

ESSENTIAL STUDY SKILLS

MARK PENNINGTON



56 TEACHER
OR SELF-
GUIDED
LESSONS



PERSONAL
ASSESSMENTS,
STUDY SKILLS,
AND
REFLECTION



Essential Study Skills

(What Every Student
Should Know)

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Pennington Publishing
El Dorado Hills, CA

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Printed in the United States of America

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Mark Pennington
Pennington Publishing

Essential Study Skills

(What Every Student Should Know)

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Self-Assessment and Mastery Matrix

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Introduction from the Author's Children

From a child's point of view, there are advantages and disadvantages to having a teacher as a parent. The time off certainly provides plenty of options for family activities. However, that additional time also means plenty of opportunities for learning and character development.

In our household, Dad was the teacher, and he had three sons: Matt, Ryan, and Kenny. So, this meant plenty of sports and outdoor adventures. This also meant that we were given a choice every summer: 4 hours of summer school each day at the nearby public school or 90 minutes of daily supervised instruction at home. It was not much of a choice. Each summer we chose the option that Dad affectionately labeled *Essential Study Skills*.

Our *Essential Study Skills* consisted of 30 minutes reading, 30 minutes writing, and 30 minutes study skills lessons designed to teach us everything that our regular teachers "did not have the time" to teach us during the school year. We did our 90 minutes work 5 days a week, for the entire summer. Did we love this daily work? No, it was *work*. As Ryan recently commented, "Hated it then; respect it now."

Thinking back, we did learn quite a few useful skills each summer. The study skills were especially helpful, and to this day, we don't understand why these are not taught and re-taught to mastery during the regular school year by *regular teachers*. Maybe these study skills are not introduced because teachers assume that most are simply common sense and do not need instruction. Or maybe each teacher thinks that *some other teacher* should teach them or has already taught them. **From our experience, study skills are not caught, but must be taught.**

Dad's *Essential Study Skills* lessons were designed for independent work with the same easy-to-follow lesson format for all 56 lessons:

1. Personal Assessment 2. Study Skill Lesson and 3. Reflection. The teacher may decide to read and guide students through the lesson or students can do so by themselves. Make sure to remind students to check out the online links! Following the lesson, the teacher can debrief, or students can do so on their own, with the **Reflection**.

These lessons are perfect for **self-guided independent learning and practice** during small group instruction, as part of a study skills, test prep, advisory/advocacy/homeroom, opportunity, independent living, life skills, or leadership class or period. The Teacher/Parent Review section in each lesson provides the student with the opportunity to discuss the lesson with an adult.

We are certain that your students will benefit from these lessons just as we did. Oh, and of course, our dad added more lessons to his program as he learned and taught elementary, middle school, high school, and community college over the years. Especially helpful additions, now that we are out of school and working, are the **executive function skill lessons**. Sure wish we had learned these skills *back in the day*.

Matt, Ryan, and Kenny Pennington
Summer 2009, Updated Winter 2017

Student Directions

The 56 lessons in this program will help you learn what every student should know. Mastering these study skills and executive function skills will help you become a better student, and the benefits are worth the effort.

You will spend less time, but accomplish *more* in your homework and study. Your test study will be more productive. Your reading comprehension and retention (what you remember) will improve. Your mastery of vocabulary, grammar, spelling, and punctuation will positively affect your writing, and essays will be easier to plan and complete. Your research skills will help you choose better textual evidence. You will memorize better and forget less. Your schoolwork will seem easier and will be much more enjoyable. Lastly, you should earn better grades.

Directions

First, find out *what you know* and *do not yet know* by taking the **Study Skills and Executive Function Skills Self-Assessment**. Each test item requires a “Yes,” “Somewhat,” or “No” answer. After completing the test, mark a slash (/) for each “Somewhat” or “No” answer on the mastery matrix. Leave “Yes” answers blank. Use the matrix to monitor your progress by changing the slash to an **X** when you have completed the self-guided **Personal Assessment, Study Skills Lesson, and Reflection** lesson.

1. Take the five-question **Personal Assessment** and total the points. Read the results and think about whether the results accurately reflect your knowledge and practice of the content or skill you are about to learn. Each assessment is an important preview of the lesson which follows.
2. Read the **lesson** carefully and follow directions. Take the time and make the effort to learn. Take marginal annotations (notes), such as the following, to respond to the lesson. Your teacher will be able to evaluate your effort by reading these annotations.

8 Great Marginal Annotations to Improve Reading Comprehension

1. Write **definitions** provided in the text or those which you research.
 2. **Star** main ideas and **bullet point** key details. **List and number** examples.
 3. Write a **question mark** for confusing sections to re-read or ask your teacher about.
 4. **[Bracket]** sections and comment with criticisms, praises, insights, interpretations, ways to re-think the author’s idea, and questions.
 5. **Summarize** reading sections.
 6. Connect related ideas within the text with **arrows**, and **comment** on connections to other texts or sources, including relevant personal experiences.
 7. **Write specific predictions** and check as you continue reading.
 8. **Highlight** textual evidence which you may use in a related assignment or in class discussion of the reading.
3. Complete the **Reflection**. The format is the same for each lesson, but each lesson requires different responses. Ask your parent or teacher review to discuss the lesson with you.

How to Get Motivated Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. To get motivated to do something I don't want to do, I just get started and don't stop until it's done.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I set goals for myself to get motivated to accomplish tasks that I don't want to do.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. When I reach my goals, I celebrate my achievements.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I try my best, even on tasks that I don't want to do.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I get expert help to show me how to accomplish tasks which I feel unmotivated to complete.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

- 23-25 You know all the key strategies that allow you to motivate yourself to do things that you do not want to do.
- 20-22 You know most of the key strategies that allow you to motivate yourself to do things that you do not want to do.
- 17-19 You know some of the key strategies that allow you to motivate yourself to do things that you do not want to do.
- 13-16 You know few of the key strategies that allow you to motivate yourself to do things that you do not want to do. Knowing these strategies will get you motivated.
- <13 You do not know the key strategies that allow you to motivate yourself to do things that you do not want to do. Knowing these strategies will get you motivated.

Already Know: What I already know about getting motivated is _____

Want to Know: What I want to know about getting motivated is _____

How to Get Motivated Lesson

It's easy to get motivated to do something you enjoy. If your parents announce plans to go out to your favorite restaurant, it isn't hard to get excited about that doing that task. However, it's harder to get motivated to do something that you do *not* enjoy. If your parents announce plans to go to visit your least favorite relative, it is hard to get excited about doing that task. The trick is to learn how to self-motivate to accomplish the things that you do not enjoy. Learning and applying the steps of **The Motivation Cycle** will help you achieve your goals and feel good about your accomplishments. Fill in the blanks in the graphic as you read this lesson.



Step 1 Practice

The only way to get motivated to complete a task is by starting on that task through effective practice. Effective practice means to do things repeatedly *the right way*. To find out *what* the best practice is and *how* to do it, you need to consult an expert. Teachers, parents, or friends who are successful at the task can be excellent coaches. Famous basketball star, Michael Jordan, said that he started listening to his coaches in high school after failing to make the varsity team in his freshman year. *How* you practice is just as important as *how much* you practice.

Step 2 Achievement

As you continue practice, you will begin to see results. It may take a while to reach your goal. If you haven't done any homework all year in Math, it will take some time to improve your grade and catch up on missing skills. If you do not experience achievement after a reasonable amount of time, ask for help and adjust your practice. Michael Jordan made the varsity the next year.

Step 3 Satisfaction

Once you start experiencing achievement, you start feeling good about yourself and your accomplishments. In fact, this sense of personal satisfaction, which is connected to the goal, will increase your motivation to continue practicing. When people sense that there is a "pay-out," they will continue to work well. I'd say Michael Jordan must have felt plenty of satisfaction with his personal achievements, and I'd say that he probably did not mind the continued practice.

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Prevent Procrastination Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. I avoid procrastination (postponing work).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I know why I procrastinate.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I start projects immediately when they are assigned.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. If I skip a day working on a long-term project, I double-up work the very next day.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Before beginning work on long-term projects, I divide up tasks and write them down.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

- 23-25 You know all the strategies to help you prevent procrastination.
- 20-22 You know many of the strategies to help you prevent procrastination.
- 17-19 You know some of the strategies to help you prevent procrastination.
- 13-16 You know few of the strategies to help you prevent procrastination. Learn the procrastination prevention strategies to help you get started and complete projects.
- <13 You don't know the strategies to help you prevent procrastination. Learn the procrastination prevention strategies to help you get started and complete projects.

Already Know: What I already know about how to avoid procrastination is _____

Want to Know: What I want to know about how to avoid procrastination is _____

How to Prevent Procrastination Lesson

To avoid procrastination, learn how to develop a **Procrastination Prevention Plan**. Remember what adults always say? “Procrastination means to put off until tomorrow what you could be doing today.” Of course, they are right, but do you know the strategies to develop a plan that will help replace your bad habits with good ones? Here is a workable plan with the strategies to help you learn how to avoid procrastination.

But first, take a moment to figure out *why* you are procrastinating. People usually procrastinate for one of these reasons:

1. “I don’t want to do it.” The goal may be difficult and take significant effort or time. Or you might be just plain rebellious or lazy.
2. “It’s not worth it.” The pay-off for achieving the goal may not be considered worth the effort.
3. “It just doesn’t feel right.” You might think that it isn’t the right time or set of circumstances to begin. You might be waiting for the magic fairy to make you want to get started.
4. “I might fail or succeed.” You might be reminded of a past failure or even a past success which creates future expectations.
5. “It’s someone else’s responsibility or fault.” Playing the blame game can certainly prevent you from taking personal responsibility and action.

Which reasons listed above are the ones that influence you to avoid getting started on long-term school projects, extra-curricular (outside of school) commitments, or family responsibilities? List a few of your recent procrastinations and identify which of the reasons above were most responsible for your delays in getting started on the projects.

Procrastination _____ Reasons _____

Procrastination _____ Reasons _____

Procrastination _____ Reasons _____

To avoid procrastinating on long-term school projects, follow these proven steps:

The Procrastination Prevention Plan

1. Get started on your project as soon as it is assigned—that very day.
2. Start small. The longest journey begins with a single step, but you must take that step.
3. Keep at it! Do something on the project every day until it is finished. An object at rest tends to stay at rest. However, an object in motion tends to stay in motion.
4. If you miss a planned workday, double-up your work on the project on the very next day.
5. Divide up the project sub-tasks so that you have a day off, say once per week. Plan your timeline to finish the project early. Celebrate with rewards if the project is completed early. Get your parents on board with the rewards.

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Set Goals Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. I write down short and long-term goals that I wish to accomplish.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. When I set goals, I share them with people who will ask me about my progress toward these goals.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. When I set goals, I seek out experts to help guide me toward the successful completion of these goals.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. When I set goals, I set rewards to motivate my efforts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. After I achieve, or fail to achieve my goals, I evaluate what worked and what did not.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

- 23-25 You brainstorm and write down both long-term and short-term goals, monitor your progress, and evaluate your successes or failures.
- 20-22 You brainstorm and write down goals often.
- 17-19 You sometimes brainstorm and write down goals.
- 13-16 Sometimes you brainstorm goals. Goal-setting will increase motivation and success. Learn the strategies to set, monitor, and evaluate goals and you will improve achievement.
- <13 You don't set goals for yourself. Goal-setting will increase motivation and success. Learn the strategies to set, monitor, and evaluate goals and you will improve achievement.

Already Know: What I already know about how to set goals is _____

Want to Know: What I want to know about how to set goals is _____

How to Set Goals Lesson

Learning how to set goals is important for schoolwork and for life. It's not just a matter of saying "I'm going to do it." It's also a matter of realistic expectations and effective planning. Following is a helpful list of how to set goals that you will be able to achieve.

1. First, set a **well-defined goal** that is realistic. your goal to one task that is achievable. Rome wasn't built in a day. It takes time to implement any plan and achieve success. For example, if you were earning a D grade after nine weeks in a math class, it would probably not be realistic to expect that grade to rise to an A within the next two weeks, no matter the extent of your efforts. A much more realistic goal would be to raise that grade to a C within that time period. It takes a while to dig yourself out of a ditch that you've taken nine weeks to dig.
2. Next, make your goal **specific and measurable**. Write down your goal. General goals rarely effect change. Instead of "My goal is to do better in math," try "My goal is to get a B or better on my math test in two weeks."
3. **Share your goal** with people that will pester you about your progress toward achieving that goal. Ask for their support. For example, tell your math teacher, your best friend, and your parents about the B you plan to achieve.
4. The next step is to **find the expert help** to develop a strategy for achieving your realistic and specific goal. The expert help might be your math teacher in the above example, or a tutor, or a parent, or a friend. Show your written goal to the expert and ask for specific help about what to do first, next, and thereafter. Arrange a time to check-in with the expert soon after you start your plan to evaluate your progress and to ensure that your plan makes sense.
5. After getting expert advice as to how to achieve your goal, **set rewards** before you begin to practice. Everyone works better toward a goal when rewards have been clearly defined. For example, set aside money to purchase a new video game once you have earned that B. Also establish mini-rewards to motivate practice in achieving that goal. For example, set aside a favorite snack to munch on after you have completed the daily practice toward your goal.
6. **Be flexible** and willing to adjust your goal or how you practice achieving that goal. Talk to your expert again if you do not see the progress that you had planned. Sometimes a small tweak in a plan can make all the difference. Thomas Edison failed a thousand times before he was successful the one time that he invented the incandescent light bulb.
7. **Evaluate** once your goal has been reached or not. Celebrate and take your reward if you achieve your goal. If you did not achieve your goal, go back to your expert and brainstorm what went wrong. Set a new goal and begin immediately.

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Develop a Positive Mental Attitude Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. I practice keeping a positive mental attitude.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I delay gratification (something that pleases me) to receive my reward at the most appropriate time.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I tend to spend time with happy people.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I remind myself to practice a positive mental attitude.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I am a thankful person, who expresses appreciation to and compliments others.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

- 23-25 You constantly work at and achieve a positive mental attitude.
- 20-22 You often work at and achieve a positive mental attitude.
- 17-19 You sometimes work at and achieve a positive mental attitude.
- 13-16 You rarely work at and achieve a positive mental attitude. A positive mental attitude is not a feeling; there are strategies to learn how to achieve this attitude.
- <13 You don't work at achieving a positive mental attitude. A positive mental attitude is not a feeling; there are strategies to learn how to achieve this attitude.

Already Know: What I already know about developing a positive mental attitude is...

Want to Know: What I want to know about developing a positive mental attitude is...

How to Develop a Positive Mental Attitude Lesson

Scientific research provides us with some interesting generalizations about people who demonstrate positive mental attitudes. People with positive mental attitudes live healthier and longer lives. They have more friends and longer-lasting marriages. They are wealthier and have better paying and more prestigious jobs.

So, why wouldn't people do everything in their powers to develop positive mental attitudes? One reason may be that the rewards described in the above generalizations are more long-term and less immediate than the short-term and more immediate gratification gained by people with negative mental attitudes.

It is certainly true that whiners and drama queens or kings tend to get immediate attention. This instant gratification releases temporary pleasure-producing endorphins in the brain. Also, it is true to some degree that "misery loves company." Of course, those attracted to negative people tend to be negative people who feed on other's negativity.

So, what strategies can those who want to break out of negative mental attitudes use to develop positive mental attitudes?

Strategies to Develop Positive Mental Attitude

1. Make your positive mental attitude a daily *choice*. A positive mental attitude is not a feeling that you enjoy or come by naturally. Choose to see the glass as being "half-full," rather than "half-empty."
2. Develop an attitude of thankfulness. Others are much less fortunate than you are. Keep focused on everything for which you should be thankful.
3. Express appreciation and compliment often. Focus on giving credit and praise to those who are meaningful in your life. A note of appreciation to a teacher, a friend, or a parent will cheer up both the giver and receiver.
4. Don't let past failures prevent you from taking risks or trying something new. Develop the attitude that "What is past, is past. What is now, is possible with my best effort."
5. Focus on your strengths. You may not be "good" at a certain school subject, but you may be willing to work harder or ask for help.
6. Practice a positive mental attitude and it will soon become a habit, replacing the habit of a negative mental attitude. Keep at it, and the results will come in time.

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Create a Home Study Environment Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. I study in the same place at home each day.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I study where there are no noise distractions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I study at an organized and uncluttered desk.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I concentrate only on my homework during study time.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I feel comfortable, but not too comfortable, in my study environment workplace.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

- 23-25 You already have all the components of an effective study environment.
- 20-22 You already have most of the components of an effective study environment.
- 17-19 You have some of the components of an effective study environment.
- 13-16 You have only a few of the components of an effective study environment. By putting into practice the suggestions in this Study Skill Tip, you will improve the quality of your study environment and enhance your chances of study success.
- <13 You do not have the components of an effective study environment. By putting into practice the suggestions in this Study Skill Tip, you will improve the quality of your study environment and enhance your chances of study success.

Already Know: What I already know about a home study environment is _____

Want to Know: What I want to know about a home study environment is _____

How to Create a Home Study Environment Lesson

We are affected by our surroundings. Where we complete homework and study contributes to or detracts from the quality of our work at home. Follow these tips to learn how to create a productive home study environment.

1. Develop a study environment that works for you. Select a **quiet area** to dedicate to serious study. Learn to associate this place with uninterrupted study and success. Don't float around from place to place during study time.

Where and when is the best place for you to complete work at home? _____

2. **Avoid distractions** in your study environment. Keep your cell phone off and keep anyone or anything that will compete for your concentration out of that environment. Get help from others, such as parents, to support uninterrupted study time.

What and whom are your greatest distractions during study time at home? _____

What can you do about these distractions? _____

3. Unlearn poor study skills. For example, studying with the television or music as background may be something that you have always done; however, **sound competes with concentration**. Turn off these competing inputs during homework time.

What poor study skills do you have, if any? _____

4. Study on an uncluttered desk or table with good lighting and a straight-back chair. The study environment should be **business-like**, not overly comfortable.

What, if anything, could be improved? _____

5. Have study materials on or **next to your study area** so that you don't have to interrupt study time to locate these items. Keep sharpened pencils, pens, paper, and books convenient to your study area.

Which study materials and supplies do you need to add to your study area?

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Get Organized for Homework Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. I write down everything I need to do for homework in my student planner.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. My backpack is perfectly organized, and I check what I need to bring home before school is over each day.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. My binder is perfectly organized and I put everything in its proper place throughout the school day.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I study each day whether I have written work due the next day or not.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. The first thing I do when I get home is to open up my student planner.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

- 23-25 You already have all the components of effective homework organization.
- 20-22 You already have most of the components of effective homework organization.
- 17-19 You have some of the components of effective homework organization.
- 13-16 You have only a few of the components of effective homework organization. By putting into practice the suggestions in this Study Skill Tip, you will improve the quality of your homework and enhance your chances of study success.
- <13 You do not have the components of effective homework organization. By putting into practice the suggestions in this Study Skill Tip, you will improve the quality of your study environment and enhance your chances of study success.

Already Know: What I already know about effective homework organization is...

Want to Know: What I want to know about effective homework organization is...

How to Get Organized for Homework Lesson

Getting organized for homework doesn't start at home. It starts at school and if you think about it: YOU HAVE HOMEWORK EVERY DAY. Homework usually consists of the following:

- Finish up work begun in class
- Independent practice
- A long-term project
- Test study
- Independent reading
- Extra credit (Ask for it!)

Check out these tips to organize and plan your homework time:

1. Organize your homework throughout the day. When your teacher announces homework for any subject, write as many details as possible regarding the work in your student planner. Write an estimate of how much time each task will take and which books, worksheets, or supplies from school you need to bring home. Your student planner is your lifeline. Use it to write down everything that will be hard to remember at home.
2. Make sure that you understand any oral or written directions. Ask the teacher if you are not perfectly clear about the directions and if you need more help understanding what you need to do on your own. Don't hope that you will figure it out later or rely upon your parents for help.
3. Use a three-ring binder and keep a three-hole punch in your backpack to secure any worksheets and resources that your teacher provides. Ask your teacher or teachers how to best organize everything you will need to keep for each subject. Use labeled subject dividers for your classes and always place papers in their proper places, no matter how much time it takes. A worksheet stuffed in the binder folder or in a pocket of your backpack will often get lost. If possible, place every paper worksheet or resource that you will need for homework in one place in your binder. Include any notices, flyers, or letters sent home to your parents in this section.
4. Never throw anything away. If the teacher says to do so, take the work home and keep it in a drawer, storage box, or the closet. You may find you will need it after all.
5. Neatly organized your backpack. Good backpacks (I recommend rolling backpacks to take the weight off your back) will have multiple compartments. Use these compartments to organize what you need for school. A separate pen and pencil box with erasers, extra lead, a ruler, small three-hole punch, small stapler, and glue stick should go in a separate compartment. Keep books in the large compartment, inside plastic bags during the rainy season. Keep your student planner and binder or binders in another compartment. Invite your parents to inspect your backpack and do a Sunday night binder and backpack dump, just in case papers are not in their proper places.
6. Homework is also study. A little study every night for upcoming tests is smarter than a lot of cramming the night before a test. The same is true for long-term projects.
7. As soon as you get home, open your student planner to begin organizing your homework plan.

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Complete a Daily Review Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. I review notes and worksheets daily at home.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I take notes on assigned reading.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I study daily, even when there is no required written work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Each day I organize things that I have learned in class in memorable forms.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Each day I write possible test questions from things that I learned that day in class.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

- 23-25 You already have the key practices of the Daily Review mastered.
- 20-22 You already have many of the key practices of the Daily Review mastered.
- 17-19 You have some of the key practices of the Daily Review mastered.
- 13-16 You have a few of the key practices of the Daily Review mastered. Learning and practicing the components of the Daily Review will improve your learning and grades.
- <13 You do not practice the key components of the Daily Review. Learning and practicing these components will improve your learning and grades.

