**Study Skills Sessions with Dr Prue Salter Years 11 and 12**

This week Dr Prue Salter from Enhanced Learning Educational Services ([www.enhanced-learning.net](http://www.enhanced-learning.net)) ran a study skills session with Year 11. The session focused on helping students identify changes and improvements they could make to their approach to their studies in order to maximise their results in their final years of school. The main areas covered with Year 11 were setting up an effective study space at home, managing resources for school (both paper and digital), working effectively in the evenings and dealing with distractions. Prue also covered managing time efficiently, planning for assessments, making brain-friendly study notes on a regular basis and using a wide variety of active study techniques to suit individual learning styles. Parents are encouraged to review the handout from the session with students and discuss the main areas identified where changes need to be made. Parents can also find extra study skills tips on the following website: [http://studyskillstoptipsparents.com/](http://studyskillstoptipsparents.com/).

Prue also ran a study skills session with Year 12, building on the work done with the boys in previous sessions. Year 12 looked at advanced research about the brain and how that could be used to make their study more effective. Steps to make effective study notes were highlighted and students also examined the study techniques they traditionally used, exploring new techniques they could try this year that best suited their learning preferences. The students also discussed how much time they should allocate to schoolwork during term time (2-3 hours per night) and the type of independent learning they should consistently be doing throughout the year.

**Study Skills Handbook Access for All Students**

All secondary students and parents at our school also have access to a great study skills website to help students develop their skills. Go to [www.studyskillshandbook.com.au](http://www.studyskillshandbook.com.au) and enter the username: forstgregsonly and the password: 60results. There are lots of useful handouts on the THINGS TO PRINT page on this site and students can work through the units where they need additional help.

**Study Skills Tip for February**

**TOP 5 HABITS FOR STUDENTS**

Recently I was asked what I thought the top 5 habits were for students in their last year of school. I came up with this list below, then realised wouldn’t it be great if all students had these habits firmly entrenched before they even reached the senior years of school!

So your challenge for this year, no matter what your year level, is to ensure these habits become embedded as part of YOUR practice for learning to help you become an effective learner at school and in your career and personal life.

*Want to develop great habits for learning? Here’s what you need to do:*

1. **ENGAGE:** Don’t just be a bystander, instead be an active participant in your own learning, taking responsibility for what you need to do to achieve your academic best.

   *This means:*

   - You involve yourself in all of your lessons, staying on task, participating in discussions and trying to absorb as much as you can during your classes (and that means less to learn later).
   - You complete all of the set work for your subjects (your teacher gives you this for a reason) and you try and keep up to date in this work.
• You seek help on anything you don’t understand or can’t do. This might be from a teacher, a friend, online sources, additional books or study guides. You also do this nice and early, you don’t let the problems pile up.

2. ORGANISE: Being organised means that you can find things when you need them, you don’t forget about work to be done and you don’t have last minute panics. Much less stressful.

This means:

• You have a good system for managing all of the paper for school, you file away completed work and sort and organise all of the papers you are given.
• You do the same with your digital resources: well named folders and logical filing structures. You do a back-up on a regular basis.
• When you are given an assessment task you make a plan for when you will do the work for this task and you adjust the plan along the way as things change.

3. THINK AHEAD: Part of ‘stepping up’ is that you don’t just wait for someone to tell you to do something. You think ahead and work strategically.

This means:

• If you know there will be exams (and there are always exams) then don’t wait until exam time to get your act together. Make your study notes as you go. Every time you finish a topic make study notes for that topic and file it away at home.
• Make your study notes as you go. Don’t fall too far behind. Yes I know I have already said this, but it is so important I am saying it twice. Keep improving and condensing your notes throughout the year.
• In fact it needs to be said three times. Keep up to date in your study notes. Worst case scenario - catch up every school holidays.

4. STRIVE FOR EXCELLENCE: You want to be able to differentiate yourself from all of the other students, so think what you can do to make your work stand out from the crowd.

This means:

• You take the time to be thorough when working on essays and assignments. This means lots of planning and brainstorming to start and then multiple drafts over a period of time for editing and proofing (it’s good to give the subconscious time to process and evaluate between drafts).
• You look for additional source material, you read widely and you do more than what is asked of you. But you ensure that in specific tasks you are focused on answering the question and providing depth to your response.
• You make the most of any feedback you are given (either along the way or after the task) to make adjustments to your approach to your work to improve your outcomes.

5. STUDY SMART: Many students are incredibly ineffective in the way they study. They just stare into their books hoping what they need to learn will magically jump into their heads. If you aren’t doing it yet, then it is time to study smart.
This means:

- You test yourself over and over on the material you need to be able to recall in exams. You don’t just read it and hope you will be able to remember it.
- You then check for understanding, are you able to apply the information you have in your head to different types of questions? To do this you do as many practice questions and past examination papers as you can. You get hold of as many different questions as possible to do as practise.
- You do these past papers under examination conditions! This means that you stick to the time limits and don’t look at notes or answers until the end. This gives you a reality check about your performance and helps you rehearse for the time pressure of exams. You use these practise papers as a tool to help you pinpoint areas of weakness that you then address.

You can learn more about how to be a more effective student at www.studyskillshandbook.com.au by logging in with the details below and working through some of the units:

Username: forstgregsonly
Password: 60results

Dr Prue Salter - Enhanced Learning Educational Services