

POWER STUDY BOOSTERS

DIRECTIONS

Nothing can take the place of effective study habits. To get the most out of your *Learning Boosters Program*, make sure your strategies for power study are in good shape.

Evaluate yourself on each *Power Study Booster*. Add any comments or plans on blank lines. Fill in the *Success Button* at the left when you feel satisfied you have mastered that *Booster*.

MAKE YOUR HOME A STUDY CENTER

☺ 1. Establish Regular Study Times

The minimum would be one hour each school night. Research indicates that **successful completion of homework may have a greater influence on school success than any other factor**. Your **Regular Study Time** should be posted so everyone in the family knows when it is. It should be considered important and followed regularly.

☺ 2. Establish a Good Study Place

At a minimum, this means a table or desk that is uncluttered and free from visual distractions in a room that has good lighting, is fairly quiet, and is adequately ventilated or heated. Your **Study Place** should be easily accessible to anyone who is going to work with you.

☺ 3. Have Everything You Need Within Reach

Your **Study Place** should be supplied with paper, pencils, pens, stapler, paper clips, and appropriate reference books, such as a dictionary, thesaurus, atlas, and encyclopedia. Having a computer and printer available would be great.

☺ 4. Use An Organized Study Binder

Avoid loose papers. Use a **Study Binder**. Include a section divider for each class so you can keep your papers and notes separate and organized. Place an assignment sheet at the beginning of each section to list homework, when it was given, when it is due, date turned in, and grade received. An alternative is to use one assignment sheet for all classes, and keep in front of the binder.

☺ 5. Aim for Alert and Concentrated Study

Choose a regular **Study Time** when you are least likely to be interrupted and when you are most alert. Phone calls should be taken by someone else, and the message written down to be given to you later. Even a simple interruption means a waste of at least three minutes beyond the interruption itself in order to get back on task. You might want to hang a **DO NOT DISTURB** sign at your **Study Place**. **Study Time** could be divided into 30-minute blocks with breaks in between. Keep your energy level up. Do part of your studying standing up or walking around. You could also add several ten-minute **Power Boosts** (high activity, concentrated study periods) during the day. Research shows we learn the most during the first and last minutes of a **Study Time**. Several short power boosts result in more first and last phases than one long **Study Time**.

☺ 6. Do More Than Homework Assignments

Effective learning is more than just completing homework assignments. Your **Study Time** is important even if no homework assignments are due. **Study for complete mastery** of your subjects. This should include developing any important skills not already mastered, memorizing basics, studying for tests, previewing coming chapters, and going beyond the text material into areas of personal interest. **You are your own most important teacher. You are most responsible for your own success.**

☺ 7. Establish Your Own Learning and Development Program According to Your Own Interests and Talents

Beyond doing school assignments, follow your interests. Get excited about learning for its pure pleasure and what it will do for you. What **you want to learn** is important! Don't be just stuck on assignments. Take the initiative in your own learning and development. Cultivate your interests and talents. Pursue them and enjoy the satisfaction of becoming **the best you can possibly be according to your own design.**

☺ 8. Plan Your Work and Work Your Plan

At the very beginning of each **Study Time**, plan and write what you want to accomplish. Check off each task as you get it done. You accomplish much more in less time by listing what you intend to do before doing it. Priorities should be as follows:

- ◆ Anything due today or tomorrow
 - ◆ Anything else that will help achieve success in classes at school: mastery of skills, studying for tests, reading text, taking or reviewing notes, planning and working on long-term papers or projects, etc.
 - ◆ Questions that have come up during your study
 - ◆ Specific skill needs identified by yourself or from teacher input, previous papers, tests, report cards, or continuum tests such as those found in the **Learning Success Reading, Writing, and Math Game Books**
 - ◆ **I.Q. Skill-Building, Achievement Motivation & Time Management, Character Traits (Success Habits), and Learning Strategies**
 - ◆ Talents and Interests
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☺ 9. Use the 80%-20% Active-Study Power Principle

Most of your **Study Time** (80%) should be **actively doing, solving, writing, and recalling** instead of passively reading your text or notes. There is a Chinese proverb that applies: *I hear and I forget; I see and I remember; I do and I understand.*

☺ 10. Understand the Purpose of Each Assignment

Ask questions, talk to your teachers, parents, mentors, and peers about the purposes of your current assignments and their value and connection with out-of-school life. It makes doing the assignment more enjoyable and meaningful.