Already Know: What I already know about practicing a daily review of class work is...

Want to Know: What I want to know about practicing a daily review of class work is...

How to Complete a Daily Review Lesson

Review and Respond to Notes and Class Work

Every day after school at the beginning of your homework time, complete a ten-minute review of any notes, worksheets, and assignments that you worked on in class that day. This review interrupts the “forgetting cycle” and will help you prepare in advance for tests. Students remember up to 70% of new information if that information is practiced and placed into the long-term memory within the first 24 hours after first learning that information. The level of retention drops to only 10% after one week. So, plan your study schedule to have a study review time soon after school every day. A little bit of test preparation and study with a **Daily Review** will actually save you time studying the night before the test.

Purchase a spiral-bound notebook for each of your school subjects or classes. Label each notebook, according to the subject. Write the date of your **Daily Review** at the top of page and list the key areas of focus for that subject or class on that day. Write possible test questions and memory tricks to remember key ideas and details for the most important content learned that day on small sticky notes and arrange them on the **Daily Review** page. A few nights before an upcoming test, you can transfer the sticky notes to a study sheet and use them to create a practice test. Also, don't forget sticky notes that you used to take marginal annotations on worksheets, articles, and from your textbook.

A Few Tips for Writing Memorable Sticky Notes

1. People remember information best when that information is organized in a structured manner.

Tip: Organize your sticky notes into distinctly memorable patterns. Try general to specific, alphabetical, and chronological patterns. Color code categories with different color stickies. For example, if you are studying the explorers you could use blue for people, yellow for their countries, green for their areas of exploration, and pink for their accomplishments.

2. People remember information that is connected to visual imagery.

Tip: Draw out quick graphics or picture representations of key ideas on your stickies.

3. People remember events and information that are made exciting, interesting, or even embarrassing.

Tip: Personalize what you are trying to remember to keep things more memorable on your stickies. Relate the information that you want to remember to events and people in your own life.

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Manage Time for Homework Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. I coordinate (plan) my homework and study schedule with my family.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I start homework as soon as I get home.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I use my student planner to plan an order of study.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Before I begin, I plan study breaks, rewards, and study task estimates.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I begin each session with a daily review of all my schoolwork.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

- 23-25 You already have the key practices of the homework time management mastered.
- 20-22 You already have many of the key practices of homework time management mastered.
- 17-19 You have some of the key practices of homework time management mastered.
- 13-16 You have a few of the key practices of homework time management mastered. Learning and practicing the components of homework time management will improve your learning and grades.
- <13 You do not practice the key components of homework time management. Learning and practicing these components will improve your learning and grades.

Already Know: What I already know about homework time management is _____

Want to Know: What I want to know about homework time management is _____

How to Manage Time for Homework Lesson

1. Your personal schedule is not the only schedule in your family. Your parents and siblings have their own schedules, too. Their schedules affect your homework schedule. To set aside the amount of time you need to complete homework and study, you all need to communicate those schedules with each other. **A few tips for family schedules work well:** Some families post an erasable whiteboard in a common meeting area, such as the kitchen or a family room with upcoming appointments, chores, meetings, project due-dates, etc. Others post this information on a family calendar. If you have a cell phone, tablet, or desktop, you can sync family calendar events. Develop a plan with your parents that works for your homework and family's schedule.
2. **Be flexible.** Despite your best efforts with family communication, things do change. You may have to babysit or visit grandma unexpectedly. Have a workable back-up plan to handle life's interruptions.
3. If possible, start your homework **as soon as you get home.** Open your student planner as soon as you get in the door. Grab a quick snack and do your chores, but get started before you go out with friends, check your social media, play, listen to music, work on a hobby, watch television, play video games, get on the phone, etc. Postpone these fun activities until the work is done. You will enjoy them more, knowing that you have completed your homework.
4. Use a **monthly calendar** to plan out long-term study projects and to write down upcoming tests. Coordinate this calendar with a weekly student agenda or planner and make sure to share these dates and estimates of study time with your family. Remember to plan in study time, and not just reading and written homework time.
5. Develop a **study order** before you begin a study session. Study your hardest subject first when you are fresh. Concentrate your best time on this subject. Do simple or easy study or work at the end of your study time when less concentration is needed.
6. Plan **time estimates** and write these down before you begin to study. Build in a realistic cushion, allotting a bit more time than is expected for each study task. Things do not always go as planned.
7. Plan when to **take study breaks** before you begin. Study breaks should be short (5 minutes), regular (every 30 minutes), and away from your study area. Do something different than your study activity. Make sure to stretch during study breaks. Get up and move around.
8. Establish simple **rewards** in advance to enjoy during a study break. For example, if a snack is calling your name, delay gratification until a planned study break.
9. Begin your homework session with your ten-minute **Daily Review.**

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Choose Books for Independent Reading Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. When not assigned a novel, I read one of my own choice.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. When choosing a novel, I consider one which will improve my reading skills.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. When choosing a novel, I consider choosing a genre or an author with which I am unfamiliar.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. When choosing a novel, I consider the level of vocabulary difficulty.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Besides my schoolwork, I read at least 30 minutes a day.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

23-25	You always choose independent reading books that will increase your reading skills and vocabulary.
20-22	You usually choose independent reading books that will increase your reading skills and vocabulary.
17-19	You sometimes choose independent reading books that will increase your reading skills and vocabulary.
13-16	You rarely choose independent reading books that will increase your reading skills and vocabulary. This lesson will teach you how to do so.
<13	You don't choose independent reading books that will increase your reading skills and vocabulary. This lesson will teach you how to do so.

Already Know: What I already know about choosing and reading the right books is...

Want to Know: What I want to know about choosing and reading the right books is...

How to Choose Books for Independent Reading Lesson

Most elementary and many secondary teachers assign independent reading as part of your homework. Many allow you to choose which books to read. Choose a book that you hope to enjoy, but also one that will improve your reading skills and increase your vocabulary.

To understand how we learn **vocabulary**, it is helpful to examine how children build their bank of words. By age five, children have learned up to a 10,000-word vocabulary through listening. After the first 10,000 most often used words, the rest of the words in the dictionary are rarely used in conversation. The next 20,000 words are known as academic vocabulary and take about twenty years to master, but we don't learn many of these words through listening.

A few interesting facts will prove this point. The first 1,000 words learned by children make up the vast majority of words used by most educated adults on a daily basis. Watching and listening to thirty minutes of *Sesame Street* exposes the viewer to an average of only one word beyond the most often used 1,000 words. Listening to the nightly news for the same amount of time exposes to viewer to only nineteen of these key words (Hayes and Athens).

However, in contrast, reading provides a much higher exposure to words beyond the most frequently used 1,000 words. For example, reading a challenging comic book for 30 minutes exposes the reader to 53 of these words. Reading a challenging book for the same amount of time exposes a reader to 75. So, **reading challenging text certainly provides a greater opportunity to expand your vocabulary** than does listening alone.

According to reading specialists, you should read text that has about 5% of the words that are unknown to you. Reading this level of text will expose most readers to about 300 unknown words in 30 minutes of reading. Learning 5% of these words from the surrounding context clues of the text is realistic. **This means that students will learn about 15 new words during a typical reading session.**

How can you pick a book to read that has 5% unknown words? Word Recognition.

1. Choose a book and count the number of words on any complete page found near the beginning of the book and multiply that number by 3.
2. Read a page toward the beginning of the book, counting the number of unknown words. A good guideline would be "if you can't define it with a synonym, antonym, or example," it is unknown. Then, read a page near the middle of the book and continue the count. Finally, read a page near the end of the book and finish the count.
3. Divide the total number of unknown words by the total number of words found on the three pages. The result will be the percentage of unknown words. **Anything within the 3-7% range is fine. Example:** 230 (words counted on a complete page) x 3 (pages to be read and counted) = 690. The reader finds 35 unknown words on the 3 pages. 35 divided by 690 = .05, or 5%.

Try this formula with the book you are now reading. Is it too easy or too hard? If the book is too easy, find one that is both interesting and challenging for your independent reading.

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Develop Good Reading Habits Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. My reading posture is excellent.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I concentrate completely when I read.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. My attention span when reading is excellent.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I adjust my rate of reading, as necessary.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I understand what I read.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

23-25	You have excellent reading comprehension and few bad silent reading habits.
20-22	Your reading comprehension is good, but you do have a few bad silent reading habits.
17-19	Your reading comprehension needs improvement, as do your silent reading habits. Learning positive reading habits will improve your comprehension.
<13 habits.	Reading comprehension is exceedingly difficult for you due to bad silent reading habits. Learning positive reading habits will improve your comprehension.

Already Know: What I already know about why people have poor reading comprehension and bad silent reading habits is...

Want to Know: What I want to know about bad and good reading habits is...

How to Develop Good Reading Habits Lesson

Many people do not read well because of poor silent reading habits. Correcting these poor reading practices and replacing them with good reading practices will improve reading comprehension. You can become a better reader by practicing these tips.

- 1. Improve your reading posture.** Reading difficult text is not a relaxing activity. Your body position has much to do with how well you understand the text. Reading in bed is wonderful for putting you to sleep, but not for studying. Instead, sit up straight in a straight-backed chair at a desk or table with good lighting and keep your feet flat on the floor. Place two hands on the reading. Keep the distance from eyes to book about the same distance as that of your forearm. Don't angle the book too much so that you can keep your head straight, but do prop up the book on another book or your binder a few inches to maintain the proper angle of vision. Not perfectly comfortable? Good! Reading is not supposed to be relaxing; it is supposed to be stimulating.
- 2. Adjust your reading attitude.** Reading may not be your favorite mental activity, but it is a crucially important study skill. As a child, you learned *to read*. Now, you read *to learn*. Good readers learn more in school and succeed to a greater degree in the workplace. Be realistic and honest with yourself. Are you reading just to tell yourself or others that you did so? Are you reading for in-depth understanding?
- 3. Establish a purpose for your reading and adjust your level of comprehension.** Not everything should be read for the same reading purpose. Reading an article about a favorite movie star does not require the level of comprehension that reading a computer manual does.
- 4. Improve your concentration.** First, silence your phone, get away from the television and computer, and find a quiet room. Anything competing with full concentration reduces reading speed and reading comprehension. Good reading cannot include multi-tasking. Stop taking mental vacations during your reading. For example, never allow yourself a pause at the end of a page or chapter—read on! Minimize daydreaming by forcing yourself to make personal connections with what is going on in the reading. Prompt yourself to quickly return to the text when your mind first begins wandering.
- 5. Improve your reading attention span.** Begin with short, uninterrupted reading sessions with 100% concentration and gradually increase the length of your sessions until you can read for, say 30 minutes. Rome wasn't built in a day and your reading attention span will take time to improve. Take a short, pre-planned break away from your reading area after a reading session. Don't read something else during your break.
- 6. When reading silently, don't pronounce the words in your head and don't move your lips while reading.** These are called *sub-vocalizations*, and they interfere with your understanding of the text. Focus on what the author is trying to say. After all, the purpose of reading is not to say the words; the purpose of reading is to understand the meaning of the text.

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Improve Oral Reading Fluency Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. I concentrate on understanding the text when I read out loud.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I pause at commas and stop at periods when I read out loud.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I read with expression when I read out loud.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I pronounce the words correctly when I read out loud.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I vary my reading speed when I read out loud to adjust to the demands of the text.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

- 23-25 You have excellent oral reading fluency skills and these positively affect your silent reading comprehension.
- 20-22 You have good oral reading fluency skills and these positively affect your silent reading comprehension.
- 17-19 Your oral reading fluency skills need some improvement, because your oral fluency skills affect your silent reading comprehension.
- <13 Your lack of oral reading fluency skills is negatively affecting your silent reading and your comprehension of the text.

Already Know: What I already know about oral reading fluency is _____

Want to Know: What I want to know about oral reading fluency is _____

How to Improve Oral Reading Fluency Lesson

Directions: Read the following article out loud to a partner.

Pets are nice. Pets live with us. They can be good friends. Pets make people happy. They can be very fun.

Some pets are very smart. Many can be trained to do what people say. Pets may come to us when we call. Some can do special tricks. Some even seem to talk to us with a “bark,” a “meow,” or a “chirp.”

Many people enjoy life more with pets. Pets can be good company. Pets can help people feel less lonely. Some pets help us feel better. Pets can even help us get more exercise.

Not all animals make good pets. Most wild animals are afraid of people. Others could be dangerous, like large cats or bears. It would be too hard to care for some animals. They might need a special place to live or special food to eat.

Pets and owners must make a good match. People need to think carefully about some things before getting a pet. A pet owner needs to have a good place for a pet to live. A small apartment may be perfect for a fish or hamster, but not for a large dog or cat. Also, some pets cost more to keep than others. Large pets eat more than small ones, and their cost of medical care can be expensive. People need to consider how much time they will be able to spend with their pets. Pets need plenty of human attention to stay happy.

The most popular pets worldwide are dogs and cats. There are slightly more cats than dogs. Birds, hamsters, turtles, snakes, lizards, and fish are also the pets of choice for many people. In the last few years pets have become more “exotic.” Many people are now keeping ferrets and monkeys as pets. Most local governments have laws restricting which pets are acceptable in their communities.

Pet owners need to be responsible with their pets. Adult pets need to be spayed or neutered to prevent unplanned litters. According to the Humane Society, over three million unwanted pets are put to sleep each year. Also, mixed breed cats and dogs can make wonderful pets. In fact, some of the best pets can be adopted from local animal shelters at little cost. Pets are valuable friends and need our very best care.

Directions: Ask a student partner to listen to reading and to comment on these questions:

1. How was your reading speed? Did you speed up and slow down to make sense of the article?
2. Did you read with good expression, changing your voice up and down as a good speaker would do?
3. Did you pay attention to punctuation, pausing at commas, stopping at commas, etc.?”
4. Did you read words accurately without skipping or substituting words?
5. Did you read words smoothly without sounding them out?
6. Did your reading seem like you were concentrating on the meaning of the article?

Now read the article again, adjusting to your partner’s comments.

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Improve Silent Reading Fluency Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. I read quickly and understand everything I read.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. My primary purpose during reading is to understand the meaning of the text.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I have a rhythm to my reading, but adjust my reading speed to the demands of the text.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I focus my eyes on the center of the page when reading.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I read faster silently than I do out loud.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

- 23-25 You have excellent silent reading skills, and you have learned important reading strategies to improve reading comprehension.
- 20-22 You have good silent reading skills, and you have learned some important reading strategies to improve reading comprehension.
- 17-19 Your silent reading skills and reading strategies need improvement, as does your silent reading speed. Improving your silent reading fluency will improve your comprehension.
- <13 Reading comprehension can be a challenge to you because of poor silent reading fluency and because you do not apply strategic reading strategies. Improving your silent reading fluency and using the reading strategies detailed in the lesson will improve your comprehension.

Already Know: What I already know about silent reading fluency is _____

Want to Know: What I want to know about silent reading fluency is _____

How to Improve Silent Reading Fluency Lesson

Most students have had teachers who tested them on their oral reading rate. These *reading fluencies* measure how fast students can accurately read grade-level reading text. Reading out loud is a necessary skill to master; however, reading out loud is chiefly a skill that serves as a foundation for learning how to read silently. As students should improve their oral reading fluency in their primary and intermediate elementary school years, they should also improve their silent reading fluency thereafter.

Reading silently allows the reader to focus on the meaning of the text, rather than upon the pronunciation of the text. Reading silently removes the distraction of the voice and allows the reader to read faster. Reading research tells us that reading faster does increase reading comprehension. So, how can you improve your silent reading fluency?

First, work at establishing a rhythm to your reading. The reading pace should be hurried, but consistent. This does not mean that you shouldn't vary your reading speed, according to the demands of the text. You may need to re-read certain sections from time to time. But do not read in a herky-jerky fashion.

The best way to keep a pace while reading is to **use your hand** to establish your reading rhythm. Use your dominant hand to pace your reading. That would be the hand that you use to write or throw a ball. Put three fingers together and place your hand under the first line on the page. Place your index finger under the first letter of the line if you are right-handed. Begin with your ring finger under the first letter of the line if you're left-handed. Now, slide your hand underneath the first line at a comfortable, but hurried pace while reading the words on the line. When the index (or ring) finger reaches the last letter of the first line, quickly slide the hand back to the first letter of the line and drop down to the second line. Continue to read in the same manner.

Intentionally, but only briefly, slow down when reading comprehension decreases. Using the hand prevents re-reading or skipping lines and also improves comprehension. Shortening the stroke of the hand across the page, after practice, will also help expand peripheral vision and improve eye movement.

Improve your eye movement. Reading research tells us that good readers have fewer eye fixations per line. When the eyes move from fixation to fixation, there is little reading comprehension. So focus on the center of the page and use your peripheral vision to view words to the left and right when you are reading columnar text, such as newspapers, articles, etc. Focus one-third of the way into the text line, then two-thirds of the way, for book text. Again, you may need to work up to these guidelines by adding on an additional fixation point, until you can read comfortably.

It takes a bit of practice to get used to reading with your hand and focusing more on the center of the page, but your silent reading fluency will improve and so will your comprehension.

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Read Interactively Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. When I read, I maintain excellent concentration.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. When I read, I often “talk” to the text or author.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. When reading any kind of book, I try to connect my life to what is going on in the reading.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. When reading any kind of book, I ask questions about what the text means.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I go to a quiet place, maintain good posture, and avoid all distractions when I read.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

- 23-25 You fully interact with your reading and have excellent reading comprehension.
- 20-22 You interact with most reading text and have good reading comprehension.
- 17-19 You do not interact with reading text as much as you could, and this limits your reading comprehension.
- 13-16 You are a “passive” reader and interact little with the reading text, so your reading comprehension is not as good as it could be. Learning how to interact with what you read will improve your reading comprehension.
- <13 You are a very “passive” reader and do not interact with the reading text, so your reading comprehension is poor. Learning how to interact with what you read will improve your reading comprehension.

Already Know: What I already know about interactive reading is _____

Want to Know: What I want to know about interactive reading is _____

How to Read Interactively Lesson

Everyone knows that effective communication between two friends or family members is a two-way, interactive process. One-sided communication does not help people understand each other. People best understand one another when they pay attention to each other, see things from the other person's point of view, and ask questions when they don't understand each other.

Reading is a different form of communication, but the interactive process should be the same. Reading really is about communication between the reader and the author. Now, it's true that the author is not speaking directly to the reader; however, we read best when we pretend that this is the case. **So, how can you learn to read interactively to improve your reading comprehension?**

The way we watch **movies** can provide some helpful techniques. Most people will say that they understand movies better than they understand books. Why is this so?

- The light of the movie or television screen and the sound draws your complete attention and focus. Distractions are limited, so you concentrate well.
- A typical audience does a lot more than “watch” a movie in the movie theater or at home. It is true that movies are a visual experience, but they are also a listening experience. The audio system and quality of the movie soundtrack make a huge difference in how well you understand a movie. Anyone who has seen a foreign movie with subtitles will admit that it is harder to understand the movie without sound. Movies are multi-sensory.
- A good movie involves the audience in its characters and story. Everyone imagines themselves shooting up the bad guys, looking into the eyes of the beautiful actress or handsome actor, or running away from the evil alien-monster-robot. You may even “talk” to the characters during crucial scenes, such as “I know what’s behind that door. Don’t open it!” You predict what will happen and probably even compare the plot to other movies of that genre as you watch. You act as a movie critic as well, thinking of how boring or exciting a scene may be.

How can you apply what you already do watching movies to what you *should do* as an interactive reader?

- Limit any distractions to improve reading concentration. In the classroom, it may be asking the teacher to move your seat away from a friend who talks too much. At home, it may be reading away from the distractions of the television, phone, music, or bothersome little brother.
- Apply all your senses to the reading. Listen to what the author is saying to *you*, try to feel what the characters feel, see the changing settings how the author describes them.
- Involve yourself in the reading by “talking to the text.” This internal dialog improves concentration and helps you better interact with the author. Summarize, compare, re-read, interpret, and predict frequently as you read. Make your reading a two-way active process, not a one-way passive activity.

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Improve Reading Comprehension Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. When reading, I frequently pause to summarize.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. When reading, I frequently make connections to other parts of the text or to other readings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. When reading, I re-think sections of the reading that I don't understand by re-reading.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. When reading, I often pause to think about what the author means.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. When reading, I frequently predict what will come next in the reading.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

23-25	You are an actively engaged reader who constantly monitors your comprehension of what the author is saying through a wide range of cueing strategies.
20-22	You often monitor your comprehension of what the author is saying through cueing strategies.
17-19	You sometimes monitor your comprehension of what the author is saying through cueing strategies.
13-16	You rarely monitor your comprehension of what the author is saying through cueing strategies. You can learn the strategies to prompt better comprehension.
<13	You do not monitor your understanding of what the author is saying through cueing strategies. You can learn the strategies to prompt better comprehension.

Already Know: What I already know about monitoring my own reading comprehension is...

Want to Know: What I want to know about monitoring my own reading comprehension is...

How to Improve Reading Comprehension Lesson

Readers fail to understand text because they lack cueing strategies to prompt effective interaction with what the text says. This is a fancy way of saying that poor readers don't know how to prompt themselves to understand what they are reading. Reading research is clear that readers who prompt themselves with thinking strategies and questions as they read tend to understand and remember what they read far better than readers who don't. So, how can you learn and apply these self-prompting strategies to improve your reading comprehension?

The five **SCRIP** reading comprehension strategies teach readers how to independently interact with and understand both narrative and expository text to improve reading comprehension. The **SCRIP** acronym stands for Summarize, Connect, Re-think, Interpret, and Predict.

