



Institiúid na gComhairleoirí Treorach
INSTITUTE OF GUIDANCE COUNSELLORS

Getting The Best Out Of School, Getting The Best Out Of Me.



A Junior Cycle Module

The Institute of Guidance Counsellors



This Booklet Belongs To

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Getting The Best Out Of School, Getting The Best Out Of Me

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1. Introduction

Everybody wants to do well and get the best out of school and the best out of themselves. What needs to happen for you to do well in your school? Would you agree with these?

Have a regular attendance

Being on time

Paying attention in class

Doing my homework

Anything else you can think of?

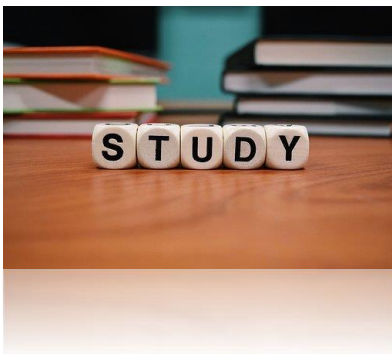
2. The Difference Between Homework & Study?

2.1 What is homework?

Homework is work that is given by your teacher to be done for the next class, which could be the next day or a few days later. In the next class, the teacher will check if the homework is done and correct and discuss it.



2.2 What is study?



In secondary school we have exams at Christmas and May each year. Sometimes we have other exams at different times, like class exams. To do our best we know we should study when these exams are approaching. However, is this enough?

Study is often viewed as work carried out in the run up to exams. A week or a few days before exams, we become conscious of the need to revisit topics covered weeks or months previously in order to do well. Is this enough?

3. Doing My Best

What does it mean to say we have done our best?

Is it about getting the top grades?

Is about our best effort?

If it is about doing our best, regardless of the grade, can we say we have done our best if we only study **just as** the exams are approaching? Doing our best might mean that we should be studying **throughout the school year** and not just studying in the run up to a class or end of term exam.

What does this mean for you?

If a teacher is teaching topic 7 in class, that teacher will be focusing on the class work and homework for that topic. However, what about topics 1 to 6? Should these be forgotten and ignored? In order for you to say you have done your best, should you be studying the older topics while working on topic 7, even if the exam is not near.



It is natural for you to expect your parents and teachers to check that they are keeping up with current topics by checking day-to-day homework. Therefore, we tend not to bother studying old topics if there is no exam/s, because nobody will check the next day and there are no consequences the next day.

However, if you don't study past topics can you say you have been doing your best? To be able to say you have done your best, do you need to be studying constantly throughout the year – even if there is not test or exam coming up?

4. How To Study

4.1 How Do You Study Your Maths?

Your answer to this question is probably to do different Maths examples over and over again. But why don't you just read over your Maths book? Would that work? Probably not. But why not?

When practicing sums in Maths with a pen, you are **processing** the information and skills. You are churning the information and skills around in your head to reinforce it into your brain.

Will this happen if you just read your Maths book?



If it doesn't work for Maths, why do you just read your Business book or Geography book when studying? If you just read your Business or Geography book, are you processing the information? Have you ever read a piece of text, and when finished, can't remember what you read? Have you ever walked from one place to another and have no memory of the buildings you have passed on that walk? If this happens we are not processing the information.

So if we only read material, it may be that this is a waste of time. Reading alone may not work long term for you to retain skills or information. We need to find ways to process text and other information, in the same way we use a pen and paper do Maths sums.

4.2 How Does The Brain Work?

Some experts say that the brain can work in three different ways.

1. **Visual** (seeing) learners like to learn through written language such as reading and writing. They remember what they have written down. They use bullet points, charts, graphs, mind maps, pictures, write stories, or use flash cards.
2. **Auditory** (hearing) learners make speeches or presentations, use recordings, read out loud, create musical jingles to aid memory or tell stories.
3. **Kinesthetic** (doing) learners learn by doing, touching or making. They often move about while studying.



However, is it this simple? Nobody falls neatly into any of these categories. While one or two styles may be dominant in us, we tend to move between the various methods. Any method we use will vary from person to person and will also change depending on the type of material being studied changes from subject to subject and within each subject.

