

Study Skills Advice

Don't Get Hung Up On Exams

"Depend on it, sir, when a man knows he is to be hanged in a fortnight, it concentrates his mind wonderfully."

Samuel Johnson might well have been talking to students about pre-examination time and that gnawing feeling of foreboding! Examinations can concentrate one's mind wonderfully, but in a positive, practical manner that will not only increase your learning potential but help your performance.

The key to both success in exams and enjoyment of college work lies in the ability to use time wisely. A pattern of good study habits begins as the term begins, but nowhere do you need them more than at examination time. You will be able to handle exams with a minimum of stress if you observe these six suggested steps:

1. Make a term study plan
2. Use good review techniques
3. Develop a confident attitude
4. Organize pre-exam hours
5. Pace the exam carefully
6. Reassess your work

Make A Term Study Plan

At the beginning of each term develop a daily schedule. Allocate time for class preparation, study, review, recreation, eating and sleeping.

A study area is important. Have on hand the texts, study guides, outlines, dictionaries and reference books, paper, pads, notebooks, that will allow you to concentrate without interruption.

Study and review differ from each other. Study refers to learning something for the first time. Review is critical because it strengthens your retention of this new knowledge by viewing it as part of a whole.

Forgetting takes place most rapidly right after learning. Review and recall, therefore, are more effective soon after study. After each class go over the main points for ten to fifteen minutes to reinforce them in your mind.

Don't overtax your memory or stamina. Research shows that most people can absorb and retain just so much knowledge at one time. It's important to study day by day, week by week. Each period of study should be no longer than one or one and a half hours, followed by recreation.

Take legible class and study notes. Throughout the term underline your textbooks and make pertinent notes in the margins.

Use Good Review Techniques

Preparing for exams is largely a question of review. The time needed is not as extensive as some students think, provided you have been consistent in your work. You should be able to review for weekly quizzes in no more than fifteen minutes, for a mid-term hour exam in two to three hours, and for a final exam in five to eight hours.

Your preparation for a final exam should be carefully scheduled into the two weeks prior to exam day. Organize a plan that does not interfere with your regular study for on-going classes.

Plan your review systematically. Use textbook chapter headings or your instructor's outline as guides. Go from chapter notes to class notes, recalling important headings and ideas. If some points are unclear, THEN reread the textbook. Don't plan to learn something for the first time.

Making summary notes is helpful. In four to eight pages, outline the main points of your detailed class and text notes. This helps reinforce the major ideas and important details.

Summary notes can also serve as a self-test toward the end of your preparation for exams. Put a sheet over

each page and slowly uncover the first heading. See if you can remember the main points listed there.

Try to predict the exam questions. Be alert throughout the term to the emphasis instructors put on certain topics, ideas or aspects.

Ask your professor what he recommends for pre-examination work. Use these comments as a guide but don't try to outguess him or her.

Group reviewing can be helpful. Limit discussions of significant points and possible test questions to thirty or forty-five minutes, with no more than four or five people.

Avoid cramming. If you have followed a regular schedule of study and review, you should not have to cram.

Develop Attitude

Tests do serve a purpose. They give you an opportunity to check your progress. Students who have formed good study habits throughout the term should be confident. Exams will help your understanding of important ideas and your ability to express them.

Organize Hours

1. The day before an exam, review a maximum of three hours. Question yourself as you review. Reread text passages only when you have difficulty remembering them.

2. Eat and sleep well so that you are refreshed for the exam.

3. Get up early to avoid rushing on the morning of the test.

4. Shower, have a good breakfast, exercise, go for a walk

5. Take a last look at your summary notes, unless it makes you nervous.

6. Be sure you have all the supplies you need.

7. Arrive in the examination room a few minutes early.

Pace Exam Carefully

Listen to the instructions and read through the entire test. Organize your thoughts.

Budget time for each question. They might be equal in scoring, so answer the easy ones first. Remember to number the answers to match the questions.

Think carefully about one question at a time. Your first sentence should be clear and contain some, if not all, of the main points in your answer.

Put down key words as guides. Indent paragraphs, number points under each heading, or make a rough diagram or outline.

Write legibly. If the instructor cannot read your work easily, your mark might suffer.

Short-form or objective questions demonstrate your ability to recognize details and your ability to choose among alternatives. Pay attention to key words like: all, none, never, might, should. Avoid leaving blanks, an answer might be correct even though you are not sure. An omission will probably count against you. In multiple choice, cross out what you know is wrong and think about what is left. Be sure to completely erase if you change an answer.

Essay questions test your ability to express yourself, to interpret and organize material. Important cue words will indicate what or how much your instructor is asking for. The ones most frequently used are: analyze, compare, contrast, criticize, define, describe, discuss, elaborate, enumerate, evaluate, explain, illustrate, interpret, justify, list, outline, prove, relate, review, state, summarize, trace. Each one of these terms calls for a specific type of material, so think about their meanings in advance.

Finish each question as best you can and go on to the next. Leave room at the bottom of each answer for possible additions later.

Make answers as concise and clear as possible. Try not to repeat yourself. Reread everything carefully. You might have left out a key word or want to add other points.