Summarize means putting together the main ideas and key details of a reading into a short-version of what the author has said. A summary can be of an entire reading, but it is more useful to summarize often at key transition points in the author's train of thought. It frequently requires the reader to go back to the previous reading section and skim that part of the reading once more.

Connect means to notice the relationship between one part of the text with another part of the text. The parts may compare (be similar) or contrast (be different). The parts may connect as a sequence (an order) of events or ideas. The parts may respond to other parts of the text or serve as reasons for or effects of what came before in the reading. Good readers also connect the relationship between what they read with a similar text or source. It could be something from another book, movie, television show, or historical event. Lastly, good readers see the relationship between one part of the text with their own personal experiences. You may have had a similar experience in your own life to that described in the text.

Re-think means to re-read the text when you are confused or have lost the author's train of thought. Reviewing what has just been read will usually improve understanding. You may even understand what the author has said in a *different way* than how you understood that section the first time that you read it.

Interpret means to think about what the author means beyond the words that are used. Authors may directly say what they mean right in the lines of the text, but they also may *suggest* what they mean with hints to allow readers to draw their own conclusions. These hints can be found in the tone (feeling or attitude) of the writing, the word choice, or in other parts of the text in which the clues may be stated more directly.

Predict means to make an educated guess about what will happen or be said next in the text, based upon what *has already happened* or *what* has been said. Good readers check their predictions with what happens or is said next in the text.

Good reading is interactive reading. Prompt your understanding of the text with these self-prompting thinking and questioning cues to understand and remember more of what the author says. Download the [SCRIP Comprehension Cues Bookmarks](#) and practice.

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Make Inferences Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. When reading an unclear section of text, I apply specific strategies to problem-solve what the author means.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. When reading an unclear section of text, I see it as an interesting challenge, or puzzle to solve.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. When reading an unclear section of text, I re-read the section to figure out the meaning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. When reading an unclear section of text, I re-read what is before and what is after that section.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. When reading an unclear section of text, I ask for help to interpret what the author is saying.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

23-25	You see reading as a mental challenge to figure out what is in the author's mind, and you use specific, intentional strategies to interpret what the author means.
20-22	You try to figure out the meaning of what the author suggests, but does not say directly, and you use some strategies to problem-solve what the author means.
17-19	You sometimes try to figure out the meaning of unclear text, but you do not use specific, intentional strategies to problem-solve what is being said.
13-16	You rarely try to figure out the meaning of unclear text. You can learn specific strategies that will help you to problem-solve the meaning of these sections.
<13	You don't try to figure out the meaning of unclear text, but tend to skip these sections. You can learn specific strategies that will help you to problem-solve the meaning of these sections.

Already Know: What I already know about how to figure out the meaning of unclear text is...

Want to Know: What I want to know about how to figure out the meaning of unclear text is...

How to Make Inferences Lesson

Familiarity with the ten most common inference patterns can help good readers understand the meaning of what the author implies. Identify which of these ten inference patterns fits an unclear section of reading to help you better interpret difficult reading text.

Often, an author intentionally leaves parts of the text unclear. This is done to allow the reader to construct meaning as the reader discovers clues in the plot of a story or in the line of argument in an article or essay. At other times, the author suggests (implies) the meaning without directly stating it. In these cases, the author expects the reader to guess or draw conclusions (infer) the meaning from other textual clues.

Good readers learn to identify these **10 Inference Patterns** to interpret what the author implies. In the following examples, the inference pattern is bolded; the text which requires inference is quoted; and a logical inference of that quoted text follows. What Can Be Inferred? As you read, circle key words from the text which indicate the bold inference pattern and help you interpret what the author means.

1. Location: While we roared down the tracks, we could feel the bounce and sway.
What Can Be Inferred? They are riding a train.

2. Agent (Occupation or Hobby): With clippers in one hand and scissors in the other, Chris was ready to begin the task.
What Can Be Inferred? He was giving a haircut.

3. Time: When the porch light burned out, the darkness was total.
What Can Be Inferred? It is late at night.

4. Action: Carol dribbled down the court and then passed the ball to Ann.
What Can Be Inferred? They are playing basketball.

5. Instrument (tool or device): With a steady hand, she put the buzzing device on the tooth.
What Can Be Inferred? The dentist is drilling out a cavity.

6. Cause and Effect: In the morning, we noticed that the trees were uprooted, and homes were missing their roof shingle.
What Can Be Inferred? There had been a tornado or hurricane.

7. Object: The broad wings were swept back into a “V” and the powerful engines roared to life.
What Can Be Inferred? A jet plane is preparing to take off.

8. Groups (kinds or types): The Toyota and Honda were in the garage and the Chevy was out in the front.
What Can Be Inferred? These are all automobiles.

9. Problem-Solution: The side of his face was swollen, and his tooth was loose.
What Can Be Inferred? He got hit in the face.

10. Feeling-Attitude: While I marched past, in the middle school band, my Dad’s eyes were filled with tears.
What Can Be Inferred? The child’s father was proud of his or her involvement in the band.

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Use Marginal Annotations Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. When I can write on reading text, I take notes, write comments, and ask questions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. When I can write on reading text, I highlight main ideas and key details.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. When I can write on reading text, I make connections to other parts of the text.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. When I can write on reading text, I organize the reading for test study.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. When I can write on reading text, I use my own abbreviations and graphics.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

23-25	You know that marginal annotations can significantly increase reading comprehension and you use them for test study.
20-22	You have some experience with marginal annotations, and you use these to increase understanding of the text.
17-19	You sometimes write on reading text, and you highlight main ideas.
13-16	You rarely highlight main ideas on reading text. Learning what to annotate in the margins of reading text will help your reading comprehension and help you to study for tests.
<13	You do not write on or highlight reading text. Learning what to annotate in the margins of reading text will help your reading comprehension and help you to study for tests.

Already Know: What I already know about making marginal annotations is _____

Want to Know: What I want to know about making marginal annotations is _____

How to Use Marginal Annotations Lesson

We all enjoy marking up our notes, or perhaps a magazine article, with our favorite yellow marker. Aw, the smell! However, is yellow highlighting *all* the key ideas the best form of note-taking to improve reading comprehension and retention? No.

Highlighting large sections of the text may even be counterproductive. Let's face it. Highlighting takes time away from reading. It also interrupts the flow of what should be an internal dialogue between reader and author. If you stopped an important conversation every minute or so with an unconnected activity, you would certainly decrease your understanding of that dialogue.

Also, highlighting can't be erased. Ever highlight what you thought was a main idea and find in a paragraph later that you were mistaken?

Finally, extensive highlighting limits effective re-reading and study review. When reviewing a highlighted text the night before an exam, your eyes are drawn only to the highlighting. You miss out on the possibility of revising your understanding of the text or seeing the author's train of thought from another angle.

Now that I've de-bunked the cherished highlighter, is there a better reading and note-taking option to improve reading comprehension? Yes. **Try using marginal annotations.**

Marginal annotations are abbreviated notes in the blank spaces of the text that promote interactive reading. Yes, you can certainly highlight a word or short section to respond to with the annotations, but limit the highlighting and focus more on your response in the annotations. Reading comprehension research is clear that internal dialogue with the text improves understanding and retention. "Talking to the text" makes reading comprehensible and memorable. Marginal annotations also provide effective review for upcoming tests.

But what about using textbooks? You can't write in your textbooks, but small sticky tabs fit nicely in textbook margins, and you can write annotations of these. Plus, they pull out without damaging the pages. Try different colors of stickies for different main ideas.

8 Great Marginal Annotations to Improve Reading Comprehension

1. Write **definitions** provided in the text or those which you research.
2. **Star** main ideas and **bullet point** key details. **List and number** examples.
3. Write a **question mark** for confusing sections to re-read or ask your teacher about.
4. **[Bracket]** sections and comment with criticisms, praises, insights, interpretations, ways to re-think the author's idea, and questions.
5. **Summarize** reading sections.
6. Connect related ideas within the text with **arrows**, and **comment** on connections to other text or sources, including relevant personal experiences.
7. **Write specific predictions** and check as you continue reading.
8. **Highlight** textual evidence which you may use in a related assignment or in class discussion of the reading.

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Read Non-Fiction Textbooks Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. I use different strategies for reading non-fiction than I do for reading fiction.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. When reading non-fiction, I preview the chapter before beginning to read.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. When reading non-fiction, I read the book study questions before I start reading.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. When reading non-fiction, I answer the book study questions as I am reading.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. When reading non-fiction, I take notes and review my notes within 24 hours.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

23-25	You know how to read and study non-fiction, and you have excellent reading comprehension of non-fiction text.
20-22	You know some strategies about how to read and study non-fiction, and you have good reading comprehension of non-fiction text.
17-19	You know some of the differences in reading fiction and non-fiction, and you have good reading comprehension of non-fiction text.
13-16	You know some of the differences in reading fiction and non-fiction, and you have fair reading comprehension of non-fiction text. Learning the PQ RAR reading study method will improve your understanding of non-fiction text.
<13	You do not recognize the differences in reading fiction and non-fiction, and you have poor reading comprehension of non-fiction text. Learning the PQ RAR reading-study method will improve your understanding of non-fiction text.

Already Know: What I already know about reading non-fiction is _____

Want to Know: What I want to know about reading non-fiction is _____

How to Read Non-Fiction Textbooks Lesson

All reading should not be read the same way. Reading non-fiction requires specific strategies to take advantage of how non-fiction text is organized. Many students read novels with good comprehension, but struggle with their science or social studies textbook.

Learn the **PQ RAR** reading-study method while you read your next textbook chapter. You will improve your understanding of the main ideas and key supporting details. You will also prepare yourself for the upcoming test as you read.

The PQ RAR Reading-Study Method

P—First, **preview** the reading selection. Try to limit the reading selection to a manageable size. Overly long chapters, say over six pages for elementary students, eight for middle school students, twelve for high school students, and sixteen for college students should be “chunked” into manageable reading sections.

1. Preview the first and last paragraphs of the chapter and the chapter review if one is provided.
2. Preview all subtitles and any book study helps at the beginning of the chapter.
3. Preview all graphics such as photographs, charts, maps, etc. and their captions.

Q—Develop text-based **questions** as you read to prompt interactive reading. Look for the answers to your own answers as you read.

1. Develop **questions** from the subtitles and write these on binder paper or type on your tablet or desktop computer, skipping lines between each question. Try “What,” “How,” and “Why” question-starters. Avoid the “Who” and “When” questions, as these tend to focus attention on the minor details of expository text.
2. Also write or type any chapter review questions not covered by your subtitle questions, skipping lines between each question.

R—**Read** the chapter and “talk to the text” by taking notes in the textbook margins. Use yellow stickies and paste them in the textbook margins, if you can’t write in the textbook. Write comments, questions, predictions, and connections to other parts of the reading and your own life experiences. List examples, key details, and important terms with their definitions. Internal monitoring of the author’s train of thought and the connection to your own knowledge and experience increases comprehension as you read textbooks.

A—**Answer** both the subtitle questions and the book questions as you read. Write your answers underneath your questions. Don’t be concerned if the textbook did not answer some of your reader-generated questions.

R—**Review** the questions and answers within the next 24 hours to minimize the effects of the “forgetting cycle.” Generate possible test questions and develop memory tricks for key concepts and details.

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Identify the Main Idea Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. When assigned a non-fiction reading, I examine the thesis statement, topic sentences, pictures, subtitles, language clues, and the process of elimination to find the main idea(s).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. When assigned a non-fiction reading, I examine some of the text features listed above to find the main idea(s).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. When assigned a non-fiction reading, I examine a few of the text features listed above to find the main idea(s).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. When assigned a non-fiction reading, I try to the main idea(s), but I don't use the text features listed above.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. When assigned a non-fiction reading, I really don't try to identify the main idea(s) unless I am told to do so.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

23-25	You are familiar with and use all the key text features to determine the main idea(s) in non-fiction text.
20-22	You are familiar with and use most of the key text features to determine the main idea(s) in non-fiction text.
17-19	You are familiar with and use some of the key text features to determine the main idea(s) in non-fiction text.
13-16	You try to determine the main idea(s) without using text features as clues.
<13	You don't try to determine the main idea(s) unless directed to do so.

Already Know: What I already know about finding the main idea(s) in non-fiction is...

Want to Know: What I want to know about finding the main idea(s) in non-fiction is...

How to Identify the Main Idea Lesson

The main idea is the central or key thoughts of an expository text. A reading selection may have several main ideas. Finding the main idea is a basic reading comprehension skill. However, *basic* does not mean easy. Main idea questions are found on every standardized test.

What main idea is not...

- Main idea is not the same as the topic.
- Main idea is not necessarily the thesis statement.
- Main idea is not necessarily the topic sentence(s).
- Main idea is not found within the narrative domain of writing, unless tagged on by the author to comment on the story such as with a moral at the end of a fairy tale.
- Main idea is not limited to one per reading selection.
- Main idea is not a generalization or something necessarily broad in scope.
- Main idea is not the minor detail of a reading selection.
- Main idea is not found in narrative text and is often confused with *theme*.

Strategies that Readers Can Use to Identify the Main Idea(s)

The **thesis statement** tells the purpose or point of view of the exposition. Finding the thesis statement will often help the reader identify the main idea(s). Much like an umbrella, the thesis statement is designed to cover the main idea(s) of a reading/writing selection. As a starting point, research demonstrates that about 50% of expository writing includes the thesis statement in the last sentence of the introduction.

The **topic sentences** can serve as main ideas in a reading/writing selection. Research demonstrates that about 80% of expository writing includes the topic sentences as the first sentences of body paragraphs.

Often the **language** of the reading text itself or the language of test problems can help readers identify main ideas. In addition to using the phrase, “main idea,” the following references are used in expository text and on standardized tests:

“best”	Another answer may be acceptable, but this one most closely fits.
“mainly”	Not completely, but most importantly.
“chiefly”	Compared to the others, this is above the rest.
“primarily”	This means mainly or the chief one, before all others.
“most likely”	A logical prediction or conclusion.
“most directly”	Most specifically.

Use the **process of elimination** to determine the main idea(s) in a reading selection. If the material lacks specificity and so is hard to identify as the author’s central point(s), then it is too general to be the main idea(s). If the material is too specific and so is difficult to identify as the author’s central point(s), then it is probably a major or minor detail that supports the main idea(s).

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Do a Close Reading for Narrative Text Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. When I read a key section of a story, I read it more than once to understand the author's message, how it is said, and key plot details.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. When I read a key section of a story, I read it more than once to understand the plot details and characters.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. When I read a key section of a story, I may re-read parts of it to understand the plot and characters.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. When I read a key section of a story, I may re-read parts of it to better understand what is going on in that part of the story.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. When I read a key section of a story, I read it once to get a basic understanding of what is going on in that part of the story.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

23-25	When you re-read a key section of a story, you identify the theme, the key elements of the plot, character development, the author's craft and story structure, and perhaps connections of other stories.
20-22	When you re-read a key section of a story, you can usually identify the key plot details, character development, and what is going on in the story.
17-19	When you re-read parts of a key section of a story, you often understand key plot details and the roles of each character.
13-16	When you re-read a key section of a story, you sometimes understand what is going on in the story.
<13	You usually don't re-read parts of a story.

Already Know: What I already know about close reading for narrative text is...

Want to Know: What I want to know about close reading for narrative text is...

How to Do a Close Reading for Narrative Text Lesson

CLOSE Reading Narrative Worksheet | Select a short story to practice this strategy.

Reading Checklist

Reading #1

- Read to find out how the author develops the THEME.
- Look for key character and plot details which support the THEME.
- Identify the story setting(s).
- Identify the main character(s) and the primary story conflict.
- Think–Pair–Share how the KEY details support the THEME.

Reading #2

- Identify how the author organizes the plot and develops characters in this story.
- Note key plot developments and identify any story devices.
- Identify the story climax and falling action.
- How does the ending resolve the primary conflict?
- Describe the author's use of word choice, imagery, tone, mood, and the story genre.
- Discuss the author's craft and structure in a small group.

Reading #3

- Compare the THEME of this story to other stories, movies, videos, and television shows.
- Cite the textual evidence which supports the THEME.
- Share with the whole group.

from Teaching Reading Strategies

Before, During, + After

Teacher or Student Research **Before**

THEME

PRE-READING NOTES

Text-dependent SCRIP Questions **During**

SUMMARIZE

CONNECT

RE-THINK

INTERPRET

PREDICT

Application of the THEME **After**

APPLY

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Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Do a Close Reading for Expository Text Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. When I read a non-fiction text, I look for the Big Idea of the reading selection and re-read at least twice.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. When I read a non-fiction text, I look for how the author organizes the text and re-read sections.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. When I read a non-fiction text, I form questions from the subtitles.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. When I read a non-fiction text, I make margin notes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. When I read a non-fiction text, I think about how I could use the information.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

23-25	You prepare yourself for reading non-fiction through effective previewing and pre-read to prepare for in-depth reading. You re-read the reading selection for better understanding.
20-22	You prepare yourself for reading non-fiction through some previewing. You re-read the reading selection for better understanding.
17-19	You sometimes prepare yourself for reading non-fiction through some previewing and you may re-read some sections of the reading.
13-16	You rarely prepare yourself for reading non-fiction through previewing.
<13	You don't prepare yourself for reading non-fiction through previewing.

Already Know: What I already know about close reading for expository text is...

Want to Know: What I want to know about close reading for expository text is...

How to Do a Close Reading for Expository Text Lesson

CLOSE Reading Expository Worksheet Select an article to practice this strategy.

Reading Checklist

Reading #1

- Read to find out how the author shares the BIG IDEA.
- Look for the key details which support or explain the BIG IDEA.
- Think–Pair–Share about the BIG IDEA and KEY details with a classmate.

Reading #2

- Identify how the author organizes the text.
- Use subtitles to form WHAT, HOW, or WHY questions and answer them as you read.
- Label TS in the right margin for each topic sentence.
- Star important ideas.
- Use arrows to connect ideas.
- Circle key vocabulary words.
- Analyze how graphics and pictures support the BIG IDEA.
- Discuss the author's craft and structure in a small group.

Reading #3

- Think about how you could use this information.
- Label TE in the right margin for any textual evidence.
- Think about how the BIG IDEA and textual evidence connect to related readings.
- Share with the whole group.

from Teaching Reading Strategies

Before, During, + After

Teacher or Student Research **Before**

BIG IDEA

PRE-READING NOTES

Text-dependent SCRIP Questions **During**

SUMMARIZE

CONNECT

RE-THINK

INTERPRET

PREDICT

How to Use Textual Evidence **After**

APPLY

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Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Use Context Clues Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. When figuring out the meaning of unknown words in my reading, I use synonym (same) clues to guess the meaning of the word.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. When figuring out the meaning of unknown words in reading, I use antonym (opposite) clues to guess the meanings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. When figuring out the meaning of unknown words in my reading, I read the sentences before and after the sentence in which the unknown word appears.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. When figuring out the meaning of unknown words in my reading, I use example clues to guess the meanings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. When figuring out the meaning of unknown words in my reading, I brainstorm context clues categories that may provide clues as to the meaning of the words.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

- 23-25 You have excellent knowledge of the specific context clues strategies and frequently use them to problem-solve the meaning of unknown words.
- 20-22 You have good knowledge of the specific context clues strategies and sometimes use them to problem-solve the meaning of unknown words.
- 17-19 You have some knowledge of the specific context clues strategies and use some of them to problem-solve the meaning of unknown words.
- 13-16 You know a few of the specific context clues strategies, but rarely use some of them to problem-solve the meaning of unknown words. Learning the context clue strategies will build your reading comprehension and vocabulary.
- <13 You don't know the context clues strategies. Learning the context clue strategies will build your reading comprehension and vocabulary.

Already Know: What I already know about context clues is...

Want to Know: What I want to know about using context clue is...

How to Use Context Clues Lesson

Why learn and practice context clue strategies to problem-solve the meanings of unknown words? Wouldn't it be better to use the dictionary? No. The dictionary is a fine tool and should be used to look up words that are necessary to the understanding of any reading. However, the dictionary is not a practical tool for defining all words as you read.

Context clue strategies can be used to figure out the meaning of many unknown words. Good readers learn to quickly sort through the following **S.A.L.E.** context clue strategies to select the strategy that works best. Of course, these context clue strategies won't always help you understand every unknown word, but they will help you learn the meanings of many.

S.A.L.E. Context Clues Strategies

When arriving at an unknown word, re-read the sentence that contains the word, looking for one of the following **S.A.L.E.** context clue strategies that may help you figure out the meaning of the word. If you can't figure it out, try reading the sentence before and the sentence after to problem-solve the meaning.

Practice: In the spaces provided, write your own sentence with a nonsense word which applies the focus **S.A.L.E.** context clue strategy to signal the meaning of that word.

Synonym—Sometimes an unknown word can be understood by the use of a synonym. Synonyms frequently follow the words or phrases they define or identify, in which case commas, dashes, or parentheses are used. **Example:** The wardrobe, or closet, opened the door to a brand-new world.

Antonym—Sometimes an unknown word is defined by the use of an antonym. Antonym clues will often use transition words or phrases such as *however, not, but, in contrast*. **Example:** He signaled a looney, not a right turn.

Logic—Your own knowledge about the content and text structure may provide clues to meaning. Logic clues can lead to a logical guess as to the meaning of an unknown word. **Example:** He petted the canine, and then made her sit up and beg for a bone.

Example—When the unknown word appears in a list of examples, the unknown word may be similar to other items in the list. If the unknown word itself provides a specific example or subset, the reader can often figure out its meaning from understanding the more general category or set. Example clues will often use transition words or phrases such as *for example, like, such as*. **Example:** Adventurous, rowdy, and crazy pioneers all found their way out West.