4.3 Learning How *Your* Brain Learns

We could argue that the learning styles mentioned above are just different forms of **processing**. There are as many ways to process information as there are individuals. Below are some examples of different methods of processing, but the challenge is for you is,

1. **To find the best methods that work for you.**
2. **Be able to change from method to method as the subject changes.**
3. **Be able to change from method to method as the material within each subject changes.**

5. Different Way Of Processing

5.1 Note Taking

One way of achieving quality and productive study is to make shorthand, concise, hand written notes *in parallel* with what you are reading. You should avoid transcribing or copying from one page to another. These notes can be words or phrases and not long and full sentences. Each new point should be written on a new line. Once you have read a line or two from a text, ask yourself, 'what does that tell me?'. Then rephrase it in your own words. Then write this out. Once you have written the bullet points you can reconstruct these bullet points into full sentences that you can now say out loud. Yes, out loud, talk to yourself. Remember, how you learned your four times table in primary school. All of this has the effect of processing the information through the "cogs" in the brain, which does not happen if you read *only*.

Here are some simple steps to follow.

1. Read a sentence or two.
2. Think about what it tells you.
3. Rephrase it in your own words.
4. Write it in bullet points
5. Say it out loud.
6. Hear it.



Which of these steps do you think is the most important?

It's actually number 2.

Why?

What does it do for us?

Your teacher will help you with the example on the next page.

Topic from History Book "Slaves"

The Romans, like most ancient civilisations, used slavery. _____

Slaves were brought to Rome from Africa and other parts of the Roman Empire and bought and sold in the marketplace. _____

They were mostly used to do heavy manual labour; however, many slaves had been educated and these were used as teachers, clerks and scribes. A slave usually accompanied wealthy women and children as bodyguards when they went out. _____

When Rome was at its height, there were some 300,000 slaves in the city. _____

It was very rare for a slave to escape for any lengthy period – any Roman citizens who helped an escaped slave were severely punished. _____

Some slaves eventually got their freedom (manumission) by buying it or in reward for loyal service. _____

Think About it - What is it telling us?

Tells us: _____
That Romans used slaves _____

Tells us: _____
Where they came from & what happened to them when they came to Rome. _____

Tells us: _____
The jobs they did _____

Tells us: _____
How many there were _____

Tell us: _____
About escaping & what happened if they did. _____

Tells us: _____
A new word for freedom & how they got it. _____

Bullet Points

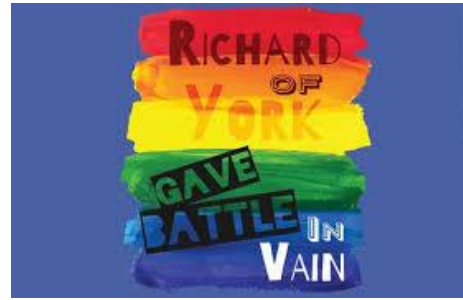
- Like most civilisations, Romans used slaves.
- Brought Africa/other parts of empire & bought/sold market place
- Manual labour/educated – teachers /bodyguards women/kids
- 300,000
- Escape rare/punishment
- Freedom = manumission/bought or reward

1. Read a sentence or two.
2. Think about what it tells us
3. Rephrase it in your own words
4. Write (not transcribe/copy)
5. Say it out loud
6. Hear it

5.2 Mnemonics

Mnemonics are another way to process information. These are various word games which act as memory aids.

Here is an example.



To remember the colours of the rainbow (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet) we can construct the following sentence,

“Richard **OF** York **Gave** **Battle** In **Vain**.

This is just another way to **process** information.

