High Impact Organizational and Study Skills for Students

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High Impact Organizational and Study Skills: An Essential Tool for All

- Influences the quality of work
- Improves the self-worth of a student
- Can be taught at a young age and used throughout life
- Essential for success!
Many students do not inherently have organizational or study skills.

Besides incorporating organizational and study skills into the curriculum, teachers need to model organizational and study skills daily.

To become organized, one has to learn how to manage time.

Can be taught at all levels in education.
Elementary Students “Not quite developed”

Many lack organizational skills because of developmental factors, including:

- Attention issues
- Inability to process information
- Lack of visual spatial memory
Elementary Students: Building Organizational Skills

- Good for all students, but especially those with Learning Disabilities
- Teach students how to use an organizer and planner
- Follow a daily agenda
- Make and update a calendar
- Use checklists
- Post reminders
- Keep everything where it belongs
  - Ex: In elementary school, the student needs to be taught to keep their desks in order
Elementary Students
Teaching Students to Take Notes: It’s Not Too Early

- Teachers can create a note-taking sheet to teach organization of notes
- Include items such as:
  - Topic of the discussion
  - Main point of content
  - New vocabulary
  - Summary
Elementary Students
Teaching Students to Take Notes: It’s Not Too Early

- After a student successfully learns this skill in one subject, he or she will be capable of transferring it into other subject areas.
- Therefore, teachers should teach notetaking skills to students starting at a young age.
- Students as young as third grade can have success in notetaking strategies.
- Teachers should prompt students as to the most important information.
Middle School Students
Self-efficacy and Self-esteem

◆ “Motivation for reading and learning, and students’ self-efficacy in school often declines in adolescence.” McTigue and Liew (2011)

◆ “Middle schoolers undergo major biological, cognitive and social-emotional changes during adolescence, and it is important for researchers and practitioners to be aware of such developmental changes in students’ self-concepts and self-beliefs.” McTigue and Liew (2011)
Middle School Students: How Do Self-Efficacy, Confidence, and Motivation Develop in Middle Schoolers?

- Self-beliefs: people innately possess self-reflective capabilities which help them self-regulate and self-monitor
- Personality factors: learning self-control will help students manage their emotions and attention
- This in turn, could positively effect their behavior
Middle School Students: How Do Self-Efficacy, Confidence, and Motivation Develop in Middle School

- Students with low self-efficacy in middle school, will often times become struggling learners.
- Struggling learners may experience high anxiety if they feel they may fail.
- This could cause “fake” trips to the nurse, plagiarism, feigned disinterest, and copying work from peers. McTigue and Liew (2011)
Middle School
Strategies to Manage Tasks

- Break a task into manageable steps
- Check each step for accuracy
- Provide visual cues
- Reinforce instructions
Middle School Students
Teaching Planning Skills

- Can be taught directly
- Problem solve how to begin a project
- Make a list of needed materials
- Talk about what information is needed
- Ask students to estimate how long it will take to complete
- Design a timeline
- Model problem-solving for students
- “Teaching the process is as important as the content” Boller (2008)
Middle School Students
Keys to Success

- Direct instruction in organizational skills can be taught in daily lessons
- Study skills can be reinforced and modeled
- Time management skills can be taught using a time line
- Behavior regulation can be reinforced daily
Middle School Students
Keys to Success

- Provide a safe learning environment
- Provide an environment that will challenge, but not overwhelm students’ cognitive and emotional capabilities.
- Adolescents respond poorly to being micromanaged and “treated like a child”
- Keep an organized classroom
- Warm and supportive teacher-student relationships lay the foundation
- Students will be more willing to take risks and accept challenges
Middle School Students
Keys to Success

- Engage in problem-solving in a democratic way
- Students will learn mutual respect
- A democratic environment will encourage students to take academic risks rather than avoidance
High School Students
“Read your text book and take notes”

Four specific study behaviors

1. Repetition-based (studying flash cards)
2. Cognitive-based (studying with a friend)
3. Procedural (time management)
4. Metacognitive (test self-knowledge)

Of these behaviors, metacognitive behaviors are strong predictors of exam scores. Gurung, Weidert and Jeske (2010)
High School Students
Best Practices

- Attending class
- Organizing notes
- Writing down relevant information
- Knowing when assignments are due
  - Using a calendar
High School Students
Very Little Effect

- Asking for extra work
- Taking practice quizzes
High School Students Effective Studying

- Students must actively engage with the material
- Students attention must be sustained
- Students must frequently self-assess on the road to mastery
High School Students
Why Didn’t I Think of That?

- Teachers need to help students develop their metacognitive skills
- Teachers should identify what works well
- Do not assume that students possess the necessary skills for learning
High School Students: Helping Students Develop Metacognitive Skills

- Plan and describe the learning objective
- Articulate what students are expected to learn
- Explicitly state the cognitive processing and skills necessary to complete the task
- Clarifying learning goals and skills the students are practicing
- Make links to prior learning
- Rhetorical questioning
- Scaffolding understanding - break the learning into parts
High School Students
Helping Students Develop Metacognitive Skills

- Students must know what they do know and what they don’t know to be successful
- “Building metacognitive knowledge of oneself as a positive learner develops self-efficacy.” Schofield, (2012)
- Sometimes students are unaware of what they need to do to fill the gaps in their knowledge.
High School Students
Do You Understand?

- Do not ask students, “Do you understand?”, or “Do you need any help?” At this age, most students won’t answer honestly.
- Ask instead for students to paraphrase what the assignment is and what they need to do to complete it.
High School Students
What Students Say about Good Teachers

- Good teachers listen to you and explain what to do rather than just hand out worksheets
- Teachers earn your respect by listening to your opinion
- Give students time to think at the end, at least 10 minutes.
- Give students feedback, not just say “Good work”
- Good teachers are flexible, make the lesson fun, and is enthusiastic
- Good teachers show us that they like us - they say “hello” in the hallways
- Talk in a quiet voice
- Schofield, (2012)
High School Students
Implications

- Teachers must change their habits, not their knowledge
- The hardest part is getting old ideas out of a teacher’s head and making room for new ideas
  - Seven Last Words of A Stagnant School: “We’ve never done it that way before.”
- Teachers must balance teaching the curriculum with teaching students how to think and develop study skills
- Remember, no one strategy is always effective
Conclusions: What Does It All Mean?

- Students must be taught organizational and study skills throughout their K-12 education
- These skills must be modeled, taught, and retaught
- Always keep in mind the developmental capabilities of students at each stage in their education
- Develop relationships with students and families. There is no substitute for the human connection
References


References
