

# The study tips listed on this page are from [www.how-to-study.com](http://www.how-to-study.com)



## Preparing to Study: A Good Study Place

If you can answer yes to all the following questions your study area encourages great concentration.

### 1. Is my Study Place available to me whenever I need it?

Your Study Place does you little good if you cannot use it when you need it. If you are using a Study Place that you must share with others for any reason, work out a schedule so that you know when you can use it.

### 2. Is my Study Place free from interruptions?

It is important to have uninterrupted study time. You may have to hang a DO NOT DISTURB sign on the door or take the phone off the hook.

### 3. Is my Study Place free from distractions?

Research shows that most students study best in a quiet environment. If you find that playing a stereo or TV improves your mood, keep the volume low.

### 4. Does my Study Place contain all the study materials I need?

Be sure your Study Place includes reference sources and supplies such as pens and pencils, paper, ruler, calculator, and whatever else you might need. If you use a computer for your schoolwork, it should be in your Study Place.

### 5. Does my Study Space contain a large enough desk or table?

While working on an assignment or studying for a test, use a desk or table that is large enough to hold everything you need. Allow enough room for writing and try to avoid clutter.

### 6. Does my Study Place have enough storage space?

You need enough room to store your study materials. Be sure you have enough storage space to allow you to keep your desktop or other work surface clear of unnecessary materials that can get in the way.

### 7. Does my Study Place have a comfortable chair?

A chair that is not comfortable can cause discomfort or pain that will interfere with your studying. A chair that is too comfortable might make you sleepy. Select a chair in which you can sit for long periods while maintaining your attention.

### 8. Does my Study Place have enough light?

The amount of light you need depends on what you are doing. The important thing is that you can clearly see what you need to see without any strain or discomfort.

### 9. Does my Study Place have a comfortable temperature?

If your Study Place is too warm, you might become sleepy. If it is too cold, your thinking may slow down and become unclear. Select a temperature at which your mind and body function best.

**A good study place is important for good studying.**



# Taking Notes in Class

In classes, your teachers will talk about topics that you are studying. The information they provide will be important for you to know when you take tests. You must be able to take good written notes from what your teachers say.

Taking good notes is a three-stage process in which there are certain things you should do **before** class, **during** class, and **after** class. Here are the three stages of note taking and what you should do during each stage.

## 1. Get Ready to Take Notes (Before Class)

- Review your notes from the previous class session before you come to class. This will help you remember what was covered and get you ready to understand new information your teacher provides.
- Complete all assigned readings before you come to class. Your teacher will expect that you have done this and will use and build upon this information.
- Bring all note taking materials with you to class. Have several pens and pencils as well as your notebook.

## 2. Take Notes (During Class)

- Keep your attention focused on what your teacher is saying. Listen for “signal statements” that tell you that what your teacher is about to say is important to write in your notes. Examples of signal statements are “The most important point...” and “Remember that . . . ” Be sure to include in your notes information that your teacher repeats or writes on the chalkboard.
- Write quickly so that you can include all the important information in your notes. Do this by writing abbreviated words such as med for medicine, using symbols such as % for percent, and writing short sentences.
- Place a question mark (?) next to information you write in your notes, but about whose meaning you are not sure.

## 3. Rewrite Your Notes (After Class)

- Rewrite your notes to make them more complete by changing abbreviated words into whole words, symbols into words, and shortened sentences into longer sentences.
- Make your notes more accurate by answering any questions you had when writing your notes in class. Use your textbook and reference sources to obtain the information you need to answer your questions. If necessary, ask your teacher or other students for help.
- Check with other students to be sure you did not leave out important information.

Having good class notes will help you to be better prepared for tests.



# Your Preferred Learning Style

A learning style is a way of learning. YOUR preferred learning style is the way in which YOU learn best. Three learning styles that are often identified in students are the **Auditory Learning Style**, the **Visual Learning Style**, and the **Tactile/Kinesthetic Learning Style**. Read about each of these learning styles to identify YOUR preferred learning style.