Reassess Your Work

When you receive your work and get back exam books, read your answers. Compare them with your textbooks and class notes. If you don't understand your instructor's marks, ask him where you went wrong. Learn by your mistakes and go on to the next phase of college work.

This article on examinations is one in a series on study skills developed for college students by the College Textbook Publishers. Free copies are available in booklet form to individual students. The series includes: HOW TO PREPARE SUCCESSFULLY FOR EXAMINATIONS, HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR TEXTBOOKS, HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR READING SKILLS, HOW TO BUILD YOUR WRITING SKILLS. For copies write to: AAP Student Service, One Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016.



Historic Table Found?

What do Buck, Kathy Franklin of Buffalo, N.Y., and Kaz have in common? They are all enshrined, at least in name, in the old Chowan College dining hall.

Chowan College photography instructor, Will McIntyre and his wife Deni bought the table from Beulah's Antiques in Woodland, N. C. Beulah's husband, Simon Johnson who claims to have nothing to do with the business, says he has it from good authority that this table and three others were in the Chowan College dining hall when it was in Columns Building.

Simon says "The college decided to get rid of them (the tables) a long time ago and somehow they found their way out here. Somebody said these tables used to be in

Walter's Grill but I don't know about that." Simon smiled and added "They sure are nice," Simon has no idea how they are. I'd guess anywhere from twenty to seventy-five years old."

Those wonderful carvers of yesteryear had no idea they would be discovered and talked about long after they left Chowan. Now their names are buried beneath a flood of chemicals.

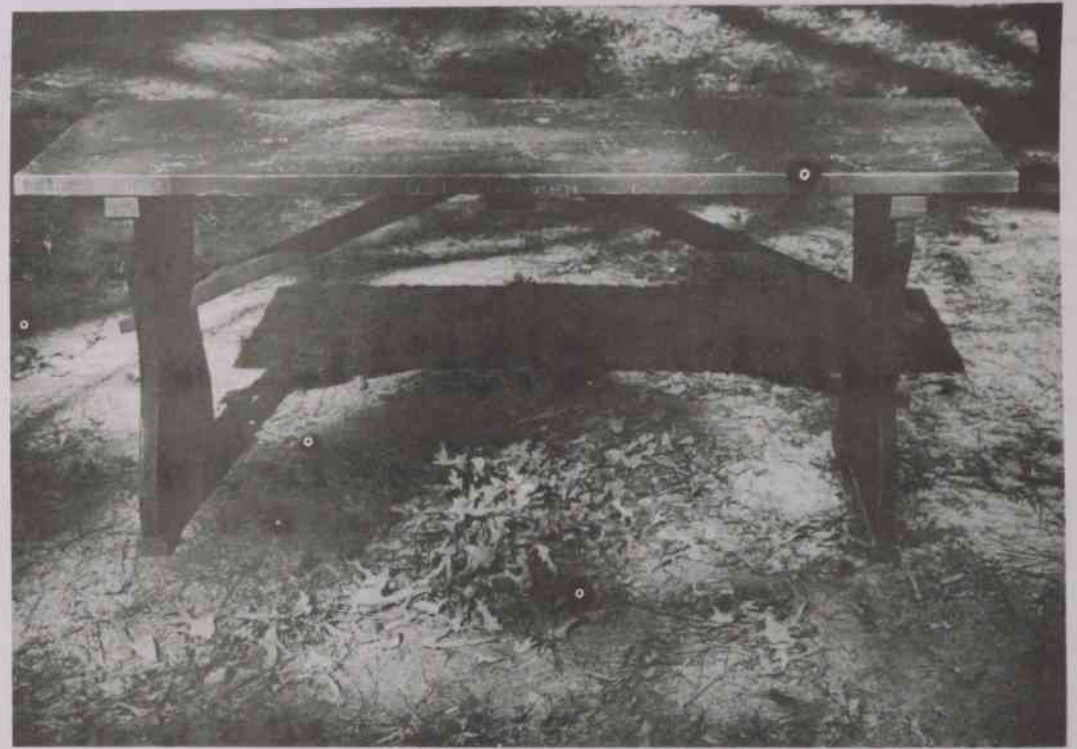
Chemicals? That's right. The McIntyres are using the table in their darkroom. Those are the breaks, Buck and Kathy.

It's back to anonymity for you.

By the way, the McIntyres did not save your chewing gum on the underside of the table. And if you think you would find your name on the other tables, Simon and Beulah still have three left.



Cindy Downs of Silver Spring, Md., has been named to the all-tournament team for her play in leading the women's volleyball team to a third-place finish in the North Carolina Junior College State Tournament at Duke University.



MERCHANDISING CLASS—Mr. Roy Duke, proprietor and owner of Hastings Quality Shop and "Ryan's World" in Franklin, Va., spoke to the Retail Merchandising 151 class on November 2. Store

location, design, operation, and management were the main points of Mr. Duke's program. He also provided the students with information on buying and selling, and price structures and mark-up.

CAREFREE — While students and faculty worked hard at registration, 9 year old Darrell Garrison and his friend Khaki frolicked in front of Marks Hall.