach, what would it do for your grades and free time?

Distributed Practice Effect: By spreading out your _____, you can see an increase in your _____ and a decrease in you amount of _____ to do that work.

Writing it down makes it real.

Test Prep Lesson 6: How to practice

How is practice different than knowing the material?

What are 3 things to try practicing for a test?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

How can you get ready for an Essay Test?

1. _____ - OR-
2. _____

How do you think practicing could help your grades?

Which of these ways are you going to apply this week?

What is going to be your biggest hurdle?

Remember: You will receive a bigger benefit not just *looking over your notes*, but by producing something!!!

Test Prep Lesson 7: Personal Preparation

What is the simple act Skylar suggested you should try?

How would you apply “tell yourself a different story”?

How is nervous energy different than excitement?

Physically -

Mentally -

What does it look like to actually tell yourself a different story when going into a test?

How effectively have you been in preparing yourself to take a test in the past? Have you ever felt like you didn't do as well on a test as you could have?

What is one way you can make sure you do better consistently?

Test Prep Lesson 8: If you bomb it...

Have you ever bombed a test? Why?

What happened when you bombed a test in the past?

Skylar talked about 3 things that go into your ability to be successful.

I _____ SUCCEED + I _____ SUCCEED = I _____ SUCCEED

What does this mean for you?

Test Prep Conclusion

MODULE 4: NOTE-TAKING IN MIDDLE SCHOOL

Note-Taking Introduction

Note-Taking Lesson 1: Why note-taking matters

Why did Kent say you should take notes?

Before the video made that claim, what would you have thought about the difference taking notes made for how much you remembered? Any difference, or just a waste of time?

How often do you take notes right now? Do you think is the too little, too much, or just right?

What do you think is stopping you from taking notes in class or when reading a textbook?

Note-Taking Lesson 2: When to take notes

What are the two times you should definitely take notes?

Which of these two times are you currently most likely to take notes?

Which do you think could have the biggest impact on your grades?

What kind of impact do you think taking notes consistently would impact your grades?
Why?

Note-Taking Lesson 3: Types of Notes (Part A)

What are the two types of note-taking Kent suggested?

Which of these two are you mostly likely to use?

What is the point of taking notes like this?

Make an outline or outline revisited of this video. If you have any confusion on this, ask your teacher to help with this.

Note-Taking Lesson 4: Types of Notes (Part B)

What goes on the two sides of two column notes?

Why do you think two-column notes could be helpful?

Why do you think including personal thoughts and information is helpful?

What do you think the benefits of an idea web/mind map would be?

When might an idea web be extremely helpful? Why do you think it may be a good strategy for test prep?

Note-Taking Lesson 5: What to include (Part A)

Why shouldn't you take down every single thing your teacher says?

Describe in your own words what we mean by "main points?"

How good are you at writing down the main points and taking notes on those during a class session?

What was the main point of the video you just watched?

Note-Taking Lesson 6: What to include (Part B)

What is the difference between details and key details?

How can you tell what is most important when you're taking notes?

On a scale of 1 to 10, how effective are you right now at identifying the most important key
Details?

How often do you find yourself taking a test and being asked something that you don't even remember reading?

If that's the case, it possibly means you've missed the key details. How could you work on enhancing your tracking of key details?

Note-Taking Lesson 7: Digital vs. Handwritten notes

Which way do you typically take notes?

Why did StudyRight suggest you should take handwritten notes?

When was the time StudyRight said taking digital notes is a good idea?

What is the goal of taking notes in general?

How could consistently taking hand-written notes impact your grades?

Note-Taking Lesson 8: Note-taking Apps

Have you ever tried using an app to take notes?

How much access do you have to apps right now for learning?

Do you remember the example of a great app to help with note-taking?

Why do you think apps could be important down the road for you?

Given all that you've learned in these note-taking videos, what are your top 3 takeaways?

How can you grow in this area to a better student?

Note-Taking Conclusion