## Are you an Auditory Learner?

Auditory Learners learn best when information is presented in an auditory language format. Do you seem to learn best in classes that emphasize teacher lectures and class discussions? Does listening to audiotapes help you learn better? Do you find yourself reading aloud or talking things out to gain better understanding? If YES, you are probably an Auditory Learner.

## Are you a Visual Learner?

Visual Learners learn best when information is presented in a written language format or in another visual format such as pictures or diagrams. Do you do best in classes in which teachers do a lot of writing at the chalkboard, provide clear handouts, and make extensive use of an overhead projector? Do you try to remember information by creating pictures in your mind? Do you take detailed written notes from your textbooks and in class? If YES, you are probably a Visual Learner.

## Are you a Tactile/Kinesthetic Learner?

Tactile/Kinesthetic Learners learn best in hands-on learning settings in which they can physically manipulate something in order to learn about it. Do you learn best when you can move about and handle things? Do you do well in classes in which there is a lab component? Do you learn better when you have an actual object in your hands rather than a picture of the object or a verbal or written description of it? If YES, you are probably a Tactile/Kinesthetic Learner.

**Your learning style is your strength.** Go with it whenever you can. When you can choose a class, try to choose one that draws heaviest on your learning style. When you can choose a teacher, try to choose one whose teaching method best matches your learning style. When you choose a major and future career, keep your learning style firmly in mind.



## The RQWQCQ Strategy for Solving Math Word Problems

RQWQCQ is a good strategy to use when solving math word problems. Each of the letters in RQWQCQ stands for a step in the strategy.

### **Read**

Read the entire problem to learn what it is about. You may find it helpful to read the problem out loud, form a picture of the problem in your mind, or draw a picture of the problem.

### **Question**

Find the question to be answered in the problem. Often the question is directly stated. When it is not stated, you will have to identify the question to be answered.

### **Write**

Write the facts you need to answer the question. It is helpful to cross out any facts presented in the problem that are not needed to answer the question. Sometimes, all of facts presented in the problem are needed to answer the question.

### **Question**

Ask yourself “ What computations must I do to answer the question?”

### **Compute**

Set up the problem on paper and do the computations. Check your computations for accuracy and make any needed corrections. Once you have done this, circle your answer.

### **Question**

Look at your answer and ask yourself: “ Is my answer possible?” You may find that your answer is not possible because it does not fit with the facts presented in the problem. When this happens, go back through the steps of RQWQCQ until you arrive at an answer that is possible.

**Use RQWQCQ to help you correctly solve math word problems.**



# The DETER Strategy for Taking Tests

To do well on a test, you must have good knowledge of the information that is being tested. But you must also have a strategy for taking the test that allows you to show what you know. The DETER strategy can help you do your best on any test. Each letter in DETER reminds you what to do.

## **D = Directions**

- Read the test directions very carefully.
- Ask your teacher to explain anything about the test directions you do not understand.
- Only by following the directions can you achieve a good score on the test.
- If you do not follow the directions, you will not be able to demonstrate what you know.

## **E = Examine**

- Examine the entire test to see how much you have to do.
- Only by knowing the entire task can you break it down into parts that become manageable for you.

## **T = Time**

- Once you have examined the entire test, decide how much time you will spend on each item.
- If there are different points for items, plan to spend the most time on the items that count for the most points.
- Planning your time is especially important for essay tests where you must avoid spending so much time on one item that you have little time left for other test items.

## **E = Easiest**

- The second **E** in DETER reminds you to answer the items you find easiest first.
- If you get stuck on a difficult item that comes up early in the test, you may not get to answer items that test things you know.

## **R = Review**

- If you have planned your time correctly, you will have time to review your answers and make them as complete and accurate as possible.
- Also make sure to review the test directions to be certain you have answered all items required.

