Studying: Some suggestions.

Learning How to Learn:

Here are some suggestions on how to make studying as effective as possible. These are suggestions that will hopefully be helpful to most students. It’s important that you find the appropriate methods for you.

• Make sure you have everything you need. (e.g. books, class notes, teachers’ summaries, summary books, past papers, web-sites etc.)
• Make a plan of when you can find time: (regular times during term time as well as extra times before exams etc.)
• Simply reading a book or notes is of little use to most people. Concentration soon wanders even if the eyes follow the words and the pages are turned.
• **Learning takes place best when we create something. Try to extract the main points and organise them onto paper.** This “summary” can take the form which the student prefers: summary notes, posters, mind-maps, cards, wee bits of paper in a matchbox and bullet points, are all examples we have seen.
  • The summary should have shape and colour, and it should be neat.
  • Do not include obvious things, which you will never forget. The summary is only for you; only put in what you need.
  • Keep it brief. A key word can be as good as a sentence.
  • Try to include a way of remembering any tricky fact. (E.g. In Physics; red is at the top; remember “RAT”).
  • Use the summary to test yourself. Cover the page or part of a page and picture what is hidden.
  • Try some homework problems or past paper questions to see if your summary is sufficient. Add to it when needed.
  • If you are short of time, imagine that you are allowed to take brief notes into the exam. Prepare these sheets and you will have a good summary.
  • A lot of the learning takes place during the creation of the summary, but it is very useful for revision; including the night before the test or exam.
  • Ask your teacher for help whenever you come across anything you do not understand. You might show your teacher your summary and ask how it might be improved.

Best wishes for good studying.

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