☺ 11. Write Questions You Want to Ask

Identify and write the help, questions, or clarifications you need to understand and master what you are studying. In a way, it will be like always having your teachers there to help you over the rough spots. Refer to your written questions and ask them privately or during class.

☺ 12. Break Long-Term Projects into Steps

Break long-term projects into small steps so you can pace your work. Use a **To-Do-List** and a **Monthly Calendar** to plan your time so you always complete assignments before their due dates. This gives you an extra chance to recheck and possibly improve your work.

☺ 13. Establish Quality Control Methods

Double check your work before handing it in. If possible, have someone else also check it for any mistakes or ways it could be improved.

☺ 14. Be Neat

Being neat pays off. Neatness makes studying easier and saves time. This includes your penmanship, binder, desk, and surroundings. Your papers are easier to study from and work with. Being especially neat has been found to add as much as 20% to math scores on math papers and tests. That could mean an increase of one or two grades. C's could become B's, B's could become A's.

☺ 15. Use Mentors and Study Partners

A mentor is someone with greater skills or experience than you have who takes interest in your success and is willing to take the time to help you over the rough spots. Parents, of course, are natural mentors, but older siblings and other adult leaders are other possibilities. Even in business and professional careers, mentors have been found to be highly effective in achieving success. Having a study partner (perhaps a friend taking the same classes) can also be a powerful way to learning success, and can make learning easier, faster, and more enjoyable. Sometimes, much of this can be done by phone.

☺ 16. Schedule Study Time in the Library

This enables you to look up other references and approaches to what you are learning, and more easily pursue where it leads.

☺ 17. Use the Best Technology Available

If possible, use a computer to help you do your best work. Many word processing programs have a spell checker, a thesaurus to suggest different words, and some may even have a grammar checker. Other possibilities include using a modem to do on-line research, or you could use a database program to keep and organize your notes on a variety of subjects.

☺ 18. Talk About What You Learn

Make it a habit to talk about what you learn. Communicating with others reinforces our memory and sometimes identifies gaps in our knowledge which we can then fill with further discussions or study.

☺ 19. Use Waiting Time to Your Advantage

There are times during the day when you are waiting for something else to happen. Examples include waiting in line, or waiting for television commercials to get done so the program you are interested in can resume. Use those minutes to memorize basic information. Write items to learn on a card, and refer to it each time you have to wait for something.

☺ 20. Establish a Learning Bulletin Board

Set up a bulletin board on which you write and draw what you are studying in school. Looking at it several times a day will improve your memory of what you are studying and will generate productive and interesting conversations.

☺ 21. Set up a Teaching Chalkboard

Use the chalkboard for you and others to work problems and to teach one another important concepts.

☺ 22. Use An Audio-Cassette Recorder

Record, and then listen to your notes. You might even ask if you may record some of your teachers' explanations. Possibly, this could be done during individual conferences or help sessions. Play the tape during part of your **Study Time**. You could also play it while doing some of your household chores, or even while riding in the car, or just before falling asleep at night.

☺ 23. Use Visuals To Help You Remember

Draw diagrams and pictures that illustrate the main points you are trying to learn. Place visuals on your Learning Bulletin Board or other memory places around your house. If you have a camcorder available, video-tape yourself or study partner explaining the material while using a chalkboard to visually demonstrate it.

☺ 24. Be Persistent and Keep Trying

The normal learning curve has its ups and downs. Sometimes it will seem like you are learning things rapidly, but at other times it will seem like little is being learned, or you appear actually stuck. That is normal, so don't get discouraged. It was that way previously for people who are now experts. Don't give up. Keep plugging along and success will be yours.

DO YOUR BEST AT SCHOOL

☺ 1. Don't Miss Class

Missing one class is really like missing two or three because you not only miss the instruction for the class you actually missed, but are unprepared to take full advantage of the instruction given for the following class or two.

☺ 2. Minimize the Damage When Absent

Get the notes from that class and go over them with someone. If possible, have the teacher help you with them during that teacher's office hours.

☺ 3. Be Prepared for Each Class

This means you have:

- ◆ Read your class notes from the last class meeting
 - ◆ Read appropriate or assigned textbook sections
 - ◆ Worked out homework problems
 - ◆ Made a list of questions to ask
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☺ 4. Arrive for Class Early and Ready

Arrive for each class early enough to ask the teacher any questions you came up with during your **Study Time** or from the last class session. Have your books and materials ready when the teacher starts the class.

☺ 5. Bring All Needed Materials to Class

This includes textbook, assignment binder, homework, previous notes, pen or pencil, etc.

