

Study skills for middle school and beyond

(Excerpts taken from www.greatschool.org)

Your child has a better chance of succeeding in high school and beyond if he or she masters school survival skills now. Here's how you can help your student get organized and learn to study effectively.

- 1. Provide a place to study.** A desk or table surface should be big enough so that your student can spread out papers and books. Make sure essential supplies such as pens, paper and calculator are close by. Have good lighting and a sturdy chair that's the right height available.
- 2. Find the time to study.** Some kids focus better right after school. Others need a break and do better after dinner. Whatever works, make it a habit and stick to it!
- 3. Help your child develop a system to keep track of important papers.** Purchase a binder with a folder in the front for completed work ready to be turned in, and a folder in the back for papers returned by the teacher.
- 4. Make sure your child has-AND USES- a planner to keep track of assignments.** If the school provided planner is not working for your child. Have them help to devise a system that will!
- 5. Help your child break big projects into smaller ones.** A big research project will seem less overwhelming and will be less likely to be left until the last minute if it's done in manageable chunks, each with its own deadline.
- 6. Communicate with your child's teachers.** If your child is struggling with organizational skills, talk to the school counselor or teachers about what might be causing the problems and brainstorm approaches to solve them.
- 7. Ask more than "Did you do your homework?"** Start from the assumption there is something to complete. Some sample questions might be:
 - What you did you do in math today?
 - What projects are you working on this week?
 - What struggles/successes did you have today?
- 8. Teach your child how to study for tests.** Studying for tests is a skill. Some tips to help:
 - Turn of distractions. Social media most of all!
 - Reviewing isn't enough. Think of potential essay questions and outline them, or work out challenging math problems to help them learn how to apply the material
 - Use highlighting, Post-its and study cards.
- 9. Help your child destress.** Good study skills can help reduce anxiety and so can relaxation exercises and regular physical activity.

