

EXPLAINING THE STUDENT WALL PLANNER

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WHY USE A STUDENT WALL PLANNER?

Successful students are students who are typically well organised and manage their time in a very effective manner. Successful students give their study a high priority and organise themselves so that they can keep all their activities in a steady balance.

Question: What are the major problems encountered by most secondary school students before they become successful?

Answer: Developing time management skills and sound study organisation.

The Student Wall Planner provides a valuable organisational base so you can achieve the results of which you are truly capable.

Because the life of a high-school student is a busy one, the Student Wall Planner has been developed by experienced teachers to give students a useful tool to develop their time management skills and plan their study to achieve rewarding results.

Many parents and teachers experience the frustration of helping children organise their time in a mature manner to enable them to keep study, leisure and other activities in balance. Teachers ‘know’ students achieve better results if they are more organised with their time and give study the appropriate priority. Learning good time management is also an essential skill to develop beyond secondary and into tertiary studies or working life.

The Student Wall Planner is set out in such a way that the student develops an overall picture of the way they spend their time with study. The Student Wall Planner also encourages the student to set goals and record the amount of time that they devote to genuine study on their subjects.

Because the Student Planner is best displayed on the wall at home, it gives parents the opportunity to assist their child develop organisation skills. There is no doubt that a school diary serves a very practical purpose but many students seem unable to maintain a diary as a standard that keeps it useful for an entire year without parents constantly checking the diary (and, let’s face it, how many parents check the diary of their 15, 16, 17 year old child?). The Student Wall Planner is a more convenient means to check and it allows parents to offer their child advice for ways to improve their time management.

Another important feature of the planner is that it is **Laminated**. This allows the Student Wall Planner to be written on with a non-permanent felt marker like the ‘over-head’ projector pen. All information written on the Student Wall Planner can be wiped clean and changed as desired. The Student Wall Planner can be re-used continuously throughout high school.

The study of school work is a very important activity of which students are constantly reminded. The key to a successful study is good organisation beforehand. The various features of the Student Wall Planner are hereby explained and some advice on how students can increase their time management skills and improve their study habits is also offered.

1 SCHOOL TIMETABLE

This is where you write in your school timetable for easy access at home. If you do not have classes for all the spaces provided, you can use the remaining spaces for extra activities such as sport training, drama club, choir, science club etc.

2 DAILY HOMEWORK AND STUDY TIMETABLE

A Daily Homework and Study Timetable is a vital organisational tool for any student who is serious about achieving good results with their school work. Study left until the night before the examination nearly always results in a performance well below your true capabilities mainly because of the increased pressure that you bring upon yourself. A good Daily Homework and Study Timetable displays a balance between the various school subjects you undertake as well as other activities likely to be encountered during any term. A well planned timetable also shows a regular routine where possible so that your mind and body come to expect a certain type of pattern. The amount of time spent on homework and study will vary depending on your age. You can enter your own time schedule into the left hand column. It is best to ask your teachers to explain what they believe is a fair amount of time for you to allocate to homework and study each week and for each subject you take consider your age and ability.

BALANCE HOMEWORK, STUDY AND LEISURE. It is important to set aside leisure time, time for assignment work, homework, study and time for reading. No doubt that you will want time to watch TV or play your favourite computer games, but these are only some activities among so many that you have to keep in balance.

3 THE GOAL CHART

Successful people set goals for themselves. The goal chart is a place where you can list your subjects and the previous results (grades, % or outcome levels) achieved in them. These should be looked at as a constant reminder that there is always some room for improvement. Now think about the results (grade, % or outcome level) you want to aim for in this term / semester. If you are capable of a better performance then write in some realistic results you wish to achieve in each subject. Your goal should be to do better each time unless your results are perfect. Set your goals so that you make your improvements in steps and not one unrealistic jump. The difference between a ‘B’ and a ‘C’ (or an improved grade or outcome level) in some of your subjects is likely to be a case of being a little more organised and having spent some time with your teacher to investigate clear strategies to make improvements with your next assessment. If unsure of the type of goals to set then your teachers and parents are the people to ask.

4 TERM PLANNER

The Term Planner is a key tool to keep yourself aware of time management as your assessments approach. The term planner is where you write down all the important assessment dates for the term. Examinations, assignments, excursions, orals, projects, rehearsals etc. are the sort of events that can be organised in this section. After you fill in the dates of the various weeks of the term, this gives you a sound overview of what is coming up each week and should help you avoid the last minute panic that normally occurs when you discover that you have a major project due in three days and there are also another 101 things to do! The Student Wall Planner is **not** the place to write in social events or birthdays as this practice may unnecessarily clutter up the section. When the current term is over simply wipe the information clear and begin to fill in next term’s assessment items.

5 STUDY RECORD

Like a log book for recording travel of a car, the study record is a space where you record the amount of overall time spent on genuine study for each subject. Many students find this sort of progress check encouraging as they see themselves accumulate more time with each subject as the term or semester goes by. Each box can represent 1 hour or 30 minutes of study and the boxes can be ticked or crossed as the time builds week to week and month to month. It is also an excellent place for parents to quickly view how much study (not necessarily homework) is being done. You need to be honest with yourself or you are wasting your time.