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Quote and Cite Textual Evidence Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. You know what belongs in a citation and when to use one.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. You know how to properly punctuate a direct quotation and its citation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. You know how to properly punctuate an indirect quotation and its citation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. You know how to properly punctuate quotations within quotations and ellipses.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. You know how to properly punctuate quotations with misspellings, wrong word choices, or errors in grammar and mechanics.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

23-25	You know how to use and properly punctuate all direct quotations, indirect quotations, and citation rules.
20-22	You know how to use and properly punctuate most direct quotations, indirect quotations, and citations.
17-19	You know how to use and properly punctuate some direct quotations, indirect quotations, and citations.
13-16	You <i>do not know</i> how to use and properly punctuate most direct quotations, indirect quotations, and citations.
<13	You <i>do not understand</i> the purpose of and how to use and punctuate direct quotations, indirect quotations, and citations.

Already Know: What I already know about citation and quotation rules is _____

Want to Know: What I want to know about citation and quotation rules is _____

How to Quote and Cite Textual Evidence Lesson

When we write an essay, report, document, or article, we frequently use an expert's words or ideas to support our own thoughts. Borrowed words are termed *direct quotations*, while borrowed ideas, using our own words to paraphrase, are termed *indirect quotations*. We also must tell our readers *who* said it and *where* it was said in a *citation*. A *citation* includes the author's last name (or the source title if no author is listed) and the page number where the author's words or ideas are found. The citation is placed within parentheses after the direct or indirect quotation.

Beginning and ending quotation marks are placed before and after the author's words. Place a period after the ending parenthesis of the citation. If the author uses an exclamation point or a question mark, place it where it is used inside the quotation marks. If you, the writer, ask a question about the quotation, place the question mark after the citation instead of the period.

Examples: Wildlife experts claim, "Cheetahs are the fastest land animals by far!" (Nen 8). The author asked, "Are they as fast as is often reported?" (Nen 8). Did the author really mean "fast" ("Energy Concerns" 8)?

When using a direct quotation, the first word of a complete sentence must be capitalized, even if it is in the middle of a sentence. However, when quoting part of a sentence, don't capitalize the first letter. Also, both parts of a divided quotation are enclosed within quotation marks. The first word of the second part is not capitalized unless it begins a new sentence. **Examples:** The dentist said, "We saw it" and then he said that it "quickly disappeared." (Nen 8).

An ellipsis is punctuated as three periods (...) and is used in direct quotations to delete unnecessary parts of the quotation. **Example:** I gave it some thought... but I never did anything.

When quotations or quoted titles are placed within quoted speech, use single quotation marks ('_') at the beginning and end of the inside quotations. Use double quotation marks ("_") at the beginning and end of the entire quotation. **Example:** The author asked, "Do you agree with Beth's statement that 'the case is closed?'" ("Energy Concerns" 8).

Direct quotations which include incorrect or non-standard spelling, word usage, mechanics, and grammar must include the bracketed *sic* [sic] after any spelling or grammar mistakes.

Examples: "It seemed rily [sic], but that's how she orientated [sic] her thinking. Sad! [sic]"

To introduce a direct quotation, *frame* the authors' words before, in the middle, or at the end of what they say. A frame may be a speaker tag. **Example:** The author said, "...". The frame may also be an *attribution*. An attribution names the author or authors and tells the reader why they are experts. **Example:** "...", suggested the three-time MVP, Michael Norberry.

An indirect quotation reports someone else's ideas without quoting each word. Indirect quotations don't include quotation marks, but must provide citations. **Example:** The author stated that cheetahs are the fastest animals (Perkins 52).

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Identify Bias and Errors in Reasoning Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. When I read a non-fiction text, I try to determine the author's bias (a one-sided point of view).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. When I read a non-fiction text, I evaluate the author's fairness in presenting evidence.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. When I read a non-fiction text, I try to think what those who disagree with the author might say.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. When I read a non-fiction text, I look for errors in reasoning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. When I read a non-fiction text, I try to identify what the author wants me (the reader) to believe or do.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

23-25	You consistently look for the author's bias, quality of reasoning, and what author wants the reader to believe or do when you read non-fiction.
20-22	You often look for the author's bias, quality of reasoning, and what author wants the reader to believe or do when you read non-fiction.
17-19	You sometimes look for the author's bias, quality of reasoning, and what author wants the reader to believe or do when you read non-fiction.
13-16	You rarely look for the author's bias, quality of reasoning, and what author wants the reader to believe or do when you read non-fiction.
<13	You don't look for the author's bias, quality of reasoning, and what author wants the reader to believe or do when you read non-fiction.

Already Know: What I already know about errors in reasoning is _____

Want to Know: What I want to know about errors in reasoning is _____

How to Identify Bias and Errors in Reasoning Lesson

As you already know, not everything found in non-fiction books, articles, reports, and documents is true. Discovering how to determine what *is* and what *is not* true about a subject is an essential skill to develop in academic research. Good readers learn to identify the facts and opinions presented by an author to infer the author's point of view on the writing subject. One's point of view about certain subject is referred to as one's *bias*. When authors use errors in reasoning to support their biases and/or fail to fairly address opposing points of view, this is poor or dishonest scholarship and writers should not cite the information as textual evidence.

Directions: Provide your own examples of each error in reasoning in the spaces provided.

1. Non-Sequitur Errors

A non-sequitur reasoning error is an illogical conclusion reached from a set of facts.

Example: If the sky is blue, and blue is the color of the ocean; then the sky must be made of ocean water. Explanation: The conclusion that "the sky must be made of ocean water" does not follow logically from the facts presented.

2. Red Herring Errors

A red herring reasoning error means that an unconnected reference is used to distract the reader from the argument. Example: The politician suggests that poverty remains the most important problem in the world today; however, the world has always had its share of poor people.

Explanation: The statement "the world has always had its share of poor people" attempts to distract the reader from the issue of poverty as the most important world problem.

3. Begging the Question Errors

A begging the question reasoning error takes place when the writer assumes something to be true, that has not yet been proven. Example: No one likes the poor musicianship of country music. Explanation: The statement assumes that country music has poor musicians to support the argument.

4. Either-Or Errors

An either-or reasoning error sets up a false choice between two ideas or issues and ignores other options. Example: Either you support the president, or you are not a true American.

Explanation: The statement ignores other options that true Americans might choose.

Check out more [Errors in Reasoning](#) for further study.

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Research Safely and Evaluate Online Sources Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. When using the Internet, I am extremely careful about sharing private information.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. When using the Internet, I am extremely careful about using and downloading online sources.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. When doing academic research online, I consider the author's biases before using any textual evidence.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. When doing academic research online, I try to identify whether the author is an expert on the subject that I am researching.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. When doing academic research online, I look for clues on the webpages to determine if the source and its links are current and relevant.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

23-25	You understand and apply all Internet safety guidelines and know how to evaluate online sources for academic research.
20-22	You mostly understand and apply all Internet safety guidelines and know how to evaluate online sources for academic research.
17-19	You understand and apply some Internet safety guidelines and somewhat know how to evaluate online sources for academic research.
13-16	You understand and apply some Internet safety guidelines, but know little about how to evaluate online sources for academic research.
<13	You may not understand and apply some Internet safety guidelines, and you know little about how to evaluate online sources for academic research.

Already Know: What I already know about Internet safety and evaluating online sources is...

Want to Know: What I want to know about Internet safety and evaluating online sources is...

How to Research Safely and Evaluate Online Sources Lesson

The Internet can be a wonderful tool for completing academic research. However, to maintain your privacy and safety, follow these guidelines.

- Never enter personal information such as your full name, birthday, age, home address, telephone number, parents' work addresses, work telephone numbers, social security numbers, or credit card information without your parents' permission.
- Never let a friend log in as you and never tell your passwords to anyone other than your parents (even your best friends). Develop a plan with your parents to keep passwords private.
- Never bully or threaten anyone on the Internet, even if you are just kidding. These are crimes.
- Never agree to get together with anyone you have met online.
- Never post pictures of yourself on social media sites that you would feel uncomfortable showing to your mom. When in doubt, get your parents' permission.
- Never post pictures of friends or classmates online without their parents' permission.
- Never download apps without your parents' approval.
- Never open, download pictures, or respond to emails, posts, messages, or texts from people you do not know.

Part of good academic research is evaluating which sources to use and which sources not to use. To select appropriate academic sources, follow these guidelines. Practice these guidelines by visiting this [site](#) and making marginal annotations next to each guideline.

- Never use a source without the author's name.
- Are the author's credentials supplied? (position, education, years of experience, occupation, member of a respected organization)
- Do the credentials match the expertise demanded by the topic and content of the research?
- Consider the author's bias when deciding whether to use the source or not. Is there advertising for an author's product on the webpage? Does the author cite references? Does the author acknowledge other points of view?
- Is there contact information and a link to a homepage to check the author or organization?
- Be wary of using URLs ending in .com (commercial). URLs ending in .gov, .edu, and .org tend to be more academic.
- Evaluate the purpose or motive of the webpage author(s). Is it to provide information or research? Is it to convince you to believe or do something? Is it to sell you a product or service?
- Is the information provided in a fair manner?
- Is the source professionally presented and written without spelling or grammatical errors?
- Are the information and research citations current or out-of-date?
- Has the page been updated recently?
- Do the links relate to the topic and purpose of the site?
- Are the linked sources academic?
- Are the links still working or are there 404 errors?
- Can you check facts and textual evidence on other sites? Google to double-check.

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Memorize with the Grouping Strategy Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. When organizing material for test study, I try to arrange the material in memorable form.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I think about studying for the next test in each subject when I organize each day's work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. When I memorize, I try to visualize.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. When I memorize, I organize the material I am studying into similar item groups.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. When I need to memorize many items, I replace abstract (can't sense) ones, like <i>liberty</i> , with concrete ones, like the Statue of Liberty.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

23-25	You understand and effectively apply the grouping memorization strategy to organize and memorize learning.
20-22	You understand and often apply the grouping memorization strategy to organize and memorize learning.
17-19	You understand and sometimes apply the grouping memorization strategy to organize and memorize learning.
13-16	You rarely apply parts of the grouping memorization strategy to organize and memorize learning. Learning this memory strategy will help you organize for test study.
<13	You don't understand the grouping memorization strategy. Learning this memory strategy will help you organize for test study.

Already Know: What I already know about the grouping memorization strategy is...

Want to Know: What I want to know about the grouping memorization strategy is...

How to Memorize with the Grouping Strategy Lesson

The Grouping Strategy can be an effective tool to help you memorize items that are able to be placed into categories. We know from recent scientific research that our brains act much like computer file folders, slotting newly learned information in the same file as already-learned information that fits within that same file. If we take the time to organize new information in the same way that our brains do, we can increase the amount of information that we are able to remember.

The groups we develop to remember similar items don't have to be organized by content. Any similarities can be used to classify items as a group. For example, a group of people could be classified according to sex, body size, color of skin, eye or hair color, or introverted-extroverted. For another example, in history you could classify information into these categories: politics/government, economics, culture, religion, military, and technology.

Let's learn how to use the Grouping Strategy to remember a list of nine items. You are driving to work and your friend phones to tell you that you've been invited to go on a backpacking trip next weekend. "Sure, I'll remember what to bring," you respond to your friend. The equipment list includes the following: tent, flashlight, stove, matches, sleeping bag, fuel, utensils, ground cloth, and food. **Stop and re-read the last sentence; try to memorize the items; recite (without looking); and count how many items you were able to remember.**

How many items did you remember? There are nine items to take on that camping trip. Most of you probably missed a few. But now, let's take a few moments to apply the Grouping Memorization Strategy to remember the items in this list. First, simply categorize the items into groups such as these:

Sleeping: sleeping bag, tent, ground cloth

Light/Fire: matches, stove, flashlight, fuel

Eating: food, utensils

Next, re-read the first group and close your eyes to visualize how the items are pictured together. Do the same for the second and third groups. Now try to recite all nine items. Works, doesn't it? But what if some items don't fit into the groups you form to memorize a list? A few exceptions would be easier to remember than memorizing the entire list as random, unrelated items.

For abstract concepts, try substituting them with concrete objects. For example, it is easier to substitute and place the concrete *Liberty Bell* into a group than the abstract concept of freedom.

Memorizing using the **Grouping Strategy** will help you memorize many seemingly unrelated items. Frequent rehearsal of the groups and their items will place the information into your long-term memory. Take the information learned in your subjects or classes each day and organize it into memorable test-preparation form with this strategy.

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Memorize with the Association Strategy Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. I have a strategy to memorize many items in order.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I think about studying for the next test in each subject when I organize each day's work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. When I memorize, I try to visualize.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I try to connect new learning to old learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. When I need to memorize many items, I replace abstract (can't sense) ones, like <i>liberty</i> , with concrete ones, like the Statue of Liberty.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

23-25	You use all the ideas behind the association memorization strategy to organize and memorize learning.
20-22	You use many of the ideas behind the association memorization strategy to organize and memorize learning.
17-19	You use the some of the ideas behind the association memorization strategy to organize and memorize learning.
13-16	You rarely apply parts of the association memorization strategy to organize and memorize learning. Learning this memory strategy will help you
<13	You don't use any of the ideas behind the association memorization strategy to organize and memorize learning. Learning this memory strategy will help you

Already Know: What I already know about the association memorization strategy is...

Want to Know: What I want to know about the association memorization strategy is...

How to Memorize with the Association Strategy Lesson

The Association Strategy can be a helpful tool to help you memorize many seemingly unrelated items or ideas. Association is a powerful memory aid. We all experience things through our senses that remind us of something else. The smell of fresh baked bread might remind you of your mom’s great apple pie. Hearing the end of the “Sesame Street” theme song might remind you of your wonderful pre-school teacher.

The Association Strategy connects the items or ideas we want to remember into one visual theme. Scientific research has proved the power of associations. The Association Strategy helps you connect newly learned information to existing information that you already have placed into your long-term memory.

Directions

Write the number of items you need to remember in the middle of a white sheet of paper or on a sticky note. Select a visual theme as the background setting for that number that represents the main idea or title of the majority of objects, or key words, that you need to remember. Draw an object that represents one thing that you need to remember next to the number. Continue drawing the rest of the objects. If the exact order is important, connect each in clockwise order. Substitute any abstract objects with more concrete ones. For example, substitute a smiling face emoji for the abstract *happiness* to create a much more memorable object.

Example

Suppose you need to remember the following tasks for Friday afternoon:

1. Take out the trash.
2. Mail your friend’s birthday package.
3. Buy a jar of mayonnaise.
4. Buy a three-pound can of hot chocolate.
5. Sweep up the patio.
6. Call for reservations at Luigi’s Italian Restaurant for Mother’s Day.
7. Call Dr. Thomas about taking your medicine.

Practice: Take out a piece of white paper. Write a large orange “seven” in the middle of the page. Since the majority of the objects or ideas that you need to remember relate to *you*, draw a quick picture of yourself, leaning up against the “seven.” Then, draw a bag of trash on your right arm and a birthday package with a bright red bow hanging from your left arm. Next, draw your right foot stuck in a jar of mayonnaise and your left foot stuck in a large can of hot chocolate. In your mouth is a whisk broom. Hanging out of your nostrils is a few spaghetti noodles from Luigi’s and hanging around your neck is a doctor’s stethoscope.

Now prompt yourself to remember the errands by identifying each object. Works, doesn’t it?

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Memorize with the Linking Strategy Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. When I memorize, I compare similar items or ideas.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. When I memorize, I try to identify specific connections between two similar items or ideas.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. When I memorize, I organize items or ideas into pairs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. When I memorize unrelated items or ideas, I adjust one of the item's features to connect to others.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. When I need to memorize many items, I replace abstract (can't sense) ones, like <i>liberty</i> , with concrete ones, like the Statue of Liberty.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

23-25	You apply all the linking memorization strategies to organize and memorize learning.
20-22	You apply many of the linking memorization strategies to organize and memorize learning.
17-19	You apply some of the linking memorization strategies to organize and memorize learning.
13-16	You rarely apply parts of the linking memorization strategies to organize and memorize learning. Learning this memory strategy will help you organize for test study.
<13	You don't use any of the ideas behind the linking memorization strategies to organize and memorize learning. Learning this memory strategy will help you

Already Know: What I already know about the linking memorization strategy is...

Want to Know: What I want to know about the linking memorization strategy is...

How to Memorize with the Linking Strategy Lesson

The Linking Strategy can be a helpful tool to help you memorize many seemingly unrelated items or ideas. Linking ideas together is a powerful memory aid. We all experience the connections between one event or idea in life to that of other events or ideas. In your memory you may link drinking a tall glass of fresh lemonade with the idea of relaxation, because you usually drink that beverage in the summertime when you are out of school. In fact, many chains of events and ideas are linked together in our memories, even though some may at first glance seem unrelated.

The Linking Strategy intentionally connects an item or idea you want to remember to one other item or idea that you want to remember, etc. Here's how to link together everything you need to remember, say for an upcoming quiz or for the key ideas of a memorized speech. If you establish solid relationships within each link and between each link of the chain, the chain will be unbreakable, and you won't forget the items or ideas on your test or in your speech.

Directions

Select two concrete (visual) objects that can have a clear relationship and form a memorable pair. Think of this pair like the left and right sides of one link in a chain. Next, link the right side of the first link to the left side of another link to create a second connection in the chain. Continue in this manner to create a memorable chain of paired objects. The links can be endless; however, each connection must be well-established and very visual. Substitute concrete objects for any key words that are too abstract to remember well. For example, substituting the concrete "peace sign" for the abstract "peace" would be a much more memorable object with which to pair.

Example

If memorizing a tree, bucket, grass, policeman, horse, cow, a candy bar, and a golden ring, you might link them as follows:

Picture a tall oak tree with a golden ring hanging from one of its branches. The ring drops in a red bucket at the base of the tree on the bright green grass. A cow is busy nibbling the grass next to the bucket, while swishing its tail. At the end of the tail a candy bar is attached. A policeman on a white horse is frantically trying to grab the candy bar.

A bit of rehearsal will place these objects into your long-term memory. It may help to draw out the links. Using the **Linking Strategy** will help you memorize of many seemingly unrelated items.

Practice: Take out a piece of white paper. Look around the classroom or imagine a room at home and make a list of eight objects (more if you wish). Next, develop pairs from the items. Now draw a picture of anything that has many visual parts, such as a clock (or a tree) and draw pictures of each object, connected with the links of a chain. Afterwards, try reciting each object from memory by visualizing your drawing. Works, doesn't it?

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Memorize with the Catch Words Strategy Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. When I organize each day's work, I organize it into memorable forms.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. When I review each day's schoolwork, I organize it for test study.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. When I memorize, I try associate something unknown with something I will remember.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. When I memorize, I try to identify the connections among similar items or ideas.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. When I memorize, I use first letters of items or ideas to form catch words.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

23-25	You already use catch words frequently to organize learning for test study.
20-22	You are somewhat familiar with catch words and sometimes use them to organize learning for test study.
17-19	You try to organize learning into memorable connections for test study.
13-16	As you learn new information, you notice the connections between facts and ideas.
<13	As you learn new information, you <i>do not</i> notice the connections between facts and ideas.

Already Know: What I already know about the catch words memorization strategy is...

Want to Know: What I want to know about the catch words memorization strategy is...

How to Memorize with the Catch Words Strategy Lesson

The Catch Words Strategy can be an effective tool to help you memorize many seemingly unrelated items. The Catch Words Strategy connects the unrelated ideas we want to remember to the letters of a word or series of words that relate to each other.

Most students have been taught a few catch words in school. Do you remember these?

- **HOMES**—for the Great Lakes: Huron, Ontario, Michigan, Erie, and Superior
- **ROY G. BIV**—for the colors of the spectrum: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet
- **NEWS**—for the chief points of the compass: North, East, West, South

Directions

For each item or idea that you want to remember, write down the first letter of the key word in that item or idea. Next, look at the jumble of letters and rearrange to form a word or set of words. Feel free to add on additional letters, if necessary, to complete a word.

For example, say you need to memorize some facts for an upcoming history test on World War I. Let's say your teacher has told you that you will need to know the causes of the war and the members of the opposing alliances. You can memorize these causes and alliances with the Catch Words Strategy.

For the long-term causes of World War I: alliances, militarism, nationalism, and imperialism, let's rearrange this list, using the first letter of each cause in this order: **MAIN**. For the opposing alliances: one set of allies was **E**ngland, **R**ussia, and **F**rance and the other set of allies was **G**ermany, **A**ustria, and **I**taly. Let's rearrange the first alliance as **REF** and the second as **A GI**. Put them together and you've got the memorable **MAIN REF A GI**.

Now, develop a picture of a **A GI**-Joe doll, dressed in a **REF**eree uniform, directing traffic on **MAIN** Street, and you will never forget these catch words. That's ten key facts from World War I, organized in three categories!

Now prompt yourself to remember each fact by referring only to the above catch words. Works well, doesn't it? A little rehearsal will place these facts into your long-term memory and help you "ace" that history test.

If you need to memorize a multiple-word item or idea, select the letter of the key word. For example, if you need to memorize "It's in the hall closet," the key word would be **h**all or **c**loset.

Practice: Take out a piece of white paper and list six to eight items on your teacher's desk (or in your backpack). Write down the first letter of each item. Form a word or words from the jumbled

letters. Add in another letter if you need to complete a word. Draw out the word or words if you wish.