☺ 6. Sit in the Front of the Classroom

It is all right to sit next to friends that do well, but do not sit near friends who do not do well. Students that sit in front of the room usually get better grades. Discuss with your parents how to get sufficient social time so an inappropriate amount of it doesn't have to be done in class.

☺ 7. Have the Best Teachers Possible

Sometimes, you will be able to choose your teachers. If so, get information about them and choose the best ones. In any case, **you can make any teacher better** by showing **appreciation** for your teacher's efforts, and **asking for help** as needed. Another way to improve your teachers' performance is to know the factors that make a good teacher and take personal responsibility to **see that those things are done as far as your needs are concerned**. The following is a list of good teacher qualities, followed by what you can do as a student to assure them:

- ◆ **A good teacher paces instruction** so it is not too fast for you to understand the concepts, but not so slow it becomes boring. He or she explains concepts clearly and organizes the learning experiences so you will master the objectives of each unit and helps you see how each part fits the other parts.
 - ⇒ As a student, **you** can suggest the pace be slowed or speeded up. You can ask questions and ask for clarifications and examples.
 - ⇒ **You** can ask what concepts or sections in the textbook will be taught next and study those ahead of time. You can ask what supplementary materials might take you further than what is covered in class, or could help you understand the material even better.
 - ⇒ **You** can use the textbook to look up areas you still do not understand. You can check other books out of the library to pursue your interests further.
 - ⇒ **You** can meet with your teacher during his or her office hours to get further help or explanations.
 - ⇒ **You** can study with other students or get help from your parents to expand on your notes and get your questions answered.
- ◆ **A good teacher provides enough practice** and the right kind of homework problems for you to master the concepts.
 - ⇒ You can do the problems in the text whether assigned or not.
 - ⇒ You can ask for extra problems to do that you can go over with your teacher during his or her office hours.
- ◆ **A good teacher gives fair tests that cover what they are expected to cover, and uses the results to help you master decided-upon learning objectives.**

- ⇒ Before each test, **you** can ask your teacher what the test will cover and a list of the topics you should concentrate on studying.
 - ⇒ **You** can take time to go over each returned test with your teacher or study partner. Just because a test is finished, you are not. If it was important to learn the material before, it is just as important now. Have your teacher re-explain and teach anything you missed. If necessary to gain a full understanding, ask other supportive people for further explanations. You are building for the future. **Your** future!
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☺ 8. Learn As Much As You Can Every Class Period

Challenge yourself to learn as much as you can every class period, and leave each class with good notes from which to study. Strive for the great feeling of knowing more at the end of the class period than when it began.

☺ 9. Be and Stay Alert

Make sure you have plenty of rest, exercise, and nutrition to feel your best. The most effective way to maintain alertness is to be active. Think about what is being presented, take notes, ask questions, take part in discussions.

☺ 10. Take Good Notes Even If Not Required

Taking notes, and reviewing them later, is essential in order to remember more of what you learn each day in class. It is best to add some visuals, drawings, key words, and examples to your notes. Certainly, all examples the teacher gives. Write question marks on any parts you don't fully understand. Get help and further explanation on those parts. Commit to studying your notes until they are fully understood and mastered.

☺ 11. Date and Label Your Notes

Make your notes easier to use by dating them and including chapter and section headings you can refer to for further explanations.

😊 12. Include Examples in Your Notes

Often, examples make it easier to understand concepts. They can also be referred to when you have difficulty with similar problems.

😊 13. Use Left Hand Margin of Paper for Study Helps

Use the left hand margin of your notes to add study helps, such as extra explanations, key words, examples, and mnemonics. During part of your **Study Time** cover the right side of your notes and see if you understand or remember the material using just the study helps. Add any extra helps you may need.

😊 14. Review Your Notes Regularly

Set a regular schedule to review your notes. For best results, review your notes on the same day they are written, and then schedule regular review until completely mastered. You may wish to rewrite the notes. As questions come up, discuss them with someone.

😊 15. Review Previous Class Notes Before Next Class

Write questions or help you need to fully understand the information and concepts covered. If possible, ask your teacher about them before class. You might want to give your teacher a list of your questions. Your teacher could then help you privately or include the explanations in that day's instruction for the class as a whole.

😊 16. Preview Text Before It Is Covered In Class

Get a head start, and be in a better position to understand what the teacher presents by reading each chapter before the teacher presents the material in class.

☺ 17. Take Advantage of Textbook Learning Aids

Do the problems and answer the questions at the end of each chapter, especially any vocabulary words. This would be a particularly good activity with your study partner. Use the pictures, charts, glossary, index, and table of contents to help you pursue understanding.