5.3 Synonyms

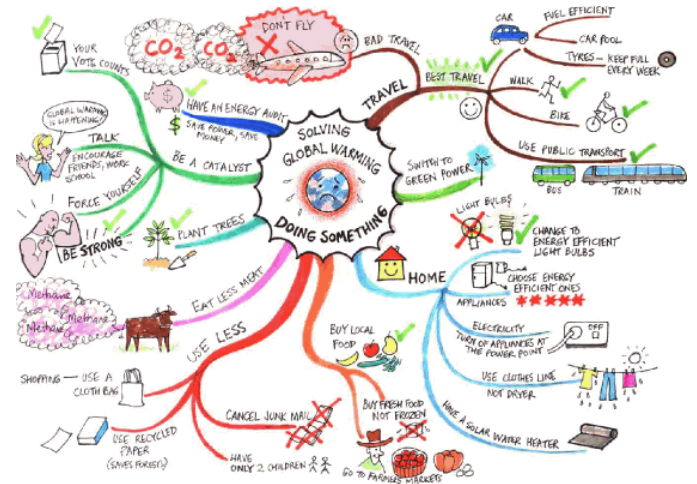
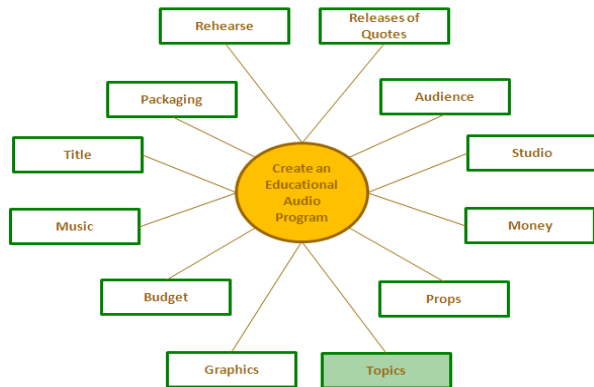
Synonyms are when we find alternative words that are easy to remember. For example to help the understanding and meaning of the word ‘confess’, the word ‘admit’ can be tagged along side it. A Thesaurus can help us with this. This is another way to **process** information.

SYNONYMS LIST	
Abroad.....	Overseas
Accord.....	Agreement
Admit.....	Confess
Agree.....	Consent
Answer.....	Response
Awful.....	Terrible
Correct.....	Right
Delicate.....	Fragile
Eager.....	Keen
Enquire.....	Investigate
Evil.....	Bad
Exit.....	Leave

5.4 Mind Maps & Flash Cards

Other methods involve the use of **mind maps** or **flash cards**.

The following illustrate some examples more examples of **processing** information.



5.5 Making Recordings

Recording yourself can be particularly useful with vocabulary for languages.

For example, if you have to know a few phrases or words,

- ✓ Press record.
- ✓ Say the first phrase/word then leave a five second gap.
- ✓ Say the second word/phrase and leave a gap.
- ✓ Say the third word/phrase and leave another gap, and so on.
- ✓ When you press replay, you will hear the word/s followed by a gap for you to repeat the words.
- ✓ Interact with your recording.

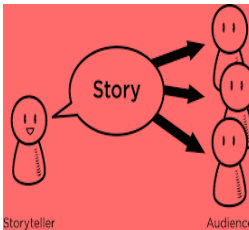


5.6 Becoming The Teacher

The experts have discovered that we remember, 20% of what we read, 30% of what we hear, 40% of what we see, 50% of what we say, 60% of what we do.

But, we remember 90% of what we read, hear, say and do, and We remember 95% of what we TEACH.

Therefore, why not do some of the following.



- ✓ Make a speech to a pretend audience.
- ✓ Tell the story to another person.
- ✓ Ask someone else to examine you.
- ✓ Teach what you have learned to someone else.



5.7 i-pads

Using of electronic devices instead of books has its advantages. i-pads can allow access to a greater volume of information using the internet. In addition, these devices allow for the information to be displayed in graphic or moving image format which books do not allow. However, be careful. Electronic devices only improve the way information is accessed and displayed. Because of the improved access and display we can think less learning is required. The same amount of time learning, practicing, and studying still needs to be done to acquire knowledge and skills. i-pads replacing books does not mean less work needs to be done.

5.8 Which One Is The Best Method?

- ✓ This question has no answer. There is not brilliant method. There is no easy method. There is only an optimum method. In other words, it may not be perfect, and it may not get brilliant results, it may not be easy, but it is the best it can be.
- ✓ One method way work for one person and a different one for another person. One method may work for certain types of material and a different method for different types of material. So, the challenge for you is to have the skill to,



1. Find the best methods that work for you.
2. Be able to change from method to method as the subject changes.
3. Be able to change from method to method as the material you are studying changes.