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Memorize with the Catch Sentence Strategy Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. When I organize each day's work, I organize it into memorable forms.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. When I review each day's schoolwork, I organize it for test study.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. When I memorize, I try associate something unknown with something I will remember.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. When I memorize, I try to identify the connections among similar items or ideas.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. When I memorize items or ideas in order, I use the first letters of items or ideas to form catch sentences.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

23-25	You already use catch sentences frequently to organize learning for test study.
20-22	You are somewhat familiar with catch sentences and sometimes use them to organize learning for test study.
17-19	You try to organize learning into memorable connections for test study and determine a sequence for study.
13-16	As you learn new information, you notice the connections between facts and ideas.
<13	As you learn new information, you <i>do not</i> notice the connections between facts and ideas.

Already Know: What I already know about the catch sentences memorization strategy is...

Want to Know: What I want to know about the catch sentences memorization strategy is...

How to Memorize with the Catch Sentence Strategy Lesson

The Catch Sentence Strategy can be an effective tool to help you memorize many seemingly unrelated items or ideas. This memory trick is especially helpful for memorizing items or facts in an exact order. Like the Catch Words Strategy, this memory trick *forces* you to remember each item or idea by prompting your recall of the first letter of each key word. Fortunately, you probably have heard a few of the most often used catch sentences in school or elsewhere.

If you have ever taken a piano lesson, you undoubtedly will remember the notes on the scale from the catch sentence: **Every Good Boy Does Fine-for the notes of the scale: E G B D F**

You probably memorized **Please Excuse My Dear Aunt Sally** to remember the order of operations in math: parentheses, exponents, multiplication, division, addition, subtraction

From science class, you may have memorized **King Henry Died by Drinking Chocolate Milk** for the units of measurement prefixes: kilo, hecto, deca, base, deci, centi, milli

Directions

For each key word that you want to remember, use the first letter of each word as the first letter of a new word that will fit into a memorable new sentence or phrase. You can add in other words to your sentence if they won't confuse you.

Example

Let's use the Catch Sentence Strategy to memorize the first ten presidents of the United States in exact order.

- | | | | | |
|---------------|------------|--------------|-------------|-----------|
| 1. Washington | 2. Adams | 3. Jefferson | 4. Madison | 5. Monroe |
| 6. Adams | 7. Jackson | 8. Van Buren | 9. Harrison | 10. Tyler |

For each president, use the first letter of each name as the first letter of a new word that will fit into a memorable sentence or phrase. The more personal or unusual the sentence, the better. How about this one? "Why are jerks making money always just very happy tycoons?"

Notice that "jerks" takes care of the confusion between Jefferson and Jackson by using "je" at the start of the word and "making money" does the same for Madison and Monroe.

Now prompt yourself to remember each name by referring only to the above catch sentence. Works well, doesn't it?

Practice: Circle the first letter for each of the planets in our solar system: Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune. Write a new word for each of these letters that will fit with other words to form a memorable catch sentence in the spaces provided.

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Memorize with the Location Strategy Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. When I memorize, I visualize what I am trying to remember.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. If I am trying to memorize an unfamiliar term or idea, I connect it to a familiar term or idea.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I can clearly picture where each of the rooms in my house or apartment are located.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I can clearly picture a key object in each of the rooms of my house or apartment.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. When I use my senses (taste, touch, sight, hearing, and smell), what I sense is easily memorable for me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

23-25	You have all the memory capabilities to use the location memorization strategy.
20-22	You have most of the memory capabilities to use the location memorization strategy.
17-19	You have some of the memory capabilities to use the location memorization strategy.
13-16	You have a few of the memory capabilities to use the location memorization strategy.
<13	You need to develop memory capabilities to use the location memorization strategy.

Already Know: What I already know about the location memorization strategy is...

Want to Know: What I want to know about the location memorization strategy is...

How to Memorize with the Location Strategy Lesson

The Location Strategy connects the unrelated ideas you want to remember by using memorable locations to fix the facts or ideas in our memory in a spatial relationship. This technique is especially useful because you can memorize any items in exact order.

Directions

Picture the floor plan of your house or apartment. Visualize a clockwise walk throughout your home, beginning in the entryway. For each room, picture the key word, or concrete object, on or next to an especially memorable object in that room. Substitute concrete objects for any key words that are too abstract to remember well. For example, substitute the concrete “bulging bicep muscle” for the abstract *strength* is a much more memorable object to picture in your rooms.

Example

Let’s say you want to memorize the “Preamble to the Constitution.” First, highlight the key words. The key words are not necessarily the most important words, but are the words that will best prompt your memory of a group of words. If you memorize the key words in order, each will help prompt your memory of the surrounding words.

“We the **people** of the United States, **in order** to form a more perfect **union**, establish **justice**, ensure domestic **tranquility**, provide for the common **defense**, promote the **general** welfare and secure the **blessings** of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do **ordain** and establish this Constitution **for** the United States of America.”

Using the Location Strategy, you might picture your entire family, linking arms together, in the **entryway** of your house (**people**). Next, picture your family marching single-file (**in order**) to your kitchen where you pick up a smelly onion (**union**) from the counter. You hand the onion to your mom, who is dressed in a judge’s (**justice**) robe. You follow your mom, who tranquilly (**tranquility**) leaves the kitchen and slides toward the living room, where you both must step over the fence (**defense**) to get into the living room. On top of the television is an old photograph of your grandfather, dressed as an army general (**general**). The grandfather sneezes, and both you and your mom say “God bless (**blessings**) you.” Your mom stays in the living room, but you walk into the hallway and see a colorful poster (**posterity**) of Beyoncé. You walk into the bathroom and close the door. You look up over the sink and see two words written in white shaving cream on the mirror (**ordain and establish**). You yell to your mom, “What are those two words **for** on the mirror?” You turn around to leave the bathroom and a bright orange four (**for**) is taped to the back of the bathroom door.

Now prompt yourself to remember each fact by visualizing the people, items, movement, and speech in those rooms. Close your eyes if it helps. If you actually walk through your apartment or home while you practice, the “Preamble to the Constitution” will be easy to memorize.

Practice: On a white sheet of paper and use the location memory strategy to draw out and memorize “The Pledge of Allegiance” or a favorite poem or song.

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Dissect a Writing Prompt Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. You re-read the writing prompt before planning an essay.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. You focus on the specific essay direction word to understand the writing prompt.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. You identify the Who and What words of the writing prompt before planning an essay.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. You identify the How and Do words of the writing prompt before planning an essay.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. You summarize the writing prompt in your own words before planning an essay.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

23-25	You know how to properly dissect a writing prompt to understand essay directions.
20-22	You mostly know how to properly dissect a writing prompt to understand essay directions.
17-19	You know some strategies about properly dissecting a writing prompt to understand essay directions.
13-16	You know a few strategies about properly dissecting a writing prompt to understand essay directions.
<13	You need to learn how to properly dissect a writing prompt to understand essay directions.

Already Know: What I already know about learning the parts of speech is _____

Want to Know: What I want to know about learning the parts of speech is _____

How to Dissect a Writing Prompt Lesson



Step 1: Dissect the Writing Prompt

Directions

1. Carefully read the **Writing Prompt** and the definition of the key **Essay Direction Word**.

Writing Prompt

Both the Abominable Snowman and the Loch Ness Monster have interested curious-minded people for years. The question of whether either creature really exists is probably still unanswered. Compare and contrast the evidence for the existence of these creatures found in this blog post and magazine article excerpt.

Essay Direction Word: *Compare* means to show how things are the same, and *contrast* means to show how things are different.

2. Next, re-read the **Writing Prompt** and use the following symbols or color highlight to mark the words that fit into these categories:

WHO, WHAT, HOW, DO

WHO

Underline any words which identify the **audience and the role of the writer**.

○WHAT

Circle any words which identify the **topic and format of the writing task**.

[HOW]

Bracket any words which identify the **context, author(s), and source(s)**.

□DO

Box any words which identify **key writing direction words**.

Now put the **Writing Prompt** into your own words.

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Write a Thesis Statement Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. My thesis statements directly respond to the key sections of the writing prompt.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. My thesis statements are designed differently for argumentative and informational/explanatory essays.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. My thesis statements are not too general and not too specific.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. My thesis statements <i>do not</i> introduce evidence.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I place my thesis statement at the end of my introductory essay paragraph.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

- 23-25 You know how to write an effective thesis statement.
- 20-22 You mostly know how to write an effective thesis statement.
- 17-19 You know how to write a thesis statement, but you need to learn a few tips.
- 13-16 You somewhat know how to write an effective thesis statement, but you need to learn a few tips.
- <13 You need to learn how to write an effective thesis statement.

Already Know: What I already know about learning the parts of speech is _____

Want to Know: What I want to know about learning the parts of speech is _____

How to Write a Thesis Statement Lesson

To write effective essays, students need to learn how to write thesis statements. The thesis statement is guided by the demands of the writing prompt. The *writing prompt* tells you what to write about and how to do so. A good thesis statement directly responds to the writing prompt. For an argumentative essay, the thesis statement states the claim(s) of the essay. For an informational/explanatory essay, the thesis statement states the specific purpose of the essay.

How to Write a Good Thesis Statement

To make sure that you directly respond to the writing prompt, include the writing topic and key words of that writing prompt in your thesis statement. Usually place the thesis statement at the end of the introductory paragraph. The thesis statement should be as specific as possible, but general enough to permit more than one topic sentence to support the purpose or point of view.

Avoid These Thesis Statement Mistakes

- The thesis statement does not state the specific point of view for an argumentative essay or the specific purpose for informational/explanatory essay.
- The thesis statement introduces evidence.
- The thesis statement refers to only part of the task of the writing prompt.
- The thesis statement refers to the essay and to the writer.
- The thesis statement includes a split (divided) focus which either argues against itself or introduces more than one focus of the essay.
- The thesis statement confuses the writing genre. For example, the writer states a point of view for an informational/explanatory writing prompt.
- The thesis statement is too specific and does not allow the writer to address the broader demands of the writing prompt.

Practice: Study the poor thesis statement and explanation. Then revise the thesis statement.

Writing Prompt: Service to one's country is true patriotism. President John F. Kennedy challenged Americans to "...ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country." Analyze what President Kennedy meant by this statement in his Inaugural Address from January 20, 1961, to share during class discussion.

I think President Kennedy meant Americans should not think our country exists to benefit us when he said "...ask not what your country can do for you..." and I will prove it in this essay.

Explanation: This thesis statement refers to only part of the task of the writing prompt and it addresses the writer and to the essay itself.

Revision: _____

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Avoid Errors in Writing Style Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. I can identify the key errors of writing style in others' writing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I can identify the key errors of writing style in my own rough draft writing before I revise.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I avoid using meaningless words or details to "pad" my writing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. When I write, I am careful with my word choice.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I concentrate on writing clearly and view my writing from that of the reader.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

- 23-25 You are aware of key errors of writing style and you attempt to avoid these errors in your writing.
- 20-22 You are aware of some errors of writing style and you attempt to avoid these errors in your writing.
- 17-19 You are aware of a few errors of writing style and you attempt to avoid these errors in your writing.
- 13-16 You are not aware of the errors of writing style in others' writing. You can learn the key errors of writing style and eliminate these from your writing.
- <13 You don't recognize errors of writing style in your own writing. You can learn the key errors of writing style and eliminate these from your writing.

Already Know: What I already know about writing style errors is _____

Want to Know: What I want to know about writing style errors is _____

How to Avoid Errors in Writing Style Lesson

Writing style is very personal and varies from author to author. However, *good* writing style does follow a set of rules which apply to all writers.

Practice: Read the following humorous sentences, which each both teach and violate a different rule of writing style. Explain the writing style error in the spaces provided.

1. Avoid using meaningless phrases in this present day and age.

2. In my paragraph, I have shown that you should delete references to your own writing.

3. Be sort of, kind of specific.

4. Prepositions are not good to end sentences with.

5. Also, never, never repeat words or phrases very, very much, too.

6. Resist exaggeration; it only works once in a million years.

7. Writers should always avoid generalizations.

8. Avoid using big words when more utilitarian words will suffice.

9. The passive voice is a form to be avoided, if it can be at all helped.

10. Never write no double negatives.

11. There are good reasons to avoid starting every sentence with *There*.

12. Keep pronoun references close to subjects in long sentences to make them clear.

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Follow Essay Writing Rules Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. I avoid over-using the same words in essays.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I write consistently in third person throughout my essays.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I avoid using contractions and abbreviations in essays.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I avoid using slang and figures of speech in essays.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I avoid overusing the “to-be” verbs: <i>is am are was were be being been</i> in essays.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

- 23-25 You understand and apply all the essential essay writing rules.
- 20-22 You understand and apply most of the essential essay writing rules.
- 17-19 You understand and apply some of the essential essay writing rules.
- 13-16 You understand and apply few of the essential essay writing rules. Learning and applying these rules will significantly improve your writing.
- <13 You don't know the essential essay writing rules. Learning and applying these rules will significantly improve your writing.

Already Know: What I already know about the essay writing rules is _____

Want to Know: What I want to know about the essay writing rules is _____

How to Follow Essay Writing Rules Lesson

Essays have different rules than do stories, letters, poems, or journal writing. Keep in mind that an essay is a **formal writing genre**. The writer of an essay must present evidence in a fair and balanced manner within a specific structure. Much like an attorney presents a case in court, the writer of an essay follows certain procedures.

- The attorney (writer) makes introductory remarks (the introductory paragraph) in which a proposed verdict (think thesis statement or the claim) of innocent or guilty is stated.
- Next, the attorney (writer) presents the main points of the case and the evidence that supports them (body paragraphs with topic sentences and evidence). The attorney (writer) must follow specific rules of evidence (essay writing rules) in court (in the essay).
- Finally, the attorney (writer) presents the closing arguments (the conclusion paragraph) which returns to the desired verdict (re-statement of the thesis) and summarizes the evidence and/or calls the jury to action.

Practice: In the spaces provided following these essay writing rules, write your own sentence examples in which you intentionally violate each rule:

Essay Writing Rules

1. Write in complete sentences. Intentional fragments, such as “Right?” do not belong in essays.

2. Write in third person. Talk about the subject of the essay. Do not personalize with the first person pronouns: *I, me, my, mine, we, us, our, ours, ourselves*. Do not talk to the reader with second person pronouns: *you, your, yours, yourself, yourselves*.

3. Do not abbreviate, such as *U.S.* Use the entire word or phrase, such as *United States*.

4. Do not use slang, such as *kids*. Use official, or formal, words, such as *children*.

5. Do not use contractions, such as *don't*. Use both words, such as *do not*.

6. Do not use figures of speech. Essays do not use poetic devices or idiomatic expressions. For example, don't write “He let the cat out of the bag.” Instead, say “He shared a secret.”

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Write an Essay Introduction Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. When writing an essay, I include an introduction, body, and conclusion.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. When writing an essay, I write at least three sentences for an introductory paragraph.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. When writing an introduction, I use at least two different essay strategies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. When writing an essay, I end my introductory paragraph with a thesis statement.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. When writing an introduction, I adapt my introduction strategies to the demands of the writing prompt and the writing genre.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

23-25	You understand and apply all the introductory paragraph strategies.
20-22	You understand and apply most of the introductory paragraph strategies.
17-19	You understand and apply some of the introductory paragraph strategies.
13-16	You understand and apply few of the introductory paragraph strategies. Learning how to write an introduction is an important skill.
<13	You do not understand and apply the introductory paragraph strategies. Learning how to write an introduction is an important skill.

Already Know: What I already know about writing an introductory paragraph is...

Want to Know: What I want to know about writing an introductory paragraph is...

How to Write an Essay Introduction Lesson

Many writers are ill-equipped to write an introduction to an essay, article, formal research paper, or business letter. Often, developing writers are taught one structure for an introductory paragraph (such as a three-sentence hook, background, and thesis statement) and find that it just doesn't work for every writing task. Developing writers need the flexibility of multiple strategies.

The following introduction strategies will help you write an introduction leading up to your thesis that will be appropriate to the specific writing task, engage the reader, and show off your writing skills. The **DQ RAPS BC** memory trick will help you remember these strategies. Not every introduction strategy fits the purpose of every writing task, so learn these options.

DQ RAPS BC Introduction Strategies

- **D**efinition-Sentences that explain the meaning of a key word that may be unfamiliar to the reader or help to narrow the focus of the subject.
- **Q**uestion to be **A**nswered-A sentence worded as a question that asks either a question needing no answer (rhetorical question) or a question to make the reader think of a question that will be answered in the essay.
- **R**eference to Something Known in Common-Sentences that refer to a fact or idea already known by most people, including your reader.
- **Q**uote from an **A**uthority-Sentences that quote an authority in the subject of the essay. It must list the name of the authority.
- **P**review of Topic Sentences-Sentences that list the subjects of each body paragraph topic sentence in the order they appear in the essay.
- **S**tartling Statement-Sentences that are designed to startle the reader with an emotional response to help support the thesis statement.
- **B**ackground-Sentences that briefly explain the setting or help your reader better understand the thesis statement.
- **C**ontroversial Statement-Sentences that interest the reader because many might disagree with what is being said.

For short essays, start your introductory paragraph with two of the strategies listed above (one sentence each) and conclude with a thesis statement.

Practice: Choose two introduction strategies, which you have never used before and write a sentence to introduce an essay thesis statement which follows these strategies:

Consequently, most children agree that _____ is the best holiday of the year.

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Write an Essay Body Paragraph Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. When writing an essay, I include at least two body paragraphs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. In a body paragraph, I include a variety of types of evidence.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. In a body paragraph, I place the topic sentence first.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. In a body paragraph, I support the topic sentence with at least two major details	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. In a body paragraph, I support each major detail with a minor detail	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

23-25	Your body paragraphs are well-organized and have major details and minor details that share a variety of evidence.
20-22	Your body paragraphs are organized and have major details and minor details that share evidence.
17-19	Your body paragraphs are organized and have major details and minor details.
13-16	Your body paragraphs are somewhat organized and have some major details and minor details. Learning how to organize body paragraphs and support with a variety of types of evidence is an important writing skill.
<13	Your body paragraphs lack proper organization. Learning how to organize body paragraphs and support with a variety of types of evidence is an important writing skill.

Already Know: What I already know about writing body paragraphs is _____

Want to Know: What I want to know about writing body paragraphs is _____

How to Write an Essay Body Paragraph Lesson

Many writers have not learned how to write body paragraphs for an essay, article, formal research paper, or business letter. The following strategies will help you write learn how to write body paragraphs that will specifically address the writing prompt, provide relevant evidence to prove your thesis, and show off your writing skills. The **FE SCALE** memory trick will help you remember the different types of evidence. Not every evidence strategy fits the purpose of every writing task, so learn and practice these options to increase your writing skill-set.

FE SCALE Evidence Strategies (Think Centigrade Fahrenheit)

- **F**act means something actually said or done. Use quotes for direct or indirect quotations.
- **E**xample is a subset typical of a category or group.
- **S**tatistic is a numerical figure that represents evidence gained from scientific research.
- **C**omparison means to show how the subject is like something else in a meaningful way.
- **Q**uote from an **A**uthority is something said by an expert on the subject.
- **L**ogic means to use deductive (general to specific) or inductive (specific to general) reasoning to prove a point.
- **E**xperience used as evidence may be a commonly known event or an event of which there is limited knowledge.

Body paragraphs are organized around the topic sentence, which is a main point, key step, reason, or argument to prove the thesis statement. Usually place your topic sentence at the beginning of each body paragraph. Use the **FE SCALE** evidence strategies as major details to support your topic sentence. Support your evidence with minor details (analysis or commentary).

A short body paragraph might be structured in this way:

- Topic Sentence (main point, key step, reason, argument)
- Major Detail: Evidence Strategy #1 (a concrete detail)
- Minor Detail: Analysis or Commentary (perhaps 2 sentences)
- Major Detail: Evidence Strategy #2 (a concrete detail)
- Minor Detail: Analysis or Commentary (perhaps 2 sentences)
- Evidence Strategy #3 Sentence
- Conclusion/Transition

Practice: Choose two types of evidence, which you have never used before to support this topic sentence in a history research paper: Americans appreciate the history of the Fourth of July holiday.

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Write an Essay Conclusion Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. When writing an essay, I re-state the thesis as the first sentence of my conclusion.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. When writing an essay, I write my conclusion last.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. When writing a conclusion, I include more than a summary and a re-statement of the the thesis.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. When writing a conclusion, I include at least two strategies besides a summary and a re-statement of the the thesis.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. When writing a conclusion, I focus on bringing the reader to a verdict about the thesis.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

- 23-25 You understand and apply all the conclusion paragraph strategies.
- 20-22 You understand and apply many of the conclusion paragraph strategies.
- 17-19 You understand and apply some of the introductory paragraph strategies.
- 13-16 You understand and apply few of the conclusion paragraph strategies. Mastering the conclusion strategies shared in this lesson will improve your writing.
- <13 You are not well prepared to write conclusion paragraphs. Mastering the conclusion strategies shared in this lesson will improve your writing.

Already Know: What I already know about writing concluding paragraphs is...

Want to Know: What I want to know about writing concluding paragraphs is...

How to Write an Essay Conclusion Lesson

Very few writers have learned how to write a conclusion to an essay, article, formal research paper, or business letter. All too often, students only received this limited instruction about how to write a conclusion: “Re-state the thesis; write another sentence that summarizes the body paragraphs; then ‘give a finished feeling’ to the writing.” Hard to write an effective conclusion with that kind of limited instruction...

The following strategies will help you learn how to write a conclusion that will be appropriate to the writing task, convince your reader, and also show off your writing skills. The **GQ SALE SC** memory trick will help remind you of your conclusion strategy options. Not every conclusion strategy fits the purpose of every writing task, so learn and practice these options to increase your writing skill-set.

