

Class 3

The Psychology of Academic Success

September 17, 2009

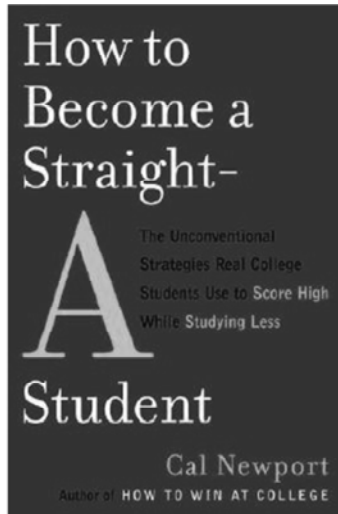
Academic Success

- Academic success is a learnable skill
 - Study skills seminars
 - Time management seminars
 - Mentorship programs
 - Self-help books
 - Tutors
 - Positive attitude
 - Motivation
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Student Academic Success Centre (SASC)

- <http://www2.carleton.ca/sasc/>
 - Advising Centre
Meet to discuss study skills, improve academic performance, change programs, and more
 - Learning Support Services
Participate in a study skills workshop, book a group study room, or use the tutor referral service
 - Peer Assisted Study Sessions
Peer Assisted Study Sessions are weekly workshops for any student taking selected courses
 - Writing Tutorial Services
The WTS is designed to help you hone your skills in academic writing
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Self-help Books



- Many books have been written on this subject
 - Check Carleton bookstore or online at Chapters-Indigo
 - The library also have many books on this topic
 - Key words: "study skills"
 - 364 results
 - **Ex: College study skills : becoming a strategic learner / Dianna L. Van Blerkom.**
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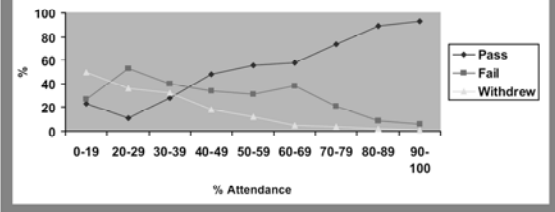
Outline

- Study Strategies:
 - In the classroom:
 - Attendance
 - Active listening
 - Good study notes
 - Outside of the classroom:
 - Effective studying
 - Time management
 - Finding the right place
 - Rewarding your efforts
 - Test Taking Strategies:
 - The Day of the Exam:
 - General tips for:
 - Preparing your mind and body
 - Reducing your anxiety
 - In the Exam:
 - Test taking strategies
 - Multiple Choice strategies
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In the classroom:

- The best predictor of academic success is **attendance!**
- If you are in class, you will hear your professor's perspective on what is important
- Some professors give hints about exams or even give exam previews in class

Figure 4. Proportion of students passing, failing to progress or withdrawing following reassessment examination board (again excludes withdrawals prior to Spring 2008)



April 2009 edition of "Inform - A journal for international foundation programme professionals", University of Reading

In the classroom:

- Active Listening
 - "hearing and then making and shaping what you heard -- along with your own ideas -- into usable pieces of knowledge".
 - Jalongo, Mary Renck, "Promoting active listening in the classroom." Childhood Education, Fall 1995
 - Reflect on what you are hearing
 - Write down questions during the lecture and try to answer them yourself, based on the lecture material
 - Ask questions!
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In the classroom:

- Read ahead
 - Knowing what you will be covering in a lecture will help you to recognize and remember it when you hear it in class
 - Make notes during the lecture
 - Don't rely just on memory
 - Don't try to write down everything
 - Write it in your own words
 - Pay attention to the important points and key concepts
 - Review your soon after class – preferably the same day
 - Supplement your notes or correct errors
 - Leave room in your notes to summarize main points for study notes
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Advanced Note System

		September 17, 2009
<input type="radio"/>	Write study notes here after class, while you are reviewing the material	Write Class Notes here during the lecture
<input type="radio"/>		
<input type="radio"/>		Leave space so that you can supplement your notes with material from the text book

Outside of the classroom

- Make a schedule for studying
- Stick to your schedule
- If it is not practical, then revise it and stick to the new schedule

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
8:00	Biology	Psychology	Biology	Psychology	Work		
9:00					Work		Study
10:00	Math	Study	Math	Study	Work		Study
11:00		Physics		Physics	Work	Hockey	Study
12:00	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Swimming	Lunch	Lunch	Study
1:00	Study	Study	Work	Lunch	Study	Study	Lunch
2:00	Study	Gym	Work	Study	Study	Study	Movie

