

How Should I Study?

Students will often walk into the Success Center feeling defeated. They will say, “I studied all night and I didn’t get the grade I wanted on my test!” To this, my response is: maybe it isn’t WHAT you studied, maybe it is HOW you studied.

Sure, staying up all night and reading material is one way of going about studying, but it isn’t proven to get the material to stay in your head. Plus, you will walk into the test feeling exhausted and overwhelmed because you just pulled an all-nighter. Maybe instead, you can use the following tips which have been proven to work for high school students:

1. **Adopt a Growth Mindset-** What does it mean to have a growth mindset? Well, have you ever told yourself that you can’t do something? Having a growth mindset is the opposite! Instead of saying “I can’t,” try saying “this is hard, but I am going to try my best.” Sounds cheesy but it is proven to work. If you tell yourself that you CAN do something, then you are more likely to try. If you start out thinking that you are going to fail, then you won’t really try your hardest because you already believe you aren’t going to succeed.
2. **Sleep Well-** Teenagers often don’t get the amount of sleep they need. Just like your body is growing taller, your brain is also growing and learning. Part of healthy growth is sleeping well. Tell your friends and family goodnight at 9pm and put the electronics down. You will find that you will sleep better and in turn your grades will improve because you will be more energized for class.
3. **Forgive Yourself for Procrastinating-** Okay, it happens to all of us. We all have moments where we leave things to the last minute. Take procrastination as a learning experience. If you forgive yourself, chances are you will be ready the next time you have a big assignment or test. This way you can avoid procrastinating in the future.
4. **Test Yourself-** Try to find sample Regents or exam questions on the topic. Answer the questions and see the ones you know/don’t know. This way you can target what topics you need to review and what you know already.
5. **Pace Your Studies-** Typically you know when your teacher assigns a test. Try to begin studying right after you know when the test day is. It is scientifically proven that if you study in small amounts on different days, then you will commit more items to memory than if you cram in one night.
6. **Believe in Yourself-** You can do it! It is proven that believing in yourself makes you a more effective learner.