☺ 18. Ask Questions Often

Even when you think you understand something, you might ask a *just to be sure* question of *Do I understand this correctly?* Then, say what you understand. The result will often be further clarifications or examples that will deepen your understanding of the concepts. Don't put off questions until later. You might forget, and in any case, will probably not get as much value from the answer as when it first comes to your mind. If it is impossible to ask the question right away, write it down to ask later.

☺ 19. Pinpoint the Help You Need

When you ask for assistance, first identify what you understand, and then what you need to learn. For example: *I understand this, but I don't understand that.* Avoid simply saying *I don't get it.* Write the answers or explanations in your notes so you can review them during later study.

☺ 20. Know All-Purpose Ways to Ask Questions

Know some all-purpose ways to ask questions when you are unsure what to ask. Examples: *Could you re-explain what you have just covered? I'm lost, but I don't know what to ask.*

☺ 21. Let Teachers Know You Want to Succeed

Teachers go the extra mile to help those students who clearly want to learn. Privately, talk to your teachers and ask for their suggestions on how to do your best or learn the most from their classes. Follow some of their best suggestions, and let them know you are using them. Benefits include:

- ◆ Teachers will observe your progress more closely and will more likely help at critical points
- ◆ The suggestions they give will almost always be valuable and effective

- ◆ The suggestions will fit the unique teaching styles of those teachers, and should make it easier for you to do well in their classes
 - ◆ Teachers will pay more attention to helping you succeed
 - ◆ They will give you the benefit of the doubt when deciding to give you one grade or another
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😊 22. Do Your Homework Every Day

The learning process is short-circuited if study is erratic. Your power to learn and study effectively grows if you have regular **Study Times** and complete your homework faithfully.

😊 23. If Possible, Do Homework the Same Day Given

It becomes harder later because you will have forgotten some of the explanations given when it was assigned. Doing your homework early also gives you more time to get help with any parts that prove difficult.

😊 24. Review Homework with Someone Every Day

Doing so will reinforce what you have learned, and the other person may be able to add valuable information or explanations.

😊 25. Do What You Can Before Asking for Help

Learning is an active process. Passively listening to answers has little value. Trying your best first, even if done incorrectly, enables you to get the most out of instruction when it is given. It is not the answers that are important. What is important is the building of your ability. After first trying it yourself, identify the specific help you need.

😊 26. Teach Someone Else

There is no better way to learn something well than teaching it to someone else.

😊 27. Keep Yourself Motivated

Post success pictures on your bulletin board and write success affirmations you can read aloud each day describing yourself as a successful student who is getting the rewards appropriate for excellence. Act as if you are already the successful student you want to be.

😊 28. Master Prerequisites Needed for Success

For example, if you are working on division operations, have you mastered your addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division facts?

😊 29. Use Supplementary Books to Aid Study

Use course outline, review books, or other articles to give you the basics. *The New Book of Knowledge* is an excellent source for interesting, well-written articles on almost any topic you will encounter in school. School Supply stores carry books to help master a variety of subjects.

😊 30. Form a Study Group

Get together some study pals one or two afternoons or evenings a week. Make it fun. Have treats available for afterwards. Especially valuable in preparing for upcoming tests.

GET THE MOST FROM YOUR TEXTBOOKS

😊 1. Take Notes on Each Chapter

Use the **Visual Note-Taking** method described in the **Learning Strategies** section.

😊 2. Preview Each Chapter Before Reading It

Look at the pictures and skim the headings. Know what the chapter will cover.

☺ 3. Mark Important Ideas and Information to Learn

Write a minus sign in the left hand margin of any facts or concepts that seems important, but you haven't mastered yet. Change the minuses to pluses during later study when confident you do understand and will remember them.

☺ 4. Compare Class Notes With Your Textbook

Not sure of what some of your notes mean? The answer might be in your textbook. Not sure of what some of what you read in your textbook? The answer might be in your class notes.

DO YOUR BEST ON TESTS

☺ 1. Prepare for Tests From the Beginning

Don't wait until a day or two before the test to study for it. Start mastering the material from the first day.

☺ 2. Find Out What the Test Will Cover

Ask your teacher what the most important topics will be on the test. Pay attention and take notes. Make sure you study those topics the most. Ask about text references and pages. Also ask what types of questions will be on the test, and the best way for you to study or prepare for it.

