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If You Would Study To Learn- Learn To Study

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Four Good Tips on Studying

1. Schedule a regular study time for each course.
2. Take short breaks during study time. Smoke a cigaret, drink a glass of water, or go for a short walk. But don't try to combine smoking and talking with studying.
3. Switch subjects fairly frequently. If you begin to tire of chemistry after half an hour, change to English or costume design or some similar subject. Then tackle the chemistry again later in the evening.
4. Sleep is just as important as study. A tired mind can't learn easily. Make an early date with your bed—and keep it.

by Margaret Leveson

If You Would Study To Learn—

Learn To Study

IN a few days, you'll begin a new quarter in college. And though you may argue bad luck, discrimination and tough courses were responsible for fall grades, you're probably fully aware that the biggest factor was you yourself.

Right now—this very minute—you can plan to pull down better grades next quarter. And this not only will please the authorities, both college and parental, but also will save you time ordinarily spent in thinking up excuses for your poor showing.

Reams have been written on the fine art of studying—your desk drawer most certainly contains a couple of handbooks on the subject, or has contributed same to some nearby wastebasket. But the whole problem of why you learn or fail to learn is simply one of motivation. Motivation is more than a two-bit word in psychology courses—it is the force, either from within or from without, which causes you to concentrate your attention on some particular problem until you have mastered it. Professors use external motivation to keep you up on class work by tossing pop quizzes at you every so often. Letters from home may contain warnings which have the same effect. Your dormitory or house may have special study regulations.

But far more important as a motivating force is the desire within yourself to learn. If you don't have this, all the tutoring in the world, plus a roomful of old tests to study and a friend in the English Department, is not going to get you through college.

So what do you do now? Get this settled with yourself, first of all. Sure, you have some required courses that you don't think you'll enjoy. But get this through that cranial wall, if you hope to rest a mortarboard on its upper surface: you need to know basic facts before you can understand advanced material. Some courses may seem to have no value to you. With these, it's easier to do the work than spend time and energy fighting the principles. This sounds like a weak-kneed policy, it's true. But your own sense of values should tell you that this policy of co-operation is usually the only practical one.

If you've convinced yourself that you want to get the most out of every class in which you enroll, you're well on the path to success. But along with the yearn to learn, you need a little practical application.

It's important to have a study schedule, and follow it as closely as possible. But just plain pounding facts into your head won't help unless you understand what's being pounded. This takes us to class, a place, incidentally, where some of us should go more often. A good lecturer can interpret a chapter to you in half the time — and with half the work — you'd ordinarily spend on it. You'll probably discover that the best lecturers usually don't take attendance. They don't need to — you're only cutting your own throat if you cut one of their classes.

When you do study, *concentrate*. Go to the library, if you must, or shut your door and hang a big quarantine sign on it. And then when you open your

book, keep your mind on what you're doing. If you can't concentrate, you might just as well give up the idea of studying for a while. Half a mind is very little better than no mind at all, and is likely to lead to half-witted answers in a quiz. If you study *hard* when you do study, you'll finish in far less time than usual.

It is possible to over-study, too. You must have sleep the night before an examination, or the knowledge you've crammed into your cranium will trickle out a whole lot slower than the molasses in January you've heard about so often. To study for a test, you should have read all assigned material by at least 2 nights before the scheduled examination. Then review any notes you've taken on this material, review any corrected problems you have, and most of all, review your lecture notes.

Not-too-subtle Secret

There's a not-too-subtle secret here: instructors usually emphasize the most important points about any subject in their lectures. And even when they don't, they are tempted to ask questions on which they've already expressed their own opinions. Some instructors, it's true, ask questions they've never covered in class. But a good instructor tests on what he has discussed carefully and explicitly, and doesn't expect you to blossom with original thought in 27 minutes of mimeographed mental probing.

Resolve that you honestly want to learn all you can. Attend every class. Concentrate when you study, but don't study to the exclusion of sleep. It's up to you, now—you can make those grades any time you decide you really want to.



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