**The Keys to Good Study**

Level: Grades 6 to 12

**Purpose:** For students to become familiar with the keys to good study habits which will, in turn, help them to become better students.

**Materials:** “Study Rules” True/False list for individual student responses, “SQ3R” handout for each student, “Commentary on Tips to Managing the Study Environment,” and “Tips on Managing the Study Environment” handouts for each student. Also, you will need a pencil and paper for each small group to brainstorm and record responses. For Activity II, slips of paper with specific statements/questions may be given to each group.

**Activity I:** Explain to students that most study skills that we learn are “self-taught” or not learned at all in a systematic way. This may be a big mistake because we can all profit from what other people know and have learned about how we learn. Although each person is a unique individual, there are certain true constants, e.g., having all the materials you know you will need at hand, be in the right mood to study, proper lighting, and so forth.

Ask the students to volunteer other things (factors) they believe true for everyone. Do not get so far into this that it intrudes on the validity of the true/false questionnaire to follow. This sharing time should be to get everyone involved, to stimulate interest, and show the need for such an activity.

**Activity II:** Hand out the questionnaire titled “Study Rules.” Request the students to individually write T for True and F for False in the appropriate spaces. Let students know that after they’ve completed the questionnaire, the answers will be shared and discussed.

*Answers: 1.T 2.F 3.T 4.F 5.F 6.T 7.T 8.T 9.F 10.T*

Have the students find a partner and share their answers from the questionnaire. (It is best to have the partners decide before the activity begins.)

The purpose of having partners is to compare, to stimulate thinking, to encourage shared responses, and so forth. This helps to involve everyone.

Read each statement aloud and record on the board (you may have a student record) how many students answered True and how many answered False. Then read correct answers out loud. Discuss or summarize the results briefly.

**Activity III:** Small groups (prearranged) are given one of the six individual “Study Tips” below to discuss and brainstorm reactions and possible answers. Allow a maximum of ten minutes for distribution and brainstorming/discussion. Each group should have a recorder to write group responses during brainstorming. (The “Study Tips” should be written on individual slips of paper to give to each group.)

Then ask the recorder of each group to share brainstormed group ideas and answers. Elicit comments from other class members as time permits.

**Closure:** Summarize by reviewing the essentials on the study rules. Two or three rules may be selected for summary comments. The students may select those rules that they think most important and assist with the summary. Discuss the SQ3R study method with the entire group. Have a copy ready for each student. The students are encouraged to take home the SQ3R study method and apply it to some specific content area assignment within the week. This activity (method) is well enough defined on the handout that additional discussion should not be needed at this time. The students should return with results of the usefulness of this method and some discussion should follow at a later date (perhaps with the specific classroom teacher).

**Study Tips**

(Positive Attitude) 1. The importance of a positive attitude. What is it? How does it work?

(Class Expectations) 2. Do you know what is expected in your particular class? If not, how do you find out? Is it the same for everyone? Does the teacher give enough details? If not, how do you ask the teacher for more details?

(Study Partners and/or 3. How important are “Study partners” or “Study groups?” What Study Groups) are they? How are they established? Maintained?

(Organized Notebook) 4. What does “organized” notebook mean? Is it the same for everyone? What are the essentials?

(Physical & Emotional) 5. How does your physical health and emotional well-being affect your work in school and study? Your anxiety regarding tests?

(Established Routine) 6. A routine is important. How does one establish one? Verify? Maintain? Keep record on, and so forth?

**SQ3R – A Study Technique**

**S = SURVEY**

Briefly look over the material you have to study. (Do a quick survey.). Read all the titles and subtitles. Look at the pictures, diagrams, maps, and so forth. If the selection is short, read the first sentence of each paragraph. If the selection is only one paragraph, read the first and last sentences.

**Q = QUESTION**

Write down some questions that your quick survey brought to mind. Think of questions that you expect the selection to answer. Or, if questions have already been written, read through them carefully.

**1st R = READ**

Read the selection through carefully. As you read, notice the answers to the questions you wrote down (or the questions that were already written).

**2nd R = RECITE**

After you have finished reading, answer the questions. You may look back at the material whenever necessary.

**3rd R = REVIEW**

Briefly look back through the selection and remind yourself of the important points. This would be a good time to proofread your paper for accuracy while comparing your actions to the selection read.

This study technique is especially good for learning material in your textbooks. Whenever you have an assignment to read for any class, apply the SQ3R method. You will understand and remember more of the materials you read then if you simply “read” it.

**Study Rules**

In the list of “Study Rules” below, some are True and some are False. Circle the “T” (for true) or “F” (for false) next to each rule.

T F 1. Try to study at the same time and in the same place every day.

T F 2. Do the easy assignments first, then go on to the harder ones.

T F 3. If you become tired while studying, take a break.

T F 4. Always work on related subjects, one right after another.

T F 5. Previewing upcoming chapters in your textbooks is a bad idea because you

 may become confused by too much information.

T F 6. For each subject, keep two sets of notes, one for classwork and another for

 textbook information.

T F 7. When reviewing for a test, quickly skim all your notes to get an overview.

 Then, go back and thoroughly review your notes to pick out specific details for

 memorization.

T F 8. It is a good idea to keep all of your old tests and quizzes in every subject to use

 as review materials for your final examinations.

T F 9. Having a radio or TV playing in the background forces you to concentrate

 harder on what you are studying.

T F 10. “Cramming” the night before an examination is a poor way to try to learn a

 subject.

**Commentary of Tips to Managing the Study Environment**

1. Successful students study whether they feel like it or not. These students study because they know that study helps them reach their life goals. If you have difficulty in this area, perhaps you need some work with your counselor to find some career directions so you can see a relationship between your work in school and some goals ahead.
2. Students must learn to shift their minds into a study mode when study time comes around. Thoughts regarding worrying about the amount of homework ahead, dislike for teachers, or feeling sorry for one’s self simple wastes valuable study time. Each time a person actually accomplished successful study (when he or she sits down to do it) helps provide a positive mental habit for further study.
3. There are many things students can do for themselves to improve concentration – get rid of distractions, have study materials available, have definite time, and so forth. If there are problems understanding the materials, students should seek help from a teacher. When students have worries which prevent them from concentrating, they should seek help.
4. Study is not a social activity. Some students have difficulty being alone. Students should try to think of this time alone as an opportunity to know themselves better – who they are, what they’re good at, how they feel regarding things they’re learning, and so forth. Time studying alone can be productive times.

**Tips on Managing the Study Environment**

1. Find your best place(s) to study and go there each time.
2. Get rid of distractions – sounds, sights, interruptions.
3. Organize your study materials.
4. Work on building a positive attitude regarding the material.
5. Get down to business.
6. Train yourself to concentrate.
7. Learn to value time alone.
8. Reward yourself (a soft drink, or whatever) following a good study session.