6 NOTES / REMINDERS

For this is a section note down all those things that you have to remember for the short term: whatever other important jobs or urgent matters that you have coming up. It is also a place to perhaps record anything else you don’t want to forget such as the dates of important school functions, web addresses or phone numbers.

HOW TO FILL OUT THE DAILY HOMEWORK & STUDY TIMETABLE

- First write in all your regular commitments such as sports training, music lessons, part-time work, other interests and activities. The time schedule you use depends on you and the times at which you decide to do your homework and study.
- List your subjects on a separate piece of paper and decide how much time you are going to allocate to each subject in a week. Obviously a Year 7 student will not set the same amount of time that a Year 12 student might. If unsure about this then see your teachers at school. It is also wise to include extra amounts of time for doing assignments and projects.
- Split the amount of time for each subject into a number of sessions that can be spread throughout the week with a realistic balance eg. Two hours for Mathematics for a Year 10 student could be split into four 30 minute sessions which may be set for Monday evening, Tuesday evening, Thursday evening and Sunday afternoon. Do not give the smallest amount of time to the hardest subjects and the longest amount of time to the easiest subjects. It is also wise to attempt the more difficult subjects first on some days as this helps you confront the harder work when you are still fresh. Leaving the tough work until the end makes it tempting to defer or not give that work the commitment that it really requires.

- Next take a close look at the total amount of time you have allocated to study for each day of the week. Some adjustments may be necessary when you stand back to see the overall picture.
- Finally invite ‘significant others’ to look at your Daily Homework and Study Timetable and ask them for some constructive criticism about your organisational efforts. These ‘others’ can be parents, other adults, older brothers/sisters or trusted appropriate friends. Changing your plan several times is not necessarily a bad thing either. **To change your mind and refine your plan is a sign that you are learning how to plan more effectively.**

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN STUDY AND HOMEWORK

Many students seem to confuse the two areas of study and homework. Put simply, study is the process of revision and practice to make what you have learned really stick. Homework is the day to day school work that needs to be completed each night. This may include textbook exercises, assignment work, set reading, researching etc.

Study involves revising work covered over the last week or fortnight. Study is not just reading over your notes! Study means doing exercises again, reading ahead in your text book, summarising your notes, reading over the more difficult concepts several times, drawing diagrams to help you remember important concepts, doing extra questions and problems that were not set by the teacher, etc. Many students are now encouraged to draw concept maps or mind maps as a

means or linking concepts together and increase their understanding of the subject.

ACTIVE REPETITION IS THE KEY

Repeating Mathematic exercises or English spelling words you did three nights ago is important because the repetition can help increase your understanding memory. Hardly any person could correctly recite a sequence of 26 letters after they read over them once or twice. The reason people know the 26 letters of the alphabet in order is because they have revised them again and again.

Many students sit down to do an hours homework and incorrectly think this amounts to an hour of study. Study is active revision of the work already covered and this does not include normal homework. There are good and bad ways to study and it is important students get themselves into good habits as early as possible.

BRIEF TIPS ON STUDY

There is ‘no single magic’ formula, just good organisation, some personal discipline and a genuine desire to do well. Any teacher or parent will tell you it is important to study in an environment free from as many distractions as possible. No loud noise, no TV, no computer, no phone calls from friends (during homework/study hours) and no radio if it can be helped. There are some who believe that a little background music does no harm that is until your favourite song comes on and you never quite get back to the task at hand. You need to be comfortable but avoid lying down as you will probably fall asleep. You need to eat well and exercise a little to keep your mind and body fit. It is also important to think about the light in your room. Is it too bright? Not enough light? If you have a desk light it is a good idea to also have a room light on as well. This helps to soften the intensity of the desk light. Keep your work space well stocked with things you need – pens, paper, calculator, access to text books etc. Don’t work for long spans of time or spend hours on the one subject. Keep your notes well organised so that you can find your work without wasting time. Many students will study for 20-25 minutes and then reward themselves with a short break and a drink or snack before getting back into it. It is not the best idea to start homework and study after you have finished watching your TV shows. Be organised! Have a plan and stick to it.

WHAT DO I ASK MY TEACHERS ABOUT?

To ensure your homework/study time is spent effectively it is important to consider as much information as possible about what you will study. When you work it is an excellent idea to keep a notepad or school diary beside you to jot down any areas of work you have experienced difficulty during your nightly routine. The best sources of information here are your teachers and the comments made on your latest school reports. Give your teacher a shock by saying ‘I am planning to spend 1 hour studying my English this weekend and I was wondering if you could suggest some ways in which I might best use my time.’ By consulting your teachers, previous tests and being honest with yourself you will also be able to generate a simple two-column list for each subject. In the first column, you write down the concepts that you are doing well with and in the other column, you list the areas of that particular subject that you know you need to work on. Asking your parents and your peers to test you on your work can also help enormously.