6. Understanding Versus Knowing & Testing Yourself

Is there a difference between **understanding** and **knowing** academic material? Part of a teacher's job is to help you understand new concepts. However, is this enough? Once you understand something, does it actually mean you know it? Have you ever been taught something new in class and leave that class understanding the material, but the next day, or even the next week, when the teacher asks you about that material you don't know it. Does this mean you **understood** the material at the time, but now do not **know** the material? How can you check this?

Also, having accumulated a set of notes we can feel a sense of satisfaction and a sense of achievement. However, we need to be careful. Because of the sense of accomplishment, we want to continue this feeling of accomplishment. To do this we continue to make more and more notes, and the more notes we have the better we feel we are doing. This can take the focus away from *knowing* what is in the notes.



To avoid the trap of understanding but not knowing, and the trap of continuously making notes, you need to **test yourself**. This can be done by doing a **revision session**.

7. What Is Revision?

Homework is work we need to do for the next class. Study is working on previous topics that have been taught in the past. What about revision?

Having studied for 3/4 weeks you might find it useful to *revise* the work *studied*. Therefore, at some point, say every 3 /4 weeks, it might be useful if you stop studying new material. Instead, that week or for next few days you might spend revising the *study* notes that have been compiled over the last number of weeks. This revision may help cement the information long-term, and help it to be retrieved when you need it and ensure you don't just understand it, but know it. These revision sessions do not require new notes to be written. Retrieve your original study notes and repeat some of the **processing** techniques mentioned about, especially steps 5 & 6 (on page 7). This may not work for subjects like Maths where problems need to be redone with a pen and paper.

It might suit to do this revision every few weeks, or it might suit to do this revision at the weekends, or every 10 days maybe. Everybody will be different. Here is what one expert said.

The secret to remembering material long-term is not to cram and over-learn but rather to periodically review what you've studied. Just how much later depends on how long you want to remember the material. It is suggested that the optimal or best time to review material is after a period which is 10 to 30 per cent of the time for which you want to remember it. Another study that looked at retention over 6 months, found the optimal time for reviewing material was one month.



8. Time Spent Studying

8.1 How Much Time Should You Spend Studying?

The quantity of time spent by each of us will vary considerably. If you haven't been studying properly of time, try something like this.



After you go home on Monday, and after you have done your homework, try starting off with 3 x 15 minutes of studying. Try and fit this in on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. Just do your homework on Friday, - no need for study. Or would 2 x 20 minutes, or 2 x 25 minutes, suit you better, we are all different.

At the weekend try and find time to do 4 x 15 minutes of study. This could be done on Saturday morning, or Saturday afternoon, or Sunday morning, or Sunday afternoon. Be careful, if you have not done your homework on Friday, the weekend session set aside for study, will just become a homework session.

After a week or two, can you increase the number of times slots or lengthen the number of time slots. This increasing should happen to keep the habit going.

You know deep down if you can do this increase, and you will know if you are pretending to yourself that you can't. We can pretend to others, but we can never pretend to ourselves.

8.2 Some Tips

- ✓ It might be easier to start of this routine with 2 or 3 subjects you find easier. It is always very hard, if not impossible, to start this habit using the most difficult subjects.
- ✓ After a while you can add in the subjects you find more difficult.
- ✓ Each session can be different topics from one subject or a mixture of subjects. Ideally it should be both of these, depending on what you have to cover.
- ✓ Time slots do not have to be the same. They can vary depending on the amount of material in a particular topic.
- ✓ For languages, a lot of shorter time slots might be more effective than a few larger time slots, e.g. 4 x 10 minutes of speaking a language from Monday to Thursday, might be better than 40 minutes on Thursday.