GQ SALE SC Conclusion Strategies

- **G**eneralization-Sentences that make one of your specific points more general in focus.
- **Q**uestion for Further Study-Sentences that mention a related subject or question that is beyond the focus of the essay.
- **S**tatement of **S**ignificance-Sentences that discuss the importance and relevance of the proven thesis statement.
- **A**pplication-Sentences that apply the proven thesis statement to another idea or issue.
- **A**rgument **L**imitations-Sentences that explain how or why your conclusions are limited.
- **E**mphasis of **K**ey Point-Sentences that mention and add importance to one of the points of your essay.
- **S**ummary Statement-Sentences that list the main ideas and major details of the essay.
- **C**all to Action- Sentences that challenge the reader to take a stand, make a difference, or get involved.

For short essays, most writers begin a concluding paragraph with a one-sentence thesis re-statement. Then, follow with two of the strategies listed above (one sentence each).

Practice: Choose two conclusion strategies, which you have never used before, to follow this thesis re-statement in a newspaper editorial about holidays:

American should substitute a new holiday, _____, for the old _____ holiday. _____

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Write Complex Sentences Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. I use a variety of different grammatical structures for my sentences.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I use complex sentences throughout my writing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I use a variety of dependent clauses.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I avoid writing two simple sentences in a row.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I intentionally combine related sentences into compound sentences and occasionally add a dependent clause to form a compound-complex sentence.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

- 23-25 You write with excellent sentence variety and style.
- 20-22 You write with good sentence variety and style.
- 17-19 You write with some sentence variety and style.
- 13-16 You write with little sentence variety. Learning to write complex sentences will greatly improve your writing skills and writing style.
- <13 You don't include sentence variety in your writing, but tend to compose only simple sentences. Learning to write complex sentences will greatly improve your writing skills and writing style.

Already Know: What I already know about writing complex sentences is _____

Want to Know: What I want to know about writing complex sentences is _____

How to Write Complex Sentences Lesson

Many students have only learned to write in simple or compound sentences. Using complex sentences will help writers improve their writing style and sentence variety.

Types of Sentence Structures

A **simple sentence** has a noun (person, place, thing, or idea), a verb (mental or physical action or “to-be” verb-is, am, are, was, were, be, being, been), and the rest of the sentence (complement).

Example: John ran down the street.

A **compound sentence** combines two simple sentences with a conjunction (a connecting word such as and, but, or so). **Example:** John ran down the street, and he saw the crime take place.

A **complex sentence** has an independent clause and at least one dependent clause. An independent clause has a noun and a verb that expresses a complete thought. A dependent clause has a noun and a verb that do not express a complete thought. **Example:** Ty completed all his chores (independent clause) + after eating his lunch (dependent clause) = Ty completed all his chores after eating his lunch.

Complex sentences help define the relationship between complicated ideas. Form complex sentences by adding dependent clauses to the beginning, middle, or end of your simple or compound sentences. If starting a sentence with a dependent clause, always follow the clause with a comma. Note: A dependent clause added to a complex sentence forms a compound-complex sentence.

Practice: Write a complex sentence of your own following each type of dependent clause.

1. **Adjective clauses** describe nouns or pronouns. Words beginning adjective clauses include who, whose, on (for, of) whom to refer to people, that to refer to people or things, and which to refer only to things. **Example:** Picasso, whose work is well-known, was a Spaniard.

2. **Adverbial clauses** describe an adjective or a verb. Words beginning adverb clauses include after, although, as, as if, as long as, as much as, as soon as, because, before, even if, how, if, in order that, once, since, so that, then, though, unless, until, when, whenever, where, wherever, whether, and while. **Example:** The doctor will see her, as long as she can wait for him.

3. **Noun clauses** are used as a subject, a complement (the rest of the sentence besides the subject and predicate), or as the object of a preposition. Words beginning noun clauses include that, what, whatever, which, whichever, who, whoever, whom, and whomever. **Example:** Whatever he demands, we will give it to him.

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Practice Active Listening Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. In class I listen actively, not passively.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. When I listen to someone, I keep eye contact with the speaker.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. When I listen to someone, I practice good posture.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. When I listen to someone, I avoid distractions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. When I listen to someone, I interact with speaker, asking questions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

- 23-25 You are an active listener and practice all the strategies that will help you pay attention well in class.
- 20-22 You are an active listener and practice many of the strategies that will help you pay attention in class.
- 17-19 You practice some of the active listening strategies that will help you pay attention in class.
- 13-16 You practice a few of the active listening strategies that will help you pay attention in class. Learning the active listening strategies will improve your attention span and achievement.
- <13 You don't use the active listening strategies that will help you pay attention in class. Learning the active listening strategies will improve your attention span and achievement.

Already Know: What I already know about active listening techniques is _____

Want to Know: What I want to know about active listening techniques is _____

How to Practice Active Listening Lesson

Much of our listening is passive. In contrast, active listening is interactive and takes effort and practice. You can improve active listening skills by applying the tips found in **ED IS PC**.

E Eye contact helps us concentrate on the speaker. We all remember a parent demanding, “Look at me, when I’m talking to you” or a teacher saying, “Eyes on me!” to the class. Maintaining eye contact improves attention to what is being said.

D Distractions prevent focused attention. Identify anything or anyone that takes you away from active listening and minimize the distraction to the extent that you can control. In a classroom, sitting next to your best friend or someone who is not actively engaged with the speaker will distract you from listening. Time to move! Avoid having toys within arm’s reach that will challenge your ability to pay close attention. Think of toys such as cell phones, pens, reading materials: in short, any external stimuli that distract you from the 100% listening task.

I Interact with and think like the speaker. Any speaker has a specific organizational plan for any presentation. Identify and follow the common organizational patterns of presentations: causes and effects, reasons and explanations, comparisons and contrasts, chronological order, issue and action steps, main ideas or steps and their key details/examples, problems and solutions, questions and answers, and evidence with analysis.

Practice these interactive actions to increase your active listening:

- Ask questions to clarify speaker points and answer questions presented by the speaker.
- Maintain an internal dialogue with the speaker about each of the main points.
- Connect to prior learning. How does what is being said relate to what you already know?
- Focus on the main ideas and don’t get lost in the details. Recognize when your speaker gets off on a tangent or on “bird walks.”
- Write summary notes and questions at the end of key speaker points.

S Signal words provide transitions between one idea to another. Pay attention to the key words that signal the introduction of a new idea. Each pattern of organization has its own signal words to transition between ideas. For example, the chronological pattern makes use of “first,” “next,” “then,” “finally” and many more. Listening to these cues will help you concentrate better.

P Posture matters! Sit up straight with feet flat on the floor. Adjust your seat or desk so that you are looking directly at the speaker, not from an angle. Keep both hands on the table or desk to maintain this posture. A bit uncomfortable? Good. Perfect relaxation promotes passive listening. A little stress promotes active listening. Try to sit as close as possible to the speaker: front and center gets the most speaker attention and your best position for interaction.

C Concentrate on what is being said and don’t daydream. Listening is a full-time job. Listen to *what* is being said, *how* it is being said, and *why* it is being said. A good trick maintain concentration is to pretend that you will have to repeat the speaker’s presentation.

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Take Notes Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. In note-taking, I listen first and then quickly write down key information.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. While taking notes, I listen first, then quickly write a summary.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. In my notes I use many abbreviations and symbols.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I use the signals my teacher, videos, and textbooks use to stress main ideas and key details.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I only write down information that I don't know, not information that I already know.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

- 23-25 You have excellent note-taking skills.
- 20-22 You have good note-taking skills.
- 17-19 You have some good note-taking skills.
- 13-16 You are familiar with some note-taking skills and will benefit from learning others.
- <13 You are unfamiliar with most note-taking skills and will benefit from learning how to take notes.

Already Know: What I already know about taking notes is _____

Want to Know: What I want to know about taking notes is _____

How to Take Notes Lesson

Taking notes can improve comprehension and retention of the information presented in lectures, videos, and textbooks. Note-taking can also help you organize for test study and for prewriting brainstorming.

Simply put, notes are summaries of the main ideas and key details that the teacher wants you to understand and remember. Effective note-taking organizes these summaries so that they can easily be reviewed and practiced. Here are a few key ingredients to effective note-taking:

1. Listen to or read the **complete thought**. Don't write something down until you understand it.
2. Learn the **signals** that your teacher, the speaker in a video, and the author(s) of a textbook use to stress main ideas and key details:
 - Repeating key points
 - Raising the voice or speaking slowly to emphasize key points
 - Writing key points down or spelling the key words out loud
 - Using phrases such as “key to” “most importantly” “main idea” “in conclusion”
 - Using transition words such as “first” “next” “finally”
3. Don't write everything that the teacher or textbook says. **Be selective**. If you already know it, don't write it down.
4. Use your own **shorthand** symbols and abbreviations. Take notes like you text.
5. **Ask questions** about main ideas and key details that you don't understand.
6. Use a note-taking organizational pattern that fits with the information being presented. A one-size-fits-all note-taking format is not the best approach. **Use different formats for different organizational patterns and purposes.**

Common Note-taking Abbreviations and Symbols (Applicable to any Academic Subject)

bc	because	“ “	ditto marks (same as above)	=	the same as
≠	not the same as	→	causes or leads to	e.g.	for example
etc.	and so on	i.e.	that is	X	not
☆	important	max	maximum	min	minimum
Q	question	A	answer	#	number
p	page	pp	pages	+	and
ref	reference	+/-	more or less	w/o	without
w/	with	re	regarding, about	~	reverse
?	confusing	1, 2, 3	first, second, third	▪	therefore

Practice: Write what you have learned about note-taking using abbreviations and symbols.

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Organize Cornell Notes Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. You could draw and label the format of the Cornell note-taking system.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. You could develop an essential question for Cornell Notes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. You could chunk the note-taking information in the right column.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. You could develop higher level questions from the notes in the left column.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. You could summarize a combination of the main ideas and address the essential question.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

23-25	You know the format and key components of the Cornell note-taking system.
20-22	You know most of the format and key components of the Cornell note-taking system.
17-19	You know some of the format and key components of the Cornell note-taking system.
13-16	You know a bit about the format and key components of the Cornell note-taking system and will learn the rest from this lesson.
<13	You are unfamiliar with the format and key components of the Cornell note-taking system, but you will learn all about Cornell Notes in this lesson.

Already Know: What I already know about taking Cornell Notes is _____

Want to Know: What I want to know about taking Cornell Notes is _____

How to Organize Cornell Notes Lesson

Cornell Notes is a format for taking notes from a lecture, reading, or video. The format will also help you recite, reflect, and review to put the information into your long-term memory. Follow these steps to complete Cornell Notes:

- Complete the full heading.
- Write the essential question about the topic or objective as provided by your teacher. If none is provided, complete the essential question when reviewing your notes.
- Take notes in the right column, using bullet points. Abbreviate and write in phrases as much as possible. Draw pictures or symbols if these are helpful. Skip lines between the ideas.
- Later that same day, during your ten-minute Daily Review, review your notes and make marginal annotations. Cross out unnecessary words. Chunk the information and make connections to form the main ideas. Write questions to ask the teacher about anything that is confusing.
- In the left column, write higher level test questions from the main ideas.
- Write a summary in which you combine the main ideas and address the essential question.
- For test study, cover the right side with your hand and use the questions to quiz yourself.

Practice: Read and take Cornell Notes on one subtitled section in your history or science textbook.

Topic/Objective:	Name:	
	Class/Period:	
	Date:	
Essential Question:		
Questions:	Notes:	
Summary:		

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Organize Formal Outline Notes Self-Assessment

Always Usually Sometimes Rarely Never

	5	4	3	2	1
1. You know what each of the alphanumeric symbols represents.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. You know what each of the decimal symbols represents.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. You know the function of main ideas in formal outline notes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. You know the function of major details in formal outline notes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. You know the function of minor details in formal outline notes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

23-25	You know the format and key components of the alphanumeric and decimal systems of formal outline note-taking.
20-22	You know most of the format and key components of the alphanumeric and decimal systems of formal outline note-taking.
17-19	You know some of the format and key components of both or one of the alphanumeric and decimal systems of formal outline note-taking.
13-16	You know a little bit about how to organize formal outline notes and will learn much more in this lesson.
<13	You haven't learned much yet about how to organize formal outline notes, but you will in this lesson.

Already Know: What I already know about learning formal outline notes is _____

Want to Know: What I want to know about learning formal outline notes is _____

How to Organize Formal Outline Notes Lesson

Alphanumeric and decimal outlines are both used for notetaking.

Alphanumeric Outlines use numbers, letters, and periods to organize information. The first letter of the word, group of words, or sentence that follows each symbol is capitalized.

- Main ideas present the key informational sections of the lecture, video, or textbook topic and are listed as Roman numerals on the left margin and are followed by periods.
Examples: I. II. III. IV. V. VI. VII. VIII. IX. X.
- Major details are listed as capital letters, followed by periods, and are indented on the lines below the main ideas. Major details *modify* the main ideas. *Modify* means to describe, change, or limit. **Examples:** A., B., C.
- The first minor detail modifies the major detail and is double indented on the next line. It begins with the Arabic numeral 1 and is followed by a period.
- The second minor detail is double indented on the next line and listed as 2.
- If examples are used to discuss minor details, use lower case letters.

Decimal Outlines use numbers to organize information. The first letter of the word, group of words, or sentence that follows each symbol is capitalized.

- Decimal Outlines begin with an Arabic numeral followed by a period and then a zero to represent the first main idea.
- The first major detail is indented from the main idea. It repeats the Arabic numeral followed by a period and then a "1." The second major detail would end in a "2," etc.
- The first minor detail is indented from the major detail. It repeats all the symbols of the major detail followed by a period and then a "1." The second minor detail would end in a "2," etc. **Examples:** 1.0, 1.1, 1.1.1, 1.1.2; 1.2, 1.2.1, 1.2.2

Practice: Apply what you have learned to fill in the blanks in both outlines.

Alphanumeric Outline Example

I. Ice cream

- A. Chocolate base flavors
 - 1. _____
 - 2. Rocky road
 - a. Peanuts
 - b. Marshmallows
- B. Fruity flavors
 - 1. Strawberry
 - 2. Cherry

II. Sherbet

- A. Orange
- B. Pineapple
- C. _____

Decimal Outline Example

1.0 Cake

- 1.1 Layer cake
 - 1.1.1 Fudge filling
 - 1.1.2 Fruit filling
- 1.2 _____
- 1.3 Bundt cake
 - 1.3.1 Cinnamon and sugar
 - 1.3.2 Apples and cloves
 - 1.3.3 Honey and raisin

2.0 Pie

- 2.1 Fruit
 - 2.1.1 Blueberry
 - 2.1.2 _____
- 2.2 Cream
 - 2.2.1 Chocolate
 - 2.2.2 _____

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Define and Identify the Parts of Speech Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. You can identify subject case and object case pronouns.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. You know what questions an adverb asks to modify (describe) an adjective, adverb, or verb.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. You know what questions an adjective asks to modify (describe) a noun or pronoun.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. You can identify conjunctions used in to join parts of a sentence.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. You can identify prepositions and the objects of the prepositions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

- 23-25 You can define and identify all the parts of speech.
- 20-22 You can define and identify most of the parts of speech.
- 17-19 You can define and identify some of the parts of speech.
- 13-16 You can define and identify a few parts of speech. But you can learn these and improve your writing.
- <13 You can't define and identify the parts of speech. But you can learn these and improve your writing.

Already Know: what I already know about learning the parts of speech is _____

Want to Know: What I want to know about learning the parts of speech is _____

How to Define and Identify the Parts of Speech Lesson

A basketball player knows the meaning of these terms: *jump shot*, a *free throw*, a *rebound*, a *foul*, a *pick-and-roll*, and a *three-pointer*. Knowing these terms helps basketball players communicate and receive instruction from their coaches. The same is true about being able to identify and use the parts of speech to communicate about speaking and writing.

Directions: Circle the best examples for each part of speech in the sentences which follow each definition and check your answers on the following page.

1. A **common noun** is a person, place, idea, or thing. It is capitalized only at the start of a sentence. It can be a single word, a group of words, or a hyphenated word.

The girl was learning to drive next to the ocean. Driving requires self-control.

2. A **proper noun** is the name of a person, place, or thing. It is always capitalized. It may be a single word, a group of words (with or without abbreviations), or a hyphenated word.

Josh was honored at U.S. Memorial Auditorium with the Smith Lee Award.

3. A **pronoun** is a word used in place of a noun(s). It can be in the subject case, acting as a “do-er” of the action in the subject case, or acting as a “receiver” of the action in the object case. Pronouns can also serve as singular or plural possessives to show ownership.

I gave her his wallet.

4. An **adjective** describes a proper noun, a common noun, or a pronoun by describing how many, what kind, or which one.

The five teammates took the tiring trip to that arena across town.

5. A **verb** shows a physical or mental action, or it describes a state of being.

She works long hours, but knows that there is more to life than work.

6. An **adverb** describes a verb or an adjective by describing how, when, where, or what degree.

Trey walked slowly, but arrived early wherever he went, and mostly he carried his cane.

7. A **preposition** is a word that has a relationship with a common noun, a proper noun, or a pronoun. The preposition is always part of a phrase and comes before its object. The preposition asks “What?” and the object provides the answer.

The judge said, under oath, that her duty was to the Constitution and for everyone.

8. A **conjunction** joins parts of a sentence.

She tries, but often fails. Either he is crazy or I am. When you listen, you understand.

9. An **article** determines number or identification of a noun and always comes before a noun. The “a” article signals a singular noun beginning with a consonant. The “an” article signals a plural noun beginning with a vowel. The “the” article signals a specific noun.

The zoologist says that a lion and an elephant are considered the “kings of the jungle.”

10. An **interjection** is a word or phrase that shows surprise or emotion. It is usually followed by an exclamation point.

Hey! Stop that.

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
4. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
5. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
6. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

Parts of Speech Answers Check out the [Parts of Speech Song](#) to practice.

1. girl, ocean, self-control; 2. Josh, U.S. Memorial Auditorium, Smith-Lee Award; 3. I, her, his
4. five, tiring, that; 5. works, knows, is; 6. slowly, easily, wherever, mostly
7. under oath, to the Constitution, for everyone; 8. but, either, or, when; 9. a, an, the; 10. Hey!

How to Use Grammatical Sentence Openers for Sentence Variety Self-Assessment

	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Don't Know
	5	4	3	2	1
1. In my writing, I vary the subject-verb-object pattern.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I start sentences with preposition phrases.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I start sentences with adverbial clauses.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I start sentences with __d or __en verbs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I start sentences with __ing words.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

- 23-25 You plan your writing with sentence variety as a focus, and you know your grammar well enough to improve your writing style.
- 20-22 You plan your writing with sentence variety as a focus, and you know some grammar to help you improve your writing style.
- 17-19 You plan your writing with sentence variety as a focus, but you don't know your grammar well enough to improve your writing style.
- 13-16 You are not able to write with much sentence variety because you don't know your grammar well enough. By practicing the following Study Tips, you will improve your writing style.
- <13 You are not able to write sentence variety because you don't know your grammar well enough. By practicing the following Study Tips, you will improve your writing style.

Already Know: What I already know about using grammatical sentence openers to improve writing style is...

Want to Know: What I want to know about using grammatical sentence openers to improve writing style is...

How to Use Grammatical Sentence Openers for Sentence Variety Lesson

One of the best ways to improve your writing style is to improve the variety of your sentence structures. Professional writers vary the subject-verb-object pattern with other grammatical sentence structures. A simple guideline for good sentence variety would be 50% subject-verb-object sentence openers and 50% other grammatical sentence openers. Revise each of the examples that follow by starting each sentence with the grammatical sentence openers.

Prepositional Phrase

Start with a phrase beginning with one of these common prepositions:

aboard, about, above, according to, across, after, against, along, among, around, as, as to, at, before, behind, below, beneath, beside, between, beyond, but, by, despite, down, during, except, for, from, in, inside, instead of, into, in place of, in spite of, like, near, next, of, off, on, onto, outside, out of, over, past, regardless of, since, than, through, throughout, to, toward, under, underneath, unlike, until, up, upon, with, within, without

Example: He found the missing watch behind the cabinet.

Revision: _____

Adverbial Clause

Start a dependent clause (a noun and verb that does not express a complete thought) with one of the following subordinating conjunctions:

after, although, as, as if, as long as, as much as, as soon as, as though, because, before, even if, even though, how, if, in order that, once, since, so that, then, that, though, unless, until, when, whenever, where, wherever, whether, or while.

Example: Lake Tahoe is fun in the summer, although it is best known for its winter activities.

Revision: _____

d, __ed, or __en Verbs

Start with a __d or an __en verb that acts as an adjective to modify a following noun or pronoun.

Example: I was frightened by the noise, so I got out of my bed to investigate.

Revision: _____

__ing Verbs and Nouns

Start a phrase with an __ing word that acts as an adjective or with an __ing word that serves as the subject of the sentence.

Example (Adjective): The climber fell rapidly, but hoped that the rope would hold.

Revision: _____

Example (Sentence Subject): The chef tastes the sauce, and it always makes him hungry.

Revision: _____

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Use Precise Verb Tenses Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. I specifically choose verb tense forms to give precision to their actions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I specifically choose verb tense forms to communicate the exact time of an action.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I use past, present, and future progressive tense verbs in my writing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I use past, present, and future perfect tense verbs in my writing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I use past, present, and future perfect progressive tense verbs in my writing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

- 23-25 You use all nine verb tense forms in your writing.
- 20-22 You use most of the nine verb tense forms in your writing.
- 17-19 You use some of the nine verb tense forms in your writing.
- 13-16 You use a few of the nine verb tense forms in your writing.
- <13 You don't use many of the nine verb tense forms in your writing.

Already Know: What I already know about the nine verb tense forms is _____

Want to Know: What I want to know about the nine verb tense forms is _____

How to Use Precise Verb Tenses Lesson

English has different forms within the past, present, and future verb tenses to communicate specific actions. **Directions:** Write your own example following each verb form.