**Using the DETER strategy will help you do better on tests and get better grades.**



# Reading Comprehension: The REDW Strategy for Finding Main Ideas

REDW is a good strategy to use to find the main idea in each paragraph of a reading assignment. Using this strategy will help you comprehend the information contained in your assignment. Each of the letters in REDW stands for a step in the strategy.

## **Read**

Read the entire paragraph to get an idea of what the paragraph is about. You may find it helpful to whisper the words as you read or to form a picture in your mind of what you are reading. Once you have a general idea of what the paragraph is about, go on to the next step.

## **Examine**

Examine each sentence in the paragraph to identify the important words that tell what the sentence is about. Ignore the words that are not needed to tell what the sentence is about. If you are allowed to, draw a line through the words to be ignored. For each sentence, write on a sheet of paper the words that tell what the sentence is about.

## **Decide**

Reread the words you wrote for each sentence in the paragraph. Decide which sentence contains the words you wrote that best describe the main idea of the paragraph. These words are the main idea of the paragraph. The sentence that contains these words is the topic sentence. The other words you wrote are the supporting details for the main idea.

## **Write**

Write the main idea for each paragraph in your notebook. This will provide you with a written record of the most important ideas you learned. This written record will be helpful if you have to take a test that covers the reading assignment.

**Use REDW to help you understand the information in your reading assignments.**

# Using Acronyms to Remember Information

Forming an acronym is a good strategy to use to remember information in any order that can be remembered. An acronym is a word that is formed from the first letter of each fact to be remembered. It can be a real word or a nonsense word you are able to pronounce.

Here is how to form an acronym.

- Write the facts you need to remember.
- Underline the first letter of each fact. If there is more than one word in a fact, underline the first letter of only the first word in the fact.
- Arrange the underlined letters to form an acronym that is a real word or a nonsense word you can pronounce.

“HOMES” is an example of an acronym that is a real word you can use to remember the names of the five Great Lakes: Michigan, Erie, Superior, Ontario, Huron: In HOMES, **H** is the first letter of Huron and helps you remember that name; **O** is the first letter of Ontario, and so on.

“Talk” is an acronym that can be used to remember the following animals: tiger, lion, elephant, kangaroo. “Talk” is not a real word, but you can easily pronounce it. You could also have used “kelt” as an acronym. Notice that in this example, you cannot form a real word using the first letter of each fact to be remembered.

Sometimes two or more of the facts you must remember each begin with the same first letter. For example, the acronym “capp” can be used to remember the following fruits: pear, apple, peach, cherry. You can use the first letter “p” in the acronym to remember either “pear” or “peach” and the second letter “p” to remember the other.

Use the acronym strategy as a way to remember information.



# Managing Your Study Time

There are only so many hours in a day, a week, and a term. You cannot change the number of hours, but you can decide how to best use them. To be successful in school, you must carefully manage your study time. Here is a strategy for doing this.

At the beginning of a **term**, prepare a **Term Calendar**. Update it as the term goes on. Here is what to do to prepare a Term Calendar.

- Record your school assignments with their due dates and your scheduled tests.
- Record your planned school activities.
- Record your known out-of-school activities.

Each Sunday before a school **week**, prepare a **Weekly Schedule**. Update it as the week goes on. Here is what to do to prepare a Weekly Schedule.

- Record your daily classes.
- Enter things to be done for the coming week from your Term Calendar.
- Review your class notes from the previous week to see if you need to add any school activities.
- Add any out-of-school activities in which you will be involved during the week.
- Be sure to include times for completing assignments, working on projects, and studying for tests. These times may be during the school day, right after school, evenings, and weekends.

Each evening before a school **day**, prepare a **Daily Organizer** for the next day. Place a  $\checkmark$  next to each thing to do as you accomplish it. Here is what to do to prepare a Daily Organizer.

- Enter the things to do for the coming day from your Weekly Schedule.
- Enter the things that still need to be accomplished from your Daily Organizer from the previous day.
- Review your class notes for the day just completed to see if you need to add any school activities. Add any out-of-school activities in which you will be involved the next day.