A FINAL WORD

Being a successful student is about taking more and more responsibility for your own learning. No other person can do the work for you or sit the test for you. This Student Wall Planner is no magic remedy for getting top results for every subject, but it is hoped that the Student Wall Planner will provide a valuable organisational base from which you can achieve the results of which you are truly capable. The Student Wall Planner will hopefully encourage you to get organised, keep your activities in balance, set your goals, work at a regular routine and seek your parent’s and teacher’s advice when you need to. When your results improve you can take all the credit and if you fail, then you need to shoulder the blame and make a concerted effort to correct your mistakes so they don’t happen again. Your desire to do well will help in your organisational efforts!

OTHER KEY RESOURCE

Nearly all schools who have organised the distribution of the Academic Student Planner will have access to another valuable resource that goes hand in hand with the Student Wall Planner that is the Study Guide - Study: Putting the Pieces Together. The Study Guide is an easy to follow teaching guide to studying and learning. The Study Guide topics that assist students includes: Set Your Goals, Learn How To Study, Understand and Use Your Wall Planner, Prepare for Examinations, Manage the Basics, Know Yourself, Motivate Yourself, Improve Your Memory and Recall, Use Mapping Strategies, Improve Your Reading and Essay Technique, Streamline Your Bookwork and Note Taking Technique and Evolve as an Independent Learner. For more details please see our web page.

(NOTE: While overhead pens and other water soluble markers are recommended the Student Wall Planner can be used with some oil based markers but **no guarantees** can be given regarding their removal as some solvents (except water) may damage the gloss surface.)



Student Planner

Use non-permanent or fine whiteboard marker ONLY
See reverse side for advice & instruction

Notes / Reminders

- * DON'T FORGET MATHS TUTOR 5.30PM THURS
- * SOCCER TRIALS FRI WK 9 + WK 10
- * MONEY FOR SOSE EXCURSION WK 3
- * DIARY SIGNED FOR FRIDAY FORMS

Student Timetable					
Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8.45 9.00	FORM	FORM	FORM	FORM	FORM
9.00 9.45	1. ENG	SCI	MATHS	SOSE	FORM/ ASSEMBLY
9.45 10.30	2. ENG	SCI	MATHS	SOSE	PE/ HEALTH
10.30 11.15	3. SOSE	JAP	ENG	SCI	PE/ HEALTH
11.35 12.20	4. FOODS	ART	COMPUTING	ENG	SCI
12.20 1.05	5. FOODS	ART	SOSE	COMPUTING	ENG
1.45 2.30	6. MATHS	MATHS	SPORT	JAP	COMPUTING
2.30 3.15	7. SCI	SOSE	SPORT	JAP	MATHS

Goal Chart		
Subject	Previous Results (Level / Grade / Mark)	My Aim (Level / Grade / Mark)
MATHS	B	A
ENGLISH	B	B
SOSE	D	C
SCIENCE	A	A
JAPANESE	C	C
ART	B	A
COMPUTING	A	A

Daily Homework and Study Timetable							
Time	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
4.30 5.00	WEEKLY PLANNING	TRAINING	/	HEALTH	/	Morning TENNIS COMPETITION	Morning /
5.00 5.30	SCI	MATHS	/	JAP	/	TENNIS COMPETITION	SCI
5.30 6.00	MATHS	COMPUTING	COMPUTING	TUTOR	/	TENNIS COMPETITION	ENG
6.00 7.00	FAMILY AND MEAL TIME					Afternoon /	Afternoon /
7.00 7.30	ENG	SCI	ENG	SOSE	ASSIG	/	MATHS
7.30 8.00	FOODS	ART	JAP	SCI	ASSIG	/	SOSE
8.00 8.30	SOSE	JAP	SOSE	ENG	ASSIG	/	/
8.30 8.45	/	/	/	/	/	Evening /	Evening /
8.45 9.15	ASSIG	ASSIG	ASSIG	ASSIG	/	STUDY	CATCH UP
9.15 9.30	STUDY	STUDY	STUDY	STUDY	/	STUDY	CATCH UP

Term Planner: /						
Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Weekend
1.	NO SCHOOL		TENNIS TRIALS (1)		TENNIS TRIALS (2)	BYE
2.			MATHS-OPEN BK TENNIS		VOTING FORM REPS	TENNIS - HOME
3.		JAP VOC TEST	TENNIS			- AWAY
4.	FOOD ASSIGNMENT		TENNIS	SCIENCE TEST	COMPUTING POWERPOINT ENG VOC TEST	- HOME
5.		ART DRAFTS	MATHS INVESTIGATION TENNIS	SOSE EXCURSION ALL DAY!		- HOME
6.	FOOD TEST ON PREPARATION		TENNIS			- AWAY
7.		SCIENCE LAB WRITE UPS	TENNIS	SOSE EXCURSION NOTES + PICS	COMPUTING ASSIG ON CD-ROM	- AWAY
8.	ENGLISH BOOK REVIEW	ART PORTFOLIO	TENNIS	JAPANESE TEST		- AWAY
9.	CAMP	CAMP	CAMP	CAMP	SOCCER TRIALS (1)	BYE
10.			SOCCER TRIALS (1)	LAST DAY!!	NO SCHOOL	

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