- ✓ You are not expected to every subject every night. But every subject should be covered at least once a week.
- ✓ Whatever the length of each single session, 15 minutes, 20 minutes, 25 minutes, stop when you find yourself day-dreaming and not concentration. Take a few minutes break. Some of us take breaks because we deserve them – and this is perfectly Okay. However, is there another reason to take a break?
- ✓ Taking a break allows us to recharge our batteries so that we can go back and do more work. Without taking the break continuing to work can be pointless because the work is not productive. What should we do during a break? Lie on the sofa, check social media, watch T.V. If what we are doing during a break is hard to stop doing, and makes it more difficult to return to the work, maybe something else needs to be done during a break.
- ✓ Maybe, we only need to rest our brain and not rest our body. So try doing something that keeps you moving. Try doing something physical that gives our brain a break. Try going for a walk. Try kicking a ball, try shooting some hoops, try hitting a slioter, try walking the dog, try whatever works for you. It might be easier to return to the work if we only give the brain a break and keep the body moving.
- ✓ After you have establish the routine of study, you might find that is better to do the work that requires greater concentration at the start of a session and leave the work that requires less concentration toward the end of a session- as you get more tired.
- ✓ If you are doing other activities on Monday, and there is only time to do your homework and no time for study, add those missed slots onto another session on a different day/s.
- ✓ If you are busy on Monday and Wednesday and cannot do study, try and make up for these missed sessions on Friday, or at the weekend.
- ✓ We know that most of the time we can get away with not doing this type of study because nobody can really check. Therefore, it is tempting after doing our homework not to bother. If you find this happening and are trying to find a way to motivate yourself to study, try this. Maybe do the study session first, before the homework session. When the study session is finished, you now have to do your homework because it is need for the next day.

8.3 A Timetable

Some of us like to make a timetable saying what times each day we are going to do things. It might look like this.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
5 p.m.					10 a.m.	
6 p.m.	6.00 p.m.	4 p.m.			11 a.m.	
7 p. m.	7.00 p.m.	5 p.m.				

If this type of timetable works for you, then make one for yourself. The times each day may have to vary if you are doing other things like sport or drama on different days.

However, such a timetable relies on us filling in what **we intend to do** and making a commitment to this. Human nature being as it is, this can be very difficult to stick to.

With this in mind, what about trying a timetable that is not filled in with what **we intend to do**, but instead, filled in with **what we have done**. It might look like this.

MON.	TUE.	WED.	THUR.	FRI.	SAT.	SUN.
(Sub.) mins.	(Sub.) mins.	(Sub.) mins.	(Sub.) Mins.	(Sub.) mins.	(Sub.) mins.	(Sub.) mins.
(Sub.) mins.	(Sub.) mins.	(Sub.) mins.	(Sub.) Mins.	(Sub.) mins.	(Sub.) mins.	(Sub.) mins.
(Sub.) mins.	(Sub.) mins.	(Sub.) mins.	(Sub.) Mins.	(Sub.) mins.	(Sub.) mins.	(Sub.) mins.
(Sub.) mins.	(Sub.) mins.	(Sub.) mins.	(Sub.) Mins.	(Sub.) mins.	(Sub.) mins.	(Sub.) mins.
(Sub.) mins.	(Sub.) mins.	(Sub.) mins.	(Sub.) Mins.	(Sub.) mins.	(Sub.) mins.	(Sub.) mins.
Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total

After each study session the number of minutes spent at each subject can be filled in. Over time this can mount up considerably and show us how much we have achieved, rather than intended to achieved. This study log (have look at the study log on page 24) can also help us keep track of the subjects we have done and the subjects we have neglected.

Remember,
*You can pretend to others if you are doing all you can do,
 but you can't pretend to yourself.*

9. What To Study

Sometimes we ask ourselves “*what do I study?*” Each day when we sit down to do our homework, the first thing we do is to check our ‘*to do*’ list in our homework diary. This helps us keep track of what we have to do, and that we have done. Why not borrow this idea for study? Why not write a to-do list for the things we have to study for the different subjects?

A study to-do list should contain a number of past (not current) topics that need to be covered that week or over the coming weeks. The different subjects might require different types of to-do lists. For example, a History and Geography to-do list may list the names of different topics and sub-topics that need to be covered, but Maths may simply be a list of problems that need to be done. Here are two examples.