One form of the past verb tense is the **past progressive**. The past progressive describes an action that took place over a period of time in the past. **Example:** Amanda *was entertaining* her guests when her grandmother arrived.

The **past perfect** verb tense refers to a physical or mental action or a state of being that was completed before a specific time in the past. The past perfect is formed with *had* + the past participle (a verb ending in *d*, *ed*, or *en* for regular verbs). **Example:** Cecil and Rae *had finished* their study by the time that the teacher passed out the test study guide.

Another form is the **past perfect progressive**. The past perfect progressive describes a past action that was interrupted by another past event. It is formed with *had been* and the *_ing* form of the verb. **Example:** My dad *had been driving* for two hours when she fell asleep at the wheel.

One form of the present verb tense is the **present progressive**. The present progressive describes an ongoing action happening or existing now. **Example:** She *is walking* faster than her friend.

The **present perfect** verb tense refers to a physical or mental action or a state of being happening or existing before the present. The present perfect is formed with *has* or *have* + the past participle (a verb ending in *d*, *ed*, or *en* for regular verbs). **Example:** He *has already started* his project.

Another form of the present perfect verb tense is the **present perfect progressive**. The present perfect progressive describes the length of time an action has been in progress up to the present time. It is formed with *have been* and the *_ing* form of the verb. **Example:** The students *have been writing* for over an hour.

One form of the future verb tense is the **future progressive**. The future progressive describes an ongoing action that will take place over a period of time in the future. **Example:** Amanda *will be taking* reservations over the holidays.

The **future perfect** verb tense refers to a physical or mental action or a state of being that will be completed before a specific time in the future. The future perfect is formed with a helping verb such as the modals *can*, *could*, *may*, *might*, *must*, *shall*, *should*, *will*, and *would* + *has* or *have* + the present participle (a verb ending in *d*, *ed*, or *en* for regular verbs). **Example:** We *will have walked* six miles by three-o'clock this afternoon.

Another form of the future perfect verb tense is the **future perfect progressive**. The future perfect progressive describes the length of time an action will be in progress up to a specific time in the future. It is formed with *will have been* and the *_ing* form of the verb. **Example:** The students *will have been playing* the same video game for two hours by the time their friends arrive.

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Eliminate the “to be” Verbs Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. You revise verbs to create sentence variety in your writing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. You try not to overuse the same verbs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. You watch for overuse of the “to be” verbs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. You know how to substitute and convert “to be” verbs into stronger verbs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. You know how to change and combine “to be” verbs into stronger verbs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

23-25	You identify weak and overused verbs, including the “to be” verbs, and revise these with strong verbs.
20-22	You identify most weak and overused verbs, including the “to be” verbs, and revise these with strong verbs.
17-19	You identify some weak and overused verbs, including the “to be” verbs, and revise these with strong verbs.
13-16	You identify a few weak and overused verbs, including the “to be” verbs, and revise these with strong verbs.
<13	You don’t know the strategies to revise weak verbs, but you will after this lesson.

Already Know: What I already know about eliminating “to be” verbs is _____

Want to Know: What I want to know about eliminating “to be” verbs is _____

How to Eliminate the “to be” Verbs Lesson

Writers often overuse “to be” verbs when stronger, more vivid and specific verbs would better communicate what the writer wants to say. Of course, using a “to be” verb *is* sometimes necessary. Try these strategies to eliminate the overused “to be” verb in your writing.

Identify—Memorize the “to be” verbs (*is, am, are, was, were, be, being, been*) to avoid using them.

Circle the “to be” verbs in this sentence: They are willing to leave as I am, but she isn’t ready at all.

Substitute—Sometimes a good replacement of a “to be” verb just pops into the brain. For example, instead of “That cherry pie *is* delicious,” substitute the “to be” verb *is* with *tastes* as in “That cherry pie *tastes* delicious.” **Also**, substitute the “there,” “here,” and “it” + “to be” verbs. For example, instead of “*There is* the cake, and *here are* the pies for dessert, and *it is* served by Mom,” replace with “Mom serves the cake and pies for dessert.”

Substitute the “to be” verbs in this sentence: She is saying that I was rude to her by being quiet.

Convert—Try starting the sentence differently to see if this helps eliminate a “to be” verb. For example, instead of “Charles Schulz *was* the creator of the Peanuts cartoon strip,” convert the common noun *creator* to the verb *created* as in “Charles Schulz *created* the Peanuts cartoon strip.”

Convert the “to be” verbs in this sentence: Mr. and Mrs. Peabody *were* the developers of the app.

Change—To eliminate a “to be” verb, students can change the subject of the sentence to another noun or pronoun in the sentence and rearrange the order of the sentence. For example, instead of “The car *was* stopped by a police officer,” change the complete subject, *the car*, to *a police officer* to write “A police officer stopped the car.” Also try starting the sentence with a different word or part of speech to help eliminate the “to be” verb. For example, instead of “The monster *was* in the dark tunnel creeping,” rearrange as “Down the dark tunnel crept the monster.”

Change the “to be” verbs in this sentence: That *is* the answer I *was* given by her.

Combine—Look at the sentences before and after the one with the “to be” verb to see if combining the sentences will eliminate the “to be” verb. For example, instead of “The child *was* sad. The sensitive child *was* feeling that way because of the news story,” combine as “The news story saddened the sensitive child.”

Combine sentences to eliminate the “to be” verbs: I had been late. Mom *was* arriving late, too.

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Spell by the Rules Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. You think about the spelling rule, if one applies, before spelling a difficult word.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Your teachers have taught you to practice the key spelling rules.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. You could name and describe most of the key spelling rules.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. You are an excellent speller.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. You use spelling aids such as dictionaries and “Spell Check” when unsure of a spelling.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

- 23-25 You use all the strategies of a successful speller.
- 20-22 You use most of the strategies of a successful speller.
- 17-19 You use some of the strategies of a successful speller.
- 13-16 You don't use many of the strategies of a successful speller. Memorizing and practicing the seven spelling rules will help you become a strategic speller.
- <13 You don't use the strategies of a successful speller. Memorizing and practicing the seven spelling rules will help you become a strategic speller.

Already Know: What I already know about the seven spelling rules is _____

Want to Know: What I want to know about the seven spelling rules is _____

How to Spell by the Rules Lesson

Knowing the seven conventional spelling rules is essential to be able to write well. Study these rules and then explain *why* each of the example words is spelled as it is, according to the spelling rule in the blank that follows. Click on the links to hear some memorable spelling songs.

1. The i before e Rule

Usually spell *i* before *e* but spell *e* before *i* after a *c* and when the letters say a long /a/ sound.

Examples: believe _____ receive _____ neighbor _____

2. The Final y Rule

Keep the *y* when adding an ending if the word ends in a vowel, then a *y*, or if the ending begins with an *i*. Change the *y* to *i* when adding a suffix if the word ends in a consonant, then a *y*.

Examples: delayed _____ copying _____ prettiest _____

3. The Consonant-Final e Rule

Drop the *e* at the end of a syllable if the suffix begins with a vowel. Keep the *e* when the suffix begins with a consonant.

Examples: paved _____ closely _____

4. The Double the Consonant Rule

Double the consonant, as in permitted, when adding on a suffix if all three of these conditions are met: 1. the last syllable has the accent (per / mit) 2. the last syllable ends in a vowel, then a consonant (permit). 3. the suffix begins with a vowel (ed).

Example: committee 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

5. The Ending “an” or “en” Rule

End a word with “ance”, “ancy”, or “ant” if the root before has a hard /c/ or /g/ sound or if the root ends with “ear” or “ure”. Otherwise, use the suffixes “ence”, “ency”, or “ent”.

Examples: vacancy _____ arrogance _____

clearance _____ insurance _____

6. The “able” or “ible” Rule

End a word with “able” if the root before has a hard /c/ or /g/ sound, after a complete root word (base word), or after a silent *e*. Otherwise, end the word with “ible”.

Examples: despicable _____ navigable _____

teachable _____ likeable _____

7. The /ion/ Sound Rule

Spell “sion” for the final /zyun/ sound or the final /shun/ sound if after an *l* or *s*. Spell “cian” for a person and “tion” in most all other cases.

Examples: illusion _____ expulsion _____

musician _____ condition _____

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Apply the Syllable Rules Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. In figuring out unknown words, I look at syllables for clues to meaning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. In reading difficult words, I look at syllables for their grammatical usage.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. In spelling difficult words, I spell syllable by syllable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I use my knowledge of syllable rules to form complex words in my writing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I am aware of accents when I pronounce difficult words.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

- 23-25 You use your excellent knowledge of syllabication skills to read, write, and spell better. Knowing these rules has increased your vocabulary.
- 20-22 You use your knowledge of syllabication skills to read, write, and spell better. Knowing these rules has increased your vocabulary.
- 17-19 You use limited knowledge of syllabication skills to read, write, and spell better.
- 13-16 You have few syllabication skills. Knowing syllabication skills will help you to read, write, and spell better.
- <13 You lack knowledge of syllabication skills. Knowing syllabication skills will help you to read, write, and spell better.

Already Know: What I already know about the syllabication rules is _____

Want to Know: What I know about the syllabication rules is _____

How to Apply the Syllable Rules Lesson

Directions: Learn these 10 syllable rules and provide your own examples to apply each rule.

1. Every syllable has only one vowel sound. Some syllables have just one vowel; others have two. But even when there are two vowels, there can be only one vowel sound in each syllable, so the two vowels say one sound.

Example: out-side. Your example: _____

2. A vowel before a syllable-ending consonant (VC) is usually short. This pattern is called a *closed syllable*. A syllable following begins after that consonant.

Examples: rob-in, bas-ket. Your example: _____

3. A vowel at the end of a syllable (CV) usually has a long vowel sound. This pattern is called an *open syllable*. A syllable following begins after that vowel.

Example: be-low. Your example: _____

4. The consonant-final *e* makes the vowel before a single consonant-*e* a long sound.

Example: basement. Your example: _____

5. Usually keep vowel teams together in the same syllable.

Example: boat-ing. Your example: _____

6. Keep the *r-controlled* vowels (ar, er, ir, or, and ur) in the same syllable and adjust the pronunciation.

Example: or-al-ly. Your example: _____

7. When two consonants come between two vowels in a word (VCCV), divide the syllable between the consonants. Exception: Don't divide between the consonants of a digraph (*ch, sh, wh, th*) and usually keep blends together e.g., *bl, br, sw*. Only separate ending "ed" suffixes from their roots when the roots end in *d* or *t*.

Examples: scrap-book, an-thrax, ham-ster, din-ner, con-fessed, com-mit-ted. Your example: _____

8. A suffix syllable ending with a consonant-"le" has a short *schwa* sound (a nasal short ũ) between the consonant and the "le" ending. The *e* is silent.

Example: cra-dle. Your example: _____

9. All words have one syllable that has a primary accent on its vowel sound. Words may also have secondary accents. The primary accent is usually found on the vowel in the root, not the prefix or suffix. Also, the syllable before a double consonant is usually accented.

Example: slów-ly and swím-ming. Your example: _____

10. Unaccented vowel sounds frequently have the *schwa* sound, especially when there is only one letter in the syllable. All vowels can have the *schwa* sound.

Example: a-boút. Your example: _____

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Punctuate Properly Lesson

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. I know how and where to use commas.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I can use quotation marks and underlining appropriately.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I know the difference between colons and semi-colons and can use them correctly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I can correctly use apostrophes in contractions and in possessives.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I know when and how to use parentheses and exclamation points.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

- 23-25 You are an expert in the use of punctuation.
- 20-22 You have mastered many of the punctuation rules.
- 17-19 You have mastered some of the punctuation rules.
- 13-16 You have mastered few of the punctuation rules. Learning these rules will help you write more effectively and better communicate what you say and how you want to say it.
- <13 You have not mastered the punctuation rules. Learning these rules will help you write more effectively and better communicate what you say and how you want to say it.

Already Know: What I already know about punctuation rules is _____

Want to Know: What I know about punctuation rules is _____

How to Punctuate Properly Lesson

Punctuation skills help writers control how ideas will be communicated and affect meaning. After each example, punctuate the sentence that follows. Check the answers on the next page.

Commas

-Use commas before or after speaker tags.

She said, "Call me at home."

"This seems hard" he thought.

-Use commas to set apart appositives.

That man, the one with the hat, left.

The girl Alyssa left home first.

-Use commas after each list item (except the last).

John, Jane, and Jose left early.

I would like a hamburger, fries and a soda.

-Use commas after introductory words or phrases.

First, you should listen to me.

During the first bad snowstorm I left home.

-Use commas to set off nouns of direct address.

Kristin, leave some for your sister.

You should listen, Daniel to what I say.

-Use commas before conjunctions to join independent clauses.

I liked her, and she liked me.

That is not funny but it is interesting.

Quotation Marks and Underlining

-Use quotation marks before and after direct quotations.

Sue said, "I'm going to bed."

She gave me the book, I said, and I read it.

-Use quotation marks before and after songs, poems, chapters, articles, documents, and short story titles.

Whenever I hear "Clementine," I begin to cry.

The best chapter is titled How I Gave Back.

-Underline movie, television show, book, magazine, and work of art titles.

I saw the wonderful Fiddler on the Roof last night.

The best television show was I Love Lucy.

Colons and Semicolons

-Use colons to introduce lists.

The following: shoes, pants, and...

I need these tools a vice, a saw, and an awl.

-Use colons between numbers in relationship.

8:52 P.M.

The ratio of girls to boys is 3 1.

-Use semicolons to join independent clauses.

Jamal went to school; Larry met him.

I don't know why he just does it.

Apostrophes

-Use apostrophes for contractions.

I can't see what they're doing.

You dont know if thats his rule.

-Use apostrophes for singular and plural possessives.

Tom's and the girls' coats were red.

Their friends houses were bigger than Sues.

Parentheses and Exclamation Points

-Use parentheses to explain or define.

The hombre (man) rode off alone.

The Great War World War I was terrible.

-Use exclamation points for surprise or emotion.

The decision really shocked me!

I can't believe she called.

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
4. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
5. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
6. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

Answers: “This seems hard,” he thought. The girl, Alyssa, left home first. I would like a hamburger, fries, and a soda. During the first bad snowstorm, I left home. You should listen, Daniel, to what I say. That is not funny, but it is interesting. “She gave me the book,” I said, “and I read it.” The best chapter is titled “How I Gave Back.” The best television show was I Love Lucy. I need these tools: a vice, a saw, and an awl. The ratio of girls to boys is 3:1. I don’t know why; he just does it. You don’t know if that’s his rule. Their friends’ houses were bigger than Sue’s. The Great War (World War I) was terrible. I can’t believe she called!

How to Capitalize Correctly Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. When problem-solving the meaning of a word, I look at prefixes for help with the meaning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. When problem-solving the meaning of a word, I look at roots for help with the meaning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. When problem-solving the meaning of a word, I look at suffixes for help with the meaning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. When problem-solving the spelling of a word, I look at the word parts for help with the spelling.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. My teachers assign Greek and Latin word parts for me to memorize.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

- 23-25 You use your excellent knowledge of Greek and Latin word parts to read, write, and spell better.
- 20-22 You use your familiarity with Greek and Latin word parts to read, write, and spell better.
- 17-19 You have limited knowledge of Greek and Latin word parts, but use these to read, write, and spell better.
- 13-16 You know a few common Greek and Latin word parts. Knowing the most common Greek and Latin word parts will help you to read, speak, write, and spell better.
- <13 You don't know the common Greek and Latin word parts. Knowing these word parts will improve your reading, speaking, spelling, and vocabulary.

Already Know: What I already know about Greek and Latin word parts is _____

Want to Know: What I want to know about learning Greek and Latin word parts is...

How to Capitalize Correctly Lesson

Directions: Write your own examples to match the capitalization rule in the space provided.

1. People and Character Names Capitalize people's and characters' names. Also, capitalize people's titles. **Example:** Alexander the Great. Do not capitalize an article (*a, an, the*) that is part of the title, unless it begins the title. **Example:** President James Earl Carter worked to provide housing for the poor. _____

2. Place Names Capitalize place names. Do not capitalize a preposition that is part of a title, unless it begins the title. Examples: Stratford upon Avon or Cardiff by the Sea. **Examples:** Ryan visited Los Angeles to see the Holocaust Museum. _____

3. Names of Things Capitalize named things. Do not capitalize a conjunction in the middle of a title. Example: President Lincoln and Soldiers' Home is a national monument in Washington D.C. **Example:** The Old North Church and Fenway Park are in Boston. _____

4. Names of Holidays Capitalize holidays. Normally, it is proper form to spell out numbers from one through ten in writing. However, when used as a date name, the numerical number is used. **Example:** They celebrate the 4th of July, but not Easter. _____

9. Organization and Business Names Capitalize the names of organizations and the letters of acronyms used for organizations. Writers drop the periods in well-known acronyms.

Examples: M.A.D.D. includes both parents and teachers, as does the PTA. _____

10. Letter Salutations and Closings Capitalize the salutations and closings in both friendly and business letters, excluding articles, conjunctions, and prepositions that don't begin or end the salutations or closings. **Examples:** Dear Son, ... Love, Dad _____

12. Language and Dialect Names Capitalize the names of languages and dialects.

Examples: He spoke Spanish with a Castilian dialect. _____

15. Historical Period Names Capitalize named historical periods. Leave articles, conjunctions, and prepositions in lower case, unless they begin or end the historical period. **Examples:** My favorite period of history to study is the Middle Ages or the Age of Reason. _____

16. Time Period Names Capitalize the names of special periods of time. Use lower case and periods for "a.m." and "p.m." Leave articles, conjunctions, and prepositions in lower case, unless they begin or end the time period. **Example:** This is the Year of the Dog. _____

17. Quotation Capitalization Capitalize the first word in a quoted sentence. **Don't** capitalize the first word of a continuing quote that was interrupted by a speaker tag. **Examples:** She said, "You are crazy. However," she paused, "it is crazy to be in love with you." _____

18. Capitalization Following Colons Capitalize the first word following a colon if it begins a series of sentences. **Example:** Good writing rules should include the following: Neatness counts. Indent each paragraph one inch. Proofread before publishing. _____

19. Lower Case Following Colons **Don't** capitalize the first word (or any word) in a list following a colon if the first word is a common noun. **Example:** Bring home these items: tortillas, sugar, and milk. _____ **Don't** capitalize the first word following a colon

that begins an independent clause. **Example:** I just re-read Lincoln's best speech: his Second Inaugural Address is brilliant. _____

20. Titles of People Capitalize the title of a person when it precedes the name. **Don't** capitalize the title if it does not precede the name. **Examples:** I heard the senator ask Mayor Johnson a question. _____ Capitalize the title of a person when it is after someone's name

followed by a comma. **Example:** The letter was signed as follows: John Pearson, Chairperson. _____ Capitalize the title of a person when the title is used as a noun of direct address. **Example:** I do plead guilty, Your Honor. _____

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Revise Non-Standard Usage Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. I code-switch between Non-standard English with my friends and Standard English in the classroom.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. When problem-solving the meaning of a word, I look at roots for help with the meaning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I don't make substitutions of verb forms in my speech and in my writing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I don't make additions or deletions in my speech and in my writing. I speak and write in complete sentences.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I use proper verb forms in speech and in writing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

23-25	You know how to use Standard English and avoid the errors of Non-Standard English.
20-22	You mostly know how to use Standard English and avoid the errors of Non-Standard English.
17-19	You often know how to use Standard English and avoid the errors of Non-Standard English.
13-16	You sometimes know how to use Standard English and avoid the errors of Non-Standard English, but you can improve by applying this lesson.
<13	You rarely know how to use Standard English and avoid the errors of Non-Standard English, but you can improve by applying this lesson.

Already Know: What I already know about Non-standard English is _____

Want to Know: What I want to know about recognizing and revising Non-standard English is...

How to Revise Non-Standard Usage Lesson

Non-standard English often differs from Standard English because of regional or cultural dialects. We also speak Standard English and Non-standard English in different social situations. You probably talk to your teacher differently than how you talk to your friends. We call this *code switching*. Following are examples of non-standard English for you to code-switch and revise.

Substitutions: Don't substitute *be* for *am*, *are*, or *is* to create an ongoing action in Standard English. **Example:** He be so funny. Instead, use *am*, *are*, or *is* to connect to a present participle (a verb with an “__ing” ending). **Revision:** He is being so funny.

Don't substitute *of* for *have* in modal forms. **Example:** I could of run. Also, don't mis-match plural and singular “to be” verbs with their subjects. **Example:** I were sad. **Revision:** I was sad.

Revise these substitutions: I be given some food, but I still were hungry. I could of eaten more.

Deletions: Don't drop verbs or parts of verbs. **Examples:** She nice (is nice), but I been (had been) nice to her first. ~~Who~~ Who is she? Revise these deletions. Where you at? I told you it needs fixed before you leave.

Additions: Avoid using additions. Don't add the *of* or *on* prepositions when unnecessary. **Examples:** Get off of my couch. Don't blame on me for that.

Avoid using the object case pronoun as a reflexive pronoun. **Example:** I got me a sandwich. **Revisions:** I got myself a sandwich. or I got a sandwich.

Revise these non-standard additions: All of the students knew what to do in an emergency. We pulled the alarm on accident, and we got as a detention.

Double Negatives: When writing in Standard English, do *not* use double negatives. **Example:** Don't use ~~no~~ double negatives in English.

Revise these non-standard double negatives: She doesn't ask for no help never.

Confused Verb Forms: Non-standard English often confuses verb forms. Don't substitute a past participle (a verb ending in “__ed,” “__d,” “__t,” or “__en” for regular verbs) for the simple past tense. **Example:** He given his best effort. **Revision:** He gave his best effort.