Time Management

- Work in short, focused sessions
 - Avoid “pseudo-work”
 - Treat it like a full time job – study 40 hours per week or more
 - Don’t procrastinate – study a few hours every week, not just before the exam
 - Remember: Being a student is doing what you don’t want to do, when you don’t want to do it
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STUDY HABITS QUESTIONNAIRE

Do you usually complete your class assignments on time?	YES	NO
Do you usually find time to prepare adequately for your exams?	YES	NO
Do you frequently delay schoolwork until the last minute?	YES	NO
When do you usually study (mornings, evenings, weekends, etc.)?		
Do you write out and follow a study schedule?	YES	NO
Are your study times planned for when you're likely to be alert?	YES	NO
Do you allow time for brief study breaks?	YES	NO
Where do you usually study (library, kitchen, bedroom, etc.)?		
Do you have a special place set up for studying and nothing else?	YES	NO
What types of auditory, visual, and social distractions are present in your study areas?		
Can you suggest any changes to reduce distractions in your study areas?		

Outside of the classroom

- Studying effectively:
 - Use multiple memory encoding strategies
 - See it – read your notes, draw pictures and diagrams
 - Feel it – highlight your text book, write study notes out by hand
 - Hear it – read your notes aloud – make a recording that you can play on your MP3 player or in your car
 - Repetition
 - The more times and the more ways you study something, the more likely you are to remember it
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Outside of the classroom

- Studying effectively:
 - Depth of processing
 - “Deep” or highly elaborate processing is more likely to be remembered
 - Just scanning your notes may not be a very deep level of processing
 - Elaborate on your notes – rewrite them in your own words, summarize
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Count the number of e's in the words I will read you. Write down the number of e's on a piece of paper so that you can check your answers at the end.

List A

<i>shade</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>desk</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>money</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>pitch</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>garden</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>hammer</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>dress</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>horse</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>month</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>door</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>belt</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>train</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>count</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>fire</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>song</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>bureau</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>foot</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>magic</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>short</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>motor</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>story</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>coal</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>dinner</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>monkey</i>	<i>1</i>

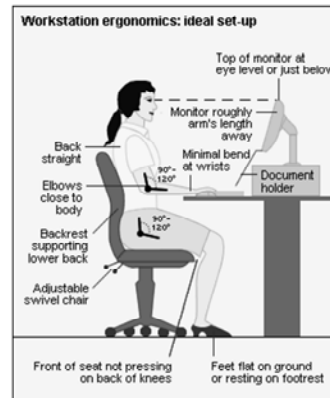
Rate the words that I will read to you using a 10-point scale of pleasantness, with 1 being *very unpleasant* and 10 *very pleasant*. Concentrate on the task of rating the pleasantness of each word. Write down your ratings on a piece of paper.

List B

<i>coin</i>	<i>skate</i>
<i>church</i>	<i>fork</i>
<i>trunk</i>	<i>pocket</i>
<i>trail</i>	<i>flower</i>
<i>clock</i>	<i>bank</i>
<i>paint</i>	<i>time</i>
<i>deep</i>	<i>bird</i>
<i>sample</i>	<i>move</i>
<i>rain</i>	<i>pipe</i>
<i>fish</i>	<i>coat</i>
<i>metal</i>	<i>travel</i>
<i>grass</i>	<i>soap</i>

Find a good place to study

- Desk
 - Don't study in bed – risk of falling asleep
 - If you are tired, have a nap – then return to your desk
- Comfortable chair
 - Back support
 - Good height relative to the desk
- Sufficient light
 - Overhead light
 - Desk lamp
 - Not just the computer
- Quiet
 - Music that is not too interesting
 - Music without lyrics



Reward your studying

- Long term rewards like “Getting an A” are not very motivating
 - Study for 20-30 minutes, then reward yourself with a short break
 - Email
 - Facebook
 - Short walk
 - Bigger rewards for completion of bigger goals
 - Finishing a chapter = watching favorite TV show
 - Finishing an exam = going to the movies
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General Tips for Exam Day

- “Sleep On It”
 - Sleep helps improve memory consolidation
 - Helps alertness and performance
 - Eat breakfast
 - Your brain needs glucose!
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General Tips for Exam Day

- Don't try to learn brand new material right before the exam
 - Cramming is not a good methods of studying
 - Arrive early
 - Don't raise your anxiety level by rushing in at the last minute
 - Don't talk about the exam right before you write it
 - Anxiety is contagious
 - Discuss ideas with TA or friends several days before the exam
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General Tips for Exam Day

- Have essential materials prepared before the exam
 - Remember to bring your:
 - Student ID
 - Pencil
 - Soft eraser
 - Choose a comfortable seat
 - Have a positive attitude.
 - Remind yourself that you are well-prepared and are going to do well.
 - Take several slow, deep breaths to relax
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Test Taking Strategies