History To Do List			Maths To Do List		
Topic	Bronze Age	Modern Ireland	Topic	Algebra	Statistics
1.	Smelting	Rebellion	1.	P17 Q. 3,4,5	2016 Q. 1
2.	Farming	Independence	2.	P19 Q, 5,6,7	2017 Q. 4
3.	Homes	World War II	3.		
4.	Daily Life	Northern Ireland	4.		
5.			5.		

10. Filing

When making out our notes we can end up with a large amount of paper. This paper can become untidy and end up all over the place in our room. This can make it more difficult to retrieve information later on. So do you need to have a filing system?



We should all have a good filing system that allows information to be retrieved almost instantaneously, for example, you could have a separate copy/folder for each subject. This copy should be for study notes only (not homework). You have to find your own filing system that works for you.

11. The Emotions That Block Study

All of us, adults and teenagers, strive to do our best at tasks we engage in, or are given to do. Doing well, or doing our best, makes us feel good about ourselves, and gives us a sense of purpose and of well-being within ourselves. Despite what we sometimes might say to others, privately, we all wish we could do our best with our school work. It's it odd that teacher and parents constantly try to get us to do what we, deep down, really want to be able to do. So, we have to ask ourselves, what is stopping us doing what we want to do?

11.1 Tricks We Pull To Avoid Work – Procrastination

At home, do you look for distractions? The experts call this procrastination.



- Do you pick up your phone to avoid the work?
- Do you switch on your i-pad or computer to avoid the work?
- Do you switch on your T.V?
- Are there other things you do to avoid the work?
- Do you blame, your phone, i-pad, T.V.?
- Is it really the fault of these devices?
- Who turned them on?

11.2 Avoiding Eye Contact

Have you ever avoided eye contact with a teacher in class? Are you avoiding eye contact because you don't know the material, or have not done your work, and are afraid you will be asked a question? Are you afraid people might find out what you don't know?



11.3 Hiding What We Don't Know

Have you ever asked questions in class that you already know the answer to. Do you do this to make yourself feel better about what you don't know? The experts call this shame effort.

11.4 Creating A Diversion

When the material in class gets too difficult, or you have not done your work, do you try to divert attention from this?



- Do you try to talk to other students to get away from the material?
- Do you start messing to distract from the fact that you find the material difficult.
- Do you start looking for attention from the teacher or your mates about something else, to hide the fact that the work is not done, or that you don't know what is going on?

11.5 Blaming Something Else

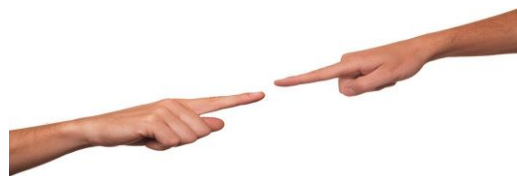
Do you blame other things in order to avoid taking the responsibility for not doing your best? For example,

- The exam was too long.
- The teacher didn't tell me that was on the exam.
- The teacher didn't explain it properly.
- Do you say to people that you freeze or panic in exams?
- Why would somebody freeze in an exam? Is it because they see the question and can't answer it? Is it because they do not know the material? Is it because they didn't do the work? Therefore, is freezing in an exam a symptom rather than the cause?



11.6 Create A Different Debate

When a teacher or parent tries to persuade you to do your school work, do you do the something totally different? Does a discussion or row about the pros and cons about the other activity help avoid having a discussion about the pros and cons about school work?



11.7 Finding Someone Else Who Is Worse Than You

When you get test results back from a teacher and have not done as well as you had hoped, do you look for another student who has done even worse than you? Do you do this to make yourself feel better about your result and help distract from your own performance. Do find other people who also did badly, and find comfort in that fact that you are not the only one.

11.8 Dragging Out The Homework Time

When you are supposed to be studying at home, do you drag out the time it takes to do your homework? Homework is sometimes easier to do than study because it is fresh in our heads. Dragging out the time taken to do homework uses up the time and gives us an excuse that there is not time to study.



11.9 Studying Stuff You Already Know

When studying at home, do you study stuff you already know to avoid studying stuff you don't know? Does this help us avoid the pain of studying?