English often has irregular past participle verb forms and these can be confused with the simple past tense in Non-standard English. **Example:** She gone went crazy.

Revise these confused verb forms: She spoken her own truth, but I knowed what she done.

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Prepare for Tests Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. I actively participate in class discussions and pay attention well.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. When an upcoming test is announced, I ask <i>what</i> will be covered on the test if the teacher does not completely inform the class.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. When an upcoming test is announced, I ask <i>how</i> we will be tested if the teacher does not completely inform the class.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. In preparing for an upcoming test, I make a practice test and take my own test.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. In preparing for an upcoming test, I study with a group of students.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

- 23-25 You have mastered all the test preparation strategies that will guarantee success on tests.
- 20-22 You have mastered many of the test preparation strategies that will guarantee success on tests.
- 17-19 You have mastered some of the test preparation strategies that will guarantee success on tests.
- 13-16 You have mastered few of the test preparation strategies that will guarantee success on tests. Learning these strategies will make a difference on your next test.
- <13 You do not know the test preparation strategies that will guarantee success on tests. Learning these strategies will make a difference on your next test.

Already Know: What I already know about test preparation strategies is _____

Want to Know: What I want to know about test preparation strategies is _____

How to Prepare for Tests Lesson

Directions: Develop five possible test questions, one for each of the five paragraphs in this lesson.

Good students spread out their test study over time and don't wait until the night before the test to cram. Learning to work "smarter, not harder" will *save* study time, not *increase* study time. The smarter approach is to study for tests a bit every day after school.

Active Participation

Active participation in class is important test study. Students who contribute to class discussions avoid passive learning, and pay attention do better on tests. Listen carefully and write down any announcements about upcoming tests and what to study in your student planner.

Ask the Right Questions

Learn how to ask the right questions of your teacher to help you study "smarter, not harder" for any test. "But what kind of questions should I ask?" Ask *what kind* of test you will be taking and adjust your study to that kind of test. Will the objective section be multiple choice? Will there be an essay? Ask not only what *will* be on the test, but also ask what *won't* be on the test. Teachers rarely include everything on tests that has been covered in class. Asking these kinds of questions in advance about upcoming tests will help focus your test study.

Create a Practice Test

Using your sticky notes, on which you developed test questions each day after school when completing your **Daily Review**, make a practice test that covers the test content in the format that you will be tested. Take the time to brainstorm any possible essay questions and pre-write possible main points and supporting details. Create this practice test days before the test itself. Show the practice test to your teacher and ask if there is any more content that you need to add to your practice test. Add any of this content and take your practice test and correct it.

Get More Brainpower

Gather a group of students from the same class to study. Pre-arrange the ground rules for the study session. Set a start and ending time and assign tasks, such as "You bring all the lecture notes; You bring all the readings; You bring the sticky notes; You bring the chocolate chip cookies." Assign group members a part of a practice test to develop and share at the study session, including essay pre-writes. Compile the test questions developed by your group of friends into one practice test. Take the test, share your answers, and learn from each other.

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Use Objective Test-taking Strategies Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. When the teacher passes out a test, I first skim over the sections of the test and make a plan.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. When taking tests, I answer the easy problems first.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. When taking tests, I read test problems twice.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. When taking tests, I look for wrong answers first and then use the process of elimination.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. When taking tests, I notice absolute words and exception words.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

23-25	You know all the objective test-taking strategies that lead to strategic guessing and test success.
20-22	You know many of the objective test-taking strategies that lead to strategic guessing and test success.
17-19	You know some of the objective test-taking strategies that lead to strategic guessing and test success.
13-16	You know some of the objective test-taking strategies that lead to strategic guessing and test success. Learning these strategies will make a difference on your next test.
<13	You do not know the objective test-taking strategies that lead to strategic guessing and test success. Learning these strategies will make a difference on your next test.

Already Know: What I already know about objective test-taking strategies is...

Want to Know: What I want to know about objective test-taking strategies is...

How to Use Objective Test-taking Strategies Lesson

There are two basic forms of written tests: *subjective* tests, which are opinion-based essays and *objective* tests, which are factually based tests. Objective tests consist of multiple choice, matching, fill-in-the-blank, true-false, and short answer formats. Learning objective test-taking strategies can help you guess strategically and achieve higher over-all test scores. Here are the most effective strategies.

1. Ask **how much time** you will have to complete the test. Establish a test plan based upon that time. Calculate how much time you will have at the beginning of each section of test problems, depending upon the number of problems in each section and the amount of time that your teacher has provided for the entire test. Then write the projected ending time in the test margin. Use a digital watch to gauge your testing pace. Don't waste too much time on any one test problem. For example, if there are five sections of the test, each section having 20 test problems, you should plan a pace of 12 minutes per section for a 60-minute test.
2. Answer the **easy questions first**. Unless the directions say differently, test problems are all worth the same amount of points. Build your confidence by answering the easy ones. Also, the easy ones may provide information or clues that you may be able to use when answering the harder test problems.
3. **Don't rush** through the test problems. Test problems are not easy reading. Be careful not to read into the test problem more than what is really there. Accuracy is more important than speed.
4. **Read each test problem twice** before looking at the answers. It is easy to miss a key word if you only read the test problem once. Be alert for little change words, such as *not*.
5. If answer choices are provided, **read all** of them before selecting one. The first answer may look right, but another may be better. Objective tests can be intentionally very tricky in this regard.
6. Look for the **wrong** answers first, not the right one. **Use the process of elimination**. It is easier to decide among fewer choices than many. Your guessing odds are substantially bettered with each wrong answer eliminated. Cross out all eliminated answers as you go.
7. Make sure to **guess**. Even if you have no idea how to answer a test problem, it is best to not leave the answer blank.
8. **Match the language of the test problem** and the test answer. For example, match negative to negative or positive to positive regarding tone or vocabulary.
9. **Absolute words**, such as *always* or *never*, are usually part of incorrect answer choices. **Exception words**, such as *frequently* or *mostly*, are usually part of correct answer choices.
10. **Review only** those answers that you leave blank after each test section. Don't change answers that you have already marked. Your first "guess" is almost always your best.

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Use Matching Test-taking Strategies Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. When taking a matching test, I read the numbered test problem twice before looking for the alphabetical match.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. When taking a matching test, I read all the answer choices before selecting one.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. When taking a matching test, I answer the easy ones first.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. When taking a matching test, I look at the grammar to select the correct match.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. When taking a matching test, I look at the scope (range of choices) and the language of each match.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

- 23-25 You already know all the matching strategies that will help you guess strategically on these sections of objective tests.
- 20-22 You already know most of the matching strategies that will help you guess strategically on these sections of objective tests.
- 17-19 You already know some of the matching strategies that will help you guess strategically on these sections of objective tests.
- 13-16 You know a few of the matching strategies that will help you guess strategically on these sections of objective tests. Learning the rest of these strategies will make a difference on your next test.
- <13 You are a purposeful reader who focuses on self-improvement and reading skill development. Learning the rest of these strategies will make a difference on your next test.

Already Know: What I already know about matching test-taking strategies is...

Want to Know: What I want to know about matching test-taking strategies is...

How to Use Matching Test-taking Strategies Lesson

Learning how to improve your scores on matching tests by using the following tips will significantly increase your test scores. Matching sections are the most commonly used testing method on teacher-constructed tests from elementary school through college. Here are the tips to “ace” any matching section on your next test.

First, remember that matching tests are divided into two columns or rows: the numerical and alphabetical sections.

1. **Read the numerical word or phrase twice.** Try to predict the correct answer before you look at the choices offered. This will provide a mind-set for evaluating the answer choices before you begin to answer. This process also helps to unlock your prior knowledge about the subject gained from test study and life experience.
2. **Read all answer choices** before selecting an answer. Test-takers frequently say that this strategy helps eliminate rushing through a test and answering impulsively. Most of you have had an experience where you quickly answered a test problem, only to find out that another answer choice, which you did not read, was the obviously correct answer.
3. **Match the easy ones first** and cross off the ones that you have selected to use the process of elimination. Getting rid of answer choices will make the selection process quicker, especially if the matching section is long.
4. **The beginning of the numbered matching column tends to match the beginning of the alphabetical matching column.** Consider this fact when selecting answer choices. If there are two alphabetic answer choices under consideration, and one is in the same beginning section as the numeric answer choice, select that one.
5. **The ending of the numbered matching column tends to match the ending of the alphabetical matching column.** If there are two alphabetic answer choices under consideration, and one is in the same ending section as the numeric answer choice, select that one.
6. **Look for grammatical clues** to help match. Singular must match singular, and plural must match plural; verb tenses must match; grammar must match, for example: nouns often match adjectives, as in *Robert E. Lee* matching *compassionate, risk-taking, and inspiring*.
7. The alphabetical answer should match the numerical answer **tone or scope** (feeling or range of choices, such as positive to positive, negative to negative, general to general, specific to specific).
8. The alphabetical answer should match the numerical answer **level of vocabulary**, for example: the scientific term, *canine*, would most likely match *dog*, not *cute little puppy*.
9. On math tests, if alphabetical answer choices cover a wide range, choose the **middle one**.
10. Finally, make sure to **guess**, if not sure of your answer choice.

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Use Fill-in-the-Blank Test-taking Strategies Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. When taking a fill-in-the-blank test, I read the statement twice before answering.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. When taking a fill-in-the-blank test, I look for “change words” such as <i>not</i> .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. When taking a fill-in-the-blank test, I look for cause-effect relationships.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. When taking a fill-in-the-blank test, I look for words don’t fit with the rest of the sentence.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. When taking a fill-in-the-blank test, I look for absolute words and exception words.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

- 23-25 You already know all the fill-in-the-blank strategies that will help you guess strategically on these sections of objective tests.
- 20-22 You already know many of the fill-in-the-blank strategies that will help you guess strategically on these sections of objective tests.
- 17-19 You already know some of the fill-in-the-blank strategies that will help you guess strategically on these sections of objective tests.
- 13-16 You know a few of the fill-in-the-blank strategies that will help you guess strategically on these sections of objective tests. By learning these strategies, you will be able to strategically guess better on these sections of tests.
- <13 You do not know the fill-in-the-blank strategies that will help you guess strategically on these sections of objective tests. By learning these strategies, you will be able to strategically guess better on these sections of tests.

Already Know: What I already know about fill-in-the-blank test-taking strategies is...

Want to Know: What I want to know about fill-in-the-blank test-taking strategies is...

How to Use Fill-in-the-Blank Test-taking Strategies Lesson

Learning how to improve your scores on true-false test sections will significantly increase your over-all test scores. Many teacher-constructed tests include true-false sections. Here are the tips to “ace” any true-false section on your next test.

1. **Read the true-false statement twice** before choosing an answer. Be alert for the little “change words,” such as *not*. Test-takers frequently say that this strategy helps eliminate rushing through a test and answering impulsively.
2. True-false tests can be very tricky. **Look first at the statement as being true**, then if *any part* of that statement is false, then the whole statement must be false.
3. True-false tests tend to have slightly more true statements than false. Therefore, if you must guess, **guess “true.”** This is probably because it is easier to write true statements, than false ones.
4. The *longer* the true-false statement, the greater is the chance that it is false because it only takes one part of the statement to be false to make the whole statement false. So, consider answering **“false” for long true-false statements**, unless you are sure that all part of the statement is true.

Example: The moon orbits an average of 240,000 miles away from the earth, has craters and mountains, little gravity, and is made of cheese.

5. Statements that include cause-effect relationships tend to be false unless an **Exception Word** is used. Words or phrases such as the following: because, caused, resulted in, is the reason that indicate cause-effect relationships.

Example: Only one U.S. president has been elected four times, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and this caused financial chaos throughout the country.

6. **Extreme statements tend to be false.**

Example: Japanese automobiles are all more reliable and cost less than American automobiles.

7. If an **Absolute Word** such as the following: all, only, every, completely, none, always, never, best, worst, absolutely is found in an answer choice, the answer choice tends to be false because these words do not allow for exceptions.

8. If an **Exception Word** such as the following: some, most, sometimes, frequently, often, usually, maybe, many, generally, partially is found in an answer choice, the answer choice tends to be true because these words do allow for exceptions.

9. Finally, make sure to **guess**, if not sure of your answer choice.

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

How to Use Multiple Choice Test-taking Strategies

Self-Assessment

	Always 5	Usually 4	Sometimes 3	Rarely 2	Never 1
1. When taking a multiple choice test, I predict answers before looking at them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. When taking a multiple choice test, I look for the wrong answers first.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. When taking a multiple choice test, I read all answer choices before selecting one.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. When taking a multiple choice test, I look for absolute words and exception words.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. When taking a multiple choice test, I consider that the level of vocabulary should match in the test problem and in the answer choices.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

- 23-25 You know all the multiple choice strategies that will help you guess strategically on these sections of objective tests.
- 20-22 You know many of the multiple choice strategies that will help you guess strategically on these sections of objective tests.
- 17-19 You know some of the multiple choice strategies that will help you guess strategically on these sections of objective tests.
- 13-16 You know a few of the multiple choice strategies that will help you guess strategically on these sections of objective tests. By learning these strategies, you will be able to strategically guess better on these sections of tests.
- <13 You do not know the multiple choice strategies that will help you guess strategically on these sections of objective tests. By learning these strategies, you will be able to strategically guess better on these sections of tests.

Already Know: What I already know about multiple choice test-taking strategies is...

Want to Know: What I want to know about multiple choice test-taking strategies is...

How to Use Multiple Choice Test-taking Strategies Lesson

Learning how to maximize your scores on multiple choice tests will significantly increase your over-all test scores. Multiple choice sections are found on both teacher-constructed and standardized tests from elementary school through college. Here are the tips to “ace” any multiple choice section on your next test.

1. **Read the numbered test problem or question twice**, being alert for little change words, such as *not*. Try to predict the correct answer before you look at the choices offered. This will provide a mind-set for evaluating the answer choices before you begin to answer. This process also helps to unlock your prior knowledge about the subject that you learned in test study and from experiences in your own life. Many students find it helpful to cover up the answer choices with one hand to make sure that they complete this first step.
2. **Read all answer choices** before selecting an answer. Test-takers frequently say that this strategy helps eliminate rushing through a test and answering impulsively. Students find it helpful to read the answer choices “up from the bottom” to ensure that they read each choice.
3. Use the **process of elimination**. If possible, cross off incorrect answer choices to permit strategic guessing. The fewer the answer choices, the greater is the likelihood of a correct answer selection.
4. **Look for grammatical clues** to help match. The numerical test problem or question must match the answer choice. For example, singular must match singular, and plural must match plural; also, verb tenses must match.
5. The answer should match the **language** of the test problem or question (positive to positive, negative to negative, grammar, singular or plural, vocabulary level of difficulty).
6. Two **close-sounding or looking answers** such as “quotient” and “quotation” or 22 and 222 tend to mean that one of the answers is correct.
7. On math tests, if answers cover a wide range, choose the one in the **middle**, if you have to guess. For example, if answers range from A. 14 B. 234 C. 1,655 D. 243, choose B or D.
8. Answer choices that have “Both A and B”, “None of the Above,” or “All the Above,” or similar tend to be correct.
9. If you must guess, the **second to last answer choice** is most frequently correct. The last answer is most frequently incorrect. This strategy only works on teacher-constructed tests.
10. If an **Absolute Word** such as the following: all, only, every, completely, none, always, never, best, worst, absolutely is found in an answer choice, the answer choice tends to be incorrect because these words do not allow for exceptions.
11. If an **Exception Word** such as the following: some, often, usually, most, sometimes, frequently, often, usually, maybe, many, generally, partially is found in an answer choice, the answer choice tends to be correct because these words do allow for exceptions.
12. Finally, make sure to **guess**, if not sure of your answer choice.

Reflection

1. Something in this lesson I did not know:
2. My specific goal to apply what I learned:
3. Accomplishing this goal will especially help me because...
4. Experts I plan to go to for help:
5. The person I will tell about my goal so that they will ask me about my progress:
6. Before I begin working toward my goal, I will need to...
7. I plan to begin working toward my goal when...
8. This is how and when I will evaluate progress toward my goal:
9. I will know that I have accomplished my goal when...
10. After reading the study skill tips, I would still like to know...

Teacher/Parent Comments:

Study Skills and Executive Function Skills Self-Assessment

Motivation

1. Do you know how to motivate yourself to do what you need to do? Yes Somewhat No
2. Do you know how to organize work and get started on a long project? Yes Somewhat No
3. Do you know how to set goals and check on your progress toward those goals? Yes Somewhat No
4. Do you know how to change a negative attitude about schoolwork to a positive attitude? Yes Somewhat No

Organization and Time Management

5. Do you have a place at home that is set up for homework and study? Yes Somewhat No
6. Do you know how to organize daily and long term homework and study? Yes Somewhat No
7. Do you begin homework with a review of what you learned in school that day? Yes Somewhat No
8. Do you know how to manage time for homework, study, and activities after school? Yes Somewhat No



Reading Strategies and Skills

9. To you know how to choose enjoyable books to read at home that will improve your reading ability? Yes Somewhat No
10. Do you know which reading habits are helpful and which are not? Yes Somewhat No
11. Do you know how to read out loud with good expression? Yes Somewhat No
12. Do you know how to concentrate during silent reading and adjust how you read? Yes Somewhat No
13. As you read, do you silently talk to the text, making comments and asking questions? Yes Somewhat No
14. Do you understand and remember most of what you read? Yes Somewhat No
15. Do you know how to figure out what an author suggests, but does not say? Yes Somewhat No
16. Do you know how to make helpful comments in the margins of texts? Yes Somewhat No
17. Do you know how to read, understand, and remember non-fiction textbooks? Yes Somewhat No
18. Do you know how to identify the main idea in reading? Yes Somewhat No
19. Do you know the key elements of a story? Yes Somewhat No
20. Do you know the key elements of an article? Yes Somewhat No
21. Do you know how to use context clues to figure out the meanings of unknown words in a text? Yes Somewhat No



Research

22. Do you know how to format citations and use quotation marks for direct and indirect quotations? Yes Somewhat No

23. Do you know how to identify bias and the quality of an author's reasons in an article? Yes Somewhat No

24. Do you know how to research safely and judge the quality of an online source? Yes Somewhat No

Memorization Strategies

25. Do you know how to memorize by grouping similar ideas or objects? Yes Somewhat No

26. Do you know how to memorize by associating (connecting) similar ideas or objects? Yes Somewhat No

27. Do you know how to memorize by linking similar ideas or objects in a connected chain? Yes Somewhat No

28. Do you know how to create a *catch word*, such as NEWS (North, East, West, South), to memorize unrelated ideas or objects? Yes Somewhat No

29. Do you know how to create a *catch sentence*, such as **Oh, you lucky duck!** (the "ould" spelling), to memorize unrelated ideas or objects in an exact order? Yes Somewhat No

30. Do you know how to use the *location strategy* to unrelated ideas or objects in an exact order? Yes Somewhat No



Essay Writing

31. Do you know how to *dissect* (break into parts) a writing prompt? Yes Somewhat No
32. Do you know how to write an effective thesis statement for an essay? Yes Somewhat No
33. Do you know what is considered good and bad writing style? Yes Somewhat No
34. Do you know how the key essay writing rules? Yes Somewhat No
35. Do you know how to write an essay introduction? Yes Somewhat No
36. Do you know how to write an essay body paragraph? Yes Somewhat No
37. Do you know how to write an essay conclusion? Yes Somewhat No
38. Do you know how to write complex sentences with beginning, middle, and ending dependent clauses? Yes Somewhat No

Listening and Note-taking

39. Do you know how to apply active listening? Yes Somewhat No
40. Do you know how to take notes from lectures, videos, and textbooks? Yes Somewhat No
41. Do you know how to use Cornell Notes? Yes Somewhat No
42. Do you know how to organize Formal Outline Notes with numbers and letters? Yes Somewhat No



Grammar, Spelling, and Mechanics

43. Can you define and identify the eight parts of speech? Yes Somewhat No
44. Do you know which grammatical sentence openers provide sentence variety? Yes Somewhat No
45. Do you know the nine verb tense forms and what each means? Yes Somewhat No
46. Do you know the eight “to be” verbs and how to eliminate them in your writing? Yes Somewhat No
47. Do you know, and can you apply, the seven key spelling rules? Yes Somewhat No
48. Do you know, and can you apply, the key syllable and accent rules? Yes Somewhat No
49. Do you know, and can you apply, all rules of punctuation, including commas, quotation marks and underlining, colons and semicolons, and apostrophes? Yes Somewhat No
50. Do you know, and can you apply, all rules of capitalization? Yes Somewhat No
51. Do you know how to use words correctly in Standard English and how to identify slang words and phrases? Yes Somewhat No

Test Preparation and Test-taking

52. Do you know how to study for tests, as you learn? Yes Somewhat No
53. Do you know how to develop a plan for taking a test? Yes Somewhat No
54. Do you know how to improve your selection of correct answer choices on matching tests? Yes Somewhat No
55. Do you know how to improve your selection of correct answer choices on fill-in-the-blank tests? Yes Somewhat No
56. Do you know how to improve your selection of correct answer choices on multiple-choice tests? Yes Somewhat No



Study Skills and Executive Function Skills Self-Assessment Mastery Matrix

Assessment #s	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21		
Teacher	Motivation				Organization and Time Management				Reading Strategies and Skills														
Class																							
Student Names																							
Totals																							

Study Skills and Executive Function Skills Self-Assessment Mastery Matrix

Assessment #s	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42
Teacher																					
Class																					
Student Names																					
Totals																					

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Study Skills and Executive Function Skills Self-Assessment Mastery Matrix

Assessment #s	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56
Teacher	Grammar, Spelling, and Mechanics									Test Preparation and Test-taking				
Class														
Student Names														
Totals														

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