- General Tips – pg.37
 - Mental schedule of how long each section should take
 - Monitor your time usage – if $\frac{1}{2}$ of the time has passed, you should be finished at least half of the exam
 - If you don't know the answer, make your best guess and move on
 - Do a good job of answering the questions you do know
 - Some later question may provide information you can use to go back and answer an earlier question
 - Don't over analyze the questions – the obvious answer is probably the right one
 - Go over the exam before you hand it in
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Tips for Multiple Choice Exams

- Anticipate the answer – look for it in the list
 - Read the questions carefully – a more complete answer may be further down in the list
 - Look for implausible answers and eliminate them
 - Even if you have to guess, if you eliminate the unlikely ones, you are increasing your odds
 - Sweeping generalizations are often incorrect
 - “always,” “never,” only, “must,” “completely,” “necessarily”
 - Carefully crafted, well qualified answers are more likely to be correct
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COMMON FLAWS IN MULTIPLE-CHOICE ITEMS

FLAW #1

- The incorrect options are highly implausible.

FLAW #2

- Equivalence and/or contradictions among options allows one to eliminate the incorrect options.

FLAW #3

- Content information in other items provides the answer.

FLAW #4

- The correct option is more detailed and/or more specific than all the other options.

FLAW #5

- The correct option is longer than all of the other options.

FLAW #6

- There is grammatical inconsistency between the stem and the incorrect options but not the correct option.

FLAW #7

- The incorrect options include certain key words that tend to appear in false statements (such as always, must, never, and so on).

FLAW #8

- There is a resemblance between the stem and correct option but not the incorrect options.
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The Testwiseness Scale

Below you will find 24 history questions for which you are *not* expected to know the answers. However, you should be able to make a good guess for each of the questions if you can spot the flaws that exist in them. Each question is flawed in some way so as to permit solution by testwise examinees. Circle what you think is the correct alternative for each item.

1. The Locarno Pact

- a. is an international agreement for the maintenance of peace through the guarantee of national boundaries of France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, and other countries of Western Europe.
- b. allowed France to occupy the Ruhr Valley.
- c. provided for the dismemberment of Austria-Hungary.
- d. provided for the protection of Red Cross bases during wartime.

2. The disputed Hayes-Tilden election of 1876 was settled by an

- a. resolution of the House of Representatives.
- b. decision of the United States Supreme Court.
- c. Electoral Commission.
- d. joint resolution of Congress.

3. The Factory Act of 1833 made new provisions for the inspection of mills. This new arrangement was important because

- a. the inspectors were not local men and therefore they had no local ties that might affect the carrying-out of their job; they were responsible to the national government rather than to the local authorities; and they were encouraged to develop a professional skill in handling their work.
 - b. the inspectorate was recruited from the factory workers.
 - c. the inspectors were asked to recommend new legislation.
 - d. the establishment of the factory inspectorate gave employment to large numbers of the educated middle class.
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4. The Ostend Manifesto aimed to
- discourage Southern expansionism.
 - prevent expansion in the South.
 - aid Southern expansionism.
 - all of the above
5. The August character of the work of Pericles in Athens frequently causes his work to be likened to that in Rome of
- Augustus
 - Sulla
 - Pompey
 - Claudius
6. The Webster-Asburton Treaty settled a long-standing dispute between Great Britain and the United States over
- the Maine boundary.
 - numerous contested claims to property as well as many other sources of ill will.
 - damages growing out of the War of 1812 and subsequent events.
 - fishing rights on the Great Lakes and in international waters.
7. Men who opposed the "Ten Hour Movement" in British factory history
- was a leader in the dominant political party.
 - is convinced that shorter hours of work are bad for the morals of the laboring classes.
 - is primarily motivated by concern for his own profits.
 - were convinced that intervention would endanger the economic welfare of Britain.
8. The career of Marius (157-86 B.C.), the opponent of Sulla, is significant in Roman history because
- he gave many outstanding dinners and entertainments for royalty.
 - he succeeded in arming the gladiators.
 - he showed that the civil authority could be thrust aside by the military.
 - he made it possible for the popular party to conduct party rallies outside the city of Rome.
9. The Locarno Pact
- was an agreement between Greece and Turkey.
 - gave the Tyrol to Italy.
 - was a conspiracy to blow up the League of Nations building at Locarno.
 - guaranteed the boundary arrangements in Western Europe.
10. The first presidential election dispute in the United States to be settled by an appointed Electoral Commission
- the Hayes-Tilden election.
 - the Jefferson-Madison election.
 - the John Quincy Adams-Henry Clay election.
 - the Garfield-McKinley election.