11.10 'I Don't Know How To Study'

Some of us might say "*I don't know how to study*". We tend to resort to this excuse when, the material we are working on is difficult i.e. it is not simple and easy, or if we are not getting great results. We need to remind ourselves that there is no study method that is easy and there is no study method that can produce perfect results. Sometimes we need to accept that studying will always be difficult and that we need to learn to be happy with our effort regardless of the result. It's all about the *optimum methods* (even though this may be difficult) and the *optimum results*. Remember, if it is difficult to do and if you are not getting a perfect result, it does not mean you don't know how to study. Maybe when we say '*I don't know how to study*' what you really mean is '*this is hard, this is painful*'.

12. Avoiding The Pain



When learning something new, we become aware of our limitations and get frustrated by the gap between what we know and what we don't know. When learning something new, we can experience a form of mental pain and discomfort. The more difficult the new task, the greater the level of pain. So in order to terminate these negative feelings we stop engaging and stop trying. This helps us stay in our comfort zone.

We need to understand that what we are feeling is perfectly normal and that the uncomfortable feelings are a normal part of the learning experience. We also need to be realised that this mental discomfort will not last forever and will get easier as we progress through the task.

We need to learn to persevere and push through the pain barrier. We need to recognise that the mental discomfort will eventually dissipate as the task nears an end. We need to be willing to suffer through something uncomfortable if we are to have that feeling of satisfaction when we complete a task. We all need to learn to feel and experience the pain if we are to learn to work through it.



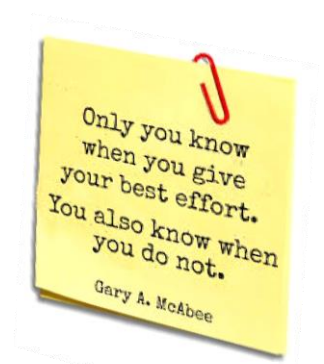
13. Focusing On Our Effort Or Focusing On Our Results

An American psychologist, Carol Dweck, of Columbia University, carried out studies into what happens to the way we think and do things if we focus on our **efforts** compared to what happens if we focus our **results**.

She had two groups of students, one that felt results were more important, and one that felt effort was more important. She gave both groups the same series of tests and then returned their results. Each group reacted differently when they got their results back.

The group that focused on their **results** reacted as follows:

- X** *They stressed out.*
- X** *They focused on what others might think of them.*
- X** *They become defensive about not doing well.*
- X** *They tried to hide their mistakes.*
- X** *They felt effort was not important and that intelligence determined success.*
- X** *When given more test, they were asked, would they like an easy test or harder test, they chose the easier one, are they scared?.*
- X** *In future test their results were worse by about 20%.*



The group that focused on their **effort** reacted as follows:

- ✓** *They worked harder for the next test.*
- ✓** *They found different/new ways to study.*
- ✓** *They saw themselves as being in control of their own success.*
- ✓** *They saw their brain as a muscle they could make bigger.*
- ✓** *They saw their mistakes as useful information to help them improve.*
- ✓** *They saw criticism as helpful.*
- ✓** *When given more test, they were asked, would they like an easy test or harder test, 90% of them chose the harder one, are they confident.*
- ✓** *And in future tests, their scores went up by about 30%.*



What lessons can we learn about ourselves from this?

14. You Are More Than Just A Student

“Everybody is a genius.

But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree,

it will spend its whole life believing that it is stupid”

Some of us can find school work, homework, and study very, very, hard. This can be normal. Is there something wrong with that person or is there something wrong with school?

School teaches and measures certain types of information and skills. It does not teach and measure all types of skills.

All of us have skills but sometimes we are in an environment that does not allow us to use or express these skills.

So, if your skills are not academic, are there other skills you are good at. Don't define yourself solely as a student. You are an individual and being a student is only one part of who you are. Don't forget about the following...

- ✓ Your determination to succeed
- ✓ Your enthusiasm and confidence
- ✓ Your energy to work long hours to achieve objectives
- ✓ Your determination to identify and find solutions to problems
- ✓ Your integrity, loyalty, and honesty
- ✓ Your commercial and entrepreneurial instinct
- ✓ Your initiative, creativity, and inventiveness
- ✓ Your ability to persuade and motivate others
- ✓ Your team spirit
- ✓ Your leadership qualities
- ✓ Your ability to help others
- ✓ Your empathy
- ✓ Your refusal to accept defeat
- ✓ Your sense of humour
- ✓ Your social responsibility
- ✓ Your skills to make friends
- ✓ Your independence
- ✓ Your ability to control impulse
- ✓ Your ability to tolerance stress
- ✓ Your optimism
- ✓ Your flexibility and adaptability
- ✓ And there are hundreds, and hundreds more, and some are unique to you...



