

6 Proven Strategies for Study Success – by Karen Boyes

The great news is passing exams is more a matter of technique than intelligence. Whatever results you have received in the past, they are NOT a reflection of the results you can achieve this year. Your test scores are not a reflection of your self-worth; they are an evaluation of the learning strategies you have put into place.

Here are some proven strategies to put into place that guarantee results.

1. **Plan for Success:** Start the year with a positive attitude knowing that you can achieve great results at the end of the year. Successful students know that it is what you do every day that makes the biggest difference. Getting into productive habits at the start of the year sets up your success. Stop and reflect on the results you want to achieve and share this with people who will support you throughout the year. Write your goals on a small poster or chart and hang it in a place you will see it every day. Add pictures, quotes or photographs to make it even more real.
2. **Summarise your notes each day:** Even though we're in the technological age, research clearly shows summarising your notes by hand is far better than reading or cutting and pasting information. Purchase a small notebook per subject and spend 20 minutes each day summarising your notes into the notebooks. Record the key points, important information a teacher has shared, definitions and anything else that maybe asked on an exam. Avoid copying exactly. Draw diagrams and add depth by adding your thoughts, opinions or background information.
3. **Use a wall planner, diary or calendar:** Successful people have a plan and record the important dates to help manage their time. Once the key dates are in place for when assignments are due, assessments are given and exam dates entered, work backwards to plan when you will learn and complete your study/assignments. While leaving it until the last minute may be a past pattern, it rarely produces the best results. When writing an assignment, remember to plan time to do the research, draft, edit the draft, have someone check your draft and complete the final copy.
4. **When you get tests and assignments back:** One of the most important factors for success this year, is to go back and learn what you DON'T KNOW. When your results are given back be excited about the marks and grades you get, however be more excited about the answers you got wrong – these are your ticket to success. This is what you study and learn for a test or exam. Going over what you already know is a waste of time. Learn what you don't know. If you are not sure, ask.
5. **Create a study place that is yours:** Many people prefer to sit at a desk to study, however some students are comfortable on the floor or a beanbag. The important factor is to have a place that is yours. It does not need to be big, fancy or flash – it just needs to be your place to study. It might be a desk or table in your bedroom, the kitchen table or your favourite spot in the sun. Ideal items to have available include coloured pencils/pens, post it notes, water, brain food, quiet classical music and your summary notebooks.
6. **Download and use the iStudyAlarm:** Research shows studying in small short bursts can be very effective, especially if you are lacking motivation or the information is challenging. The iStudyAlarm, downloadable from iTunes or Google Play, times you to study for 20 minutes and gives you a 5 minute break. It also has 27 study tips, 12 exam tips and 12 break ideas.

STUDY SMART & PASS... For your **FREE 27 Study Tips Poster**, please email karen@spectrumeducation.com

Karen Boyes is an expert in effective teaching and learning, study skills, motivation and positive thinking. She was awarded the NSANZ Educator of the Year 2014 award and works in schools throughout Australasia teaching students how to Study Smart and teachers how to raise achievement.