Your Weekly Schedule should have more detail than your Term Calendar. Your Daily Organizer should have more detail than your Weekly Schedule. Using a Term Calendar, a Weekly Schedule, and a Daily Organizer will help you make the best use of your time.



# Writing Techniques

Writing is an important form of communication. Good writers use different writing techniques to fit their purpose for writing. To be a good writer, you must master each of the following writing techniques.

## 1. Description

Through **description**, a writer helps the reader use the senses of feeling, seeing, hearing, smelling, and tasting to experience what the writer experiences. Description helps the reader more clearly understand the people, places, and things about which the writer is writing. It is the most common form of writing. You will find descriptive writing in newspapers, magazines, books, and most other forms of written communication.

## 2. Exposition

Through **exposition**, a writer informs, explains, and clarifies his/her ideas and thoughts. Exposition goes beyond description to help the reader understand with greater clarity and depth the ideas and thoughts of the writer. Expository writing, like descriptive writing, is commonly found in newspapers, magazines, books, and most other forms of written communication.

## 3. Narration

Through **narration**, a writer tells a story. A story has characters, a setting, a time, a problem, attempts at solving the problem, and a solution to the problem. Bedtime stories are examples of short stories while novels are examples of long stories. The scripts written for movies and plays are further examples of narrative writing.

## 4. Persuasion

Through **persuasion**, a writer tries to change a reader's point of view on a topic, subject, or position. The writer presents facts and opinions to get the reader to understand why something is right, wrong, or in between. Editorials, letters to the editor in newspapers and magazines, and the text for a political speech are examples of persuasive writing.

## 5. Comparison and Contrast

Through **comparison and contrast**, a writer points out the similarities and differences about a topic. Comparison is used to show what is alike or in common. Contrast is used to show what is not alike or not in common. Describing living conditions in 1900 and living conditions today would allow for much comparison and contrast.

By using the writing technique that fits your purpose, you will be able to communicate your ideas effectively.



# Good Listening In Class

It is important for you to be a good listener in class. Much of what you will have to learn will be presented verbally by your teachers. Just hearing what your teachers say is not the same as listening to what they say. Listening is a cognitive act that requires you to pay attention and think about and mentally process what you hear

Here are some things you should do to be a good listener in class.

**Be Cognitively Ready to Listen When You Come to Class.** Make sure you complete all assigned work and readings. Review your notes from previous class sessions. Think about what you know about the topic that will be covered in class that day.

**Be Emotionally Ready to Listen When You Come to Class.** Your attitude is important. Make a conscious choice to find the topic useful and interesting. Be committed to learning all that you can.

**Listen with a Purpose.** Identify what you expect and hope to learn from the class session. Listen for these things as your teacher talks.

**Listen with an Open Mind.** Be receptive to what your teacher says. It is good to question what is said as long as you remain open to points of view other than your own.

**Be Attentive.** Focus on what your teacher is saying. Try not to daydream and let your mind wander to other things. It helps to sit in the front and center of the class, and to maintain eye contact with your teacher.

**Be an Active Listener.** You can think faster than your teacher can speak. Use this to your advantage by evaluating what is being said and trying to anticipate what will be said next. Take good written notes about what your teacher says. While you can think faster than your teacher can speak, you cannot write faster than your teacher can speak. Taking notes requires you to make decisions about what to write, and you have to be an active listener to do this.

**Meet the Challenge.** Don't give up and stop listening when you find the information being presented difficult to understand. Listen even more carefully at these times and work hard to understand what is being said. Don't be reluctant to ask questions.

**Triumph Over the Environment.** The classroom may too noisy, too hot, too cold, too bright, or too dark. Don't give in to these inconveniences. Stay focused on the big picture - LEARNING.

**Visit [www.how-to-study.com](http://www.how-to-study.com) to see other study skills.**