***Remember, success is not about how smarts you are,
it is about what you are smart at... and it may not be academic stuff.***

15. Other Stuff Going On In Our Lives

All of our families have their ups and downs. We may have periods of difficulties with our relationships with our Mum, Dad, brother sister or indeed our mates. We may even experience illness, illness of others, or bereavement, or other distressing events. Sometimes we can cope with these difficulties and not let them interfere with our school lives. Sometimes these difficulties can impact on how we do in school. If this is the case for you, you may need to reach out for help. Sometimes we cannot change the situation that is causing us stress. But we may only be able to change how we react to this situation. The situation you might find yourself in may be causing you to lose out on the present. However, might your reaction cause you to lose out on your future? If you find yourself unable to change how you are reacting to the situation, look for help. Talk to somebody. Talk to a trusted adult. Talk to a teacher. Talk to your Guidance Counsellor.

16. Conclusion

You might have seen a baby or toddler attempting to take their first steps. They try and fall, and then try again. They eventually succeed in walking on their own. When this happens, and because they have no words, they scream and shout. Are they saying, *'look at me, look at what I can do'*? Are they expressing an inner satisfaction that they have learned something new? Imagine the seven year old rushing home from school to tell their parents what they had learned about planets in school that day. That seven year old is excited, proud, and chuffed with themselves because of what they had learned. Imagining the 16 year old whose mother let them learn to drive a car in an empty car park. They are excited and thrilled because they have learned something new.

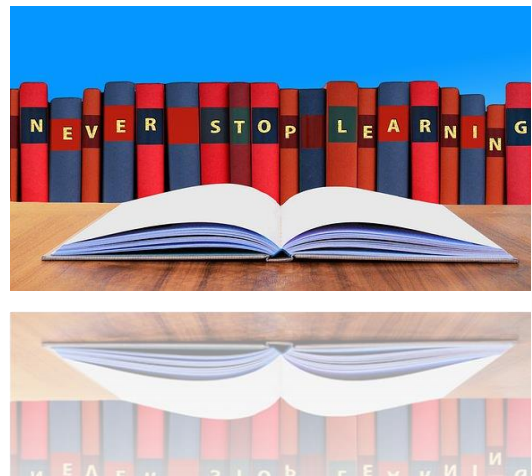
These examples prove that the human condition is naturally predisposed to want to, and feel good about, learning something new. In other words, we all like enjoy learning.

We all have had the experience of learning something new. We have all experienced the sense of accomplishment we get from leaning. We all have had the rewarding experience of the feelings of satisfaction, delight, fulfilment, and a sense of gratification we get from challenging and stretching our minds by learning. Put simply, learning gives us a buzz.

However, it has to be acknowledged that these positive feelings may not happen to the same extent when we have to learn something we find difficult, or something that is not interesting to us. This can be common in the secondary school system.

It needs to be remembered that sometimes we have to put up with something difficult if we want to get to where we want to be. We sometimes have to persevere and tolerate the pain to get what we want in the future.

Sometimes it can be worth it, because it is a gateway to a place where we will be learning what we want to learn, and we will be learning what is of interest to us. Sometimes it will be worth it because it will get us to a place where we will get that buzz we got when we took our first steps.



Study Log

MON.	TUE.	WED.	THUR.	FRI.	SAT.	SUN.
(Sub.) mins.	(Sub.) mins.	(Sub.) mins.	(Sub.) Mins.	(Sub.) mins.	(Sub.) mins.	(Sub.) mins.
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Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total

SUBJECT	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Total
English	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.
Maths	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.
	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.
	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.
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	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.
	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.
	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.
TOTAL	hrs mins.	hrs mins.	hrs mins.	hrs mins.	hrs mins.

To Do List

Subject: _____

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