☺ 3. Establish a Success Count-Down Schedule

When you know the date the test will be, set a count-down schedule. If the test will be in 8 days, then write the numbers 8 to 0 down the left side of your planning paper. Write your plan of how you will prepare for the test each day until you take the test.

☺ 4. Aim for 100% Mastery

Always try for complete mastery. What parts do you know well? What are you not sure of? Keep working to reduce *not sure of* until it is completely gone. When you always aim for 100% you get higher test scores, it is easier to organize your study, and you approach tests with confidence.

☺ 5. Use Practice Tests

Use the ones in your textbook, ask your teacher for any old tests you could practice on, or make up your own. It's like sports. Practice games help you do your best later on the real ones.

☺ 6. Arrive Early and Ready for the Test.

Arrive early enough to get set. You should be relaxed, but alert. Review your notes, especially the key points.

☺ 7. Use Mnemonics and Memory Tricks

See **Learning Strategies** section. Review the mnemonics and memory aids you are using just before taking the test. Write these down as soon as you get your test. Expand on them later. Example: You want to remember the parts of a tooth. You could make a nonsense word out of the first letter of each name. Root, enamel, pulp, crown, and dentine could become *repcd*. Also, jot down anything you have recently reviewed, but of which you are still not sure.

☺ 8. Read Directions and Get Quick Overview

Get a clear idea right from the start what the test covers. Plan your time and strategies accordingly.

😊 9. Consider a Test to Be an Important Game

The right amount of tension is important in doing your best, but too much tension and anxiety can block your mental abilities. Try for what is called **relaxed alertness**. Consider the test to be a game you want to win, but like a game you will have other chances.

😊 10. Answer Easiest Questions First

Get the easiest questions out of the way to be sure to get credit for them. You can then take the rest of the time allowed to work on the harder questions.

😊 11. Answer Every Question

Try to answer every question even if you are unsure you know the correct answer. Even related responses may give you partial credit.

😊 12. Use Your Best Penmanship

Teachers give higher marks to papers written in good penmanship and appear well organized.

😊 13. Re-Check Test Before Handing It In

Relax for a minute or two after finishing the test. Then, go through it again. The break may help you remember some things that will help you improve your answers.

😊 14. Use Feedback to Your Future Advantage

When a test is returned, locate errors and write corrections in different colored pen or pencil so it can be easy to study from. Commit to mastering anything missed on the test. Include it in your study for the next week. Get help as needed to reach 100% mastery level.

LONG TERM PROJECTS AND REPORTS SUCCESS

😊 1. Find Out How Assignment Will Be Evaluated

Ask your teacher for an explanation or checklist of how the project or report will be evaluated. Refer to it often when working on the assignment.

😊 2. Pick an Interesting and Reasonable Topic

Do the project or report as if you were truly interested in the information you will gather and report on. Narrow your topic to what can reasonably be accomplished with the time you will have available.

😊 3. Write Questions You Want Report to Answer

This gives you a start, which is the hardest part of any report.

😊 4. Start a To-Do List and Mark Your Monthly Calendar

Break the project or report into smaller steps or tasks. Write each task on a **To-Do List** with dates to be completed on your **Monthly Calendar**. Check off as completed. This will pace your efforts so it can be done easily and not left to rush through at the end.

😊 5. Use Index Cards for Notes

As you do research, write your notes on index cards so they can be easily arranged and organized to fit the format of your report. You might punch holes in the cards and keep them in a small binder so they can be kept in the order you want them in and can be referred to quickly.

😊 6. Create an Outline for Your Report

Your outline can evolve, but even from the first have a basic outline of what your final report will consist of. You might use the technique of **Visual Note-Taking** found in the **Learning Strategies** section to make this task easier and more adaptable to change.

😊 7. Talk About Your Report With Others

As often as possible, talk about your report. As you do, the report will become more clear in your own mind and easier to write. Other people may have good suggestions or other information you may wish to include.

😊 8. Use Rough Drafts As Improvement Process

Do not assume the first writing of your report to be a final. Even the best writers go through several revisions before they are satisfied with the results. When you read the rough draft to yourself, you will usually find mistakes you will want to correct and improvements you will want to make. Also, have other people read your first draft. Their comments and reactions will be valuable.

😊 9. Compare Final Draft With Grading Criteria

Will you receive maximum credit for your report according to the way your teacher has indicated it will be graded? If not, what should you change or add?

😊 10. Use Feedback to Your Future Advantage

When your report has been evaluated and graded, save it so you can use the teacher suggestions and comments to make your next report even better.
