



# **Academic Skills Handbook 2019**





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### Where to go for help

If you experience difficulties at college you should **seek help early** from your subject teachers, Support Group (SG) teacher or one of the year advisers. If necessary, you will then be referred to the most appropriate person in the Student Services, Careers or Student Program teams.

## **ACADEMIC SKILLS, ACADEMIC HONESTY**

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Academic skills are techniques and habits which allow you to demonstrate your learning in a subject to your best advantage. The academic skills you learn at college will build on and extend what you have learned in your earlier schooling. This booklet aims to help you to develop some of the academic skills you will need at college. The first among these is academic honesty. You need to showcase your own work which may be built on the work of others or in collaboration with others but is ultimately your own work as a completed piece. The Board of Senior Secondary Studies (BSSS) develops the academic rules by which college teachers and students work.

### **What is plagiarism?**

“Plagiarism is the copying, paraphrasing or summarising of work, in any form, without acknowledgement of sources, and presenting this as a student’s own work.” (BSSS, Policy and Procedures 2018, section 4.3.12.1)

- If any part of your assessment item is not your own ideas, words or product, you must indicate the source to show that it is not your own work.
- Plagiarism is not restricted to words but includes unacknowledged ideas, thoughts, opinions, conclusions, diagrams, cartoons, art and practical works, photographs, music, graphs, pictures, statistics, tables, computer programs, computer graphics, visual information from the web, advertisements, interview responses, translations from a foreign language text, using a friend’s mathematics assignment, etc – anything you can copy.
- Changing a few words or images does not mean you do not have to acknowledge the source. Paraphrased material must still be acknowledged.
- Purchasing/acquiring an assessment item response and submitting it as your own.

### **What should you do?**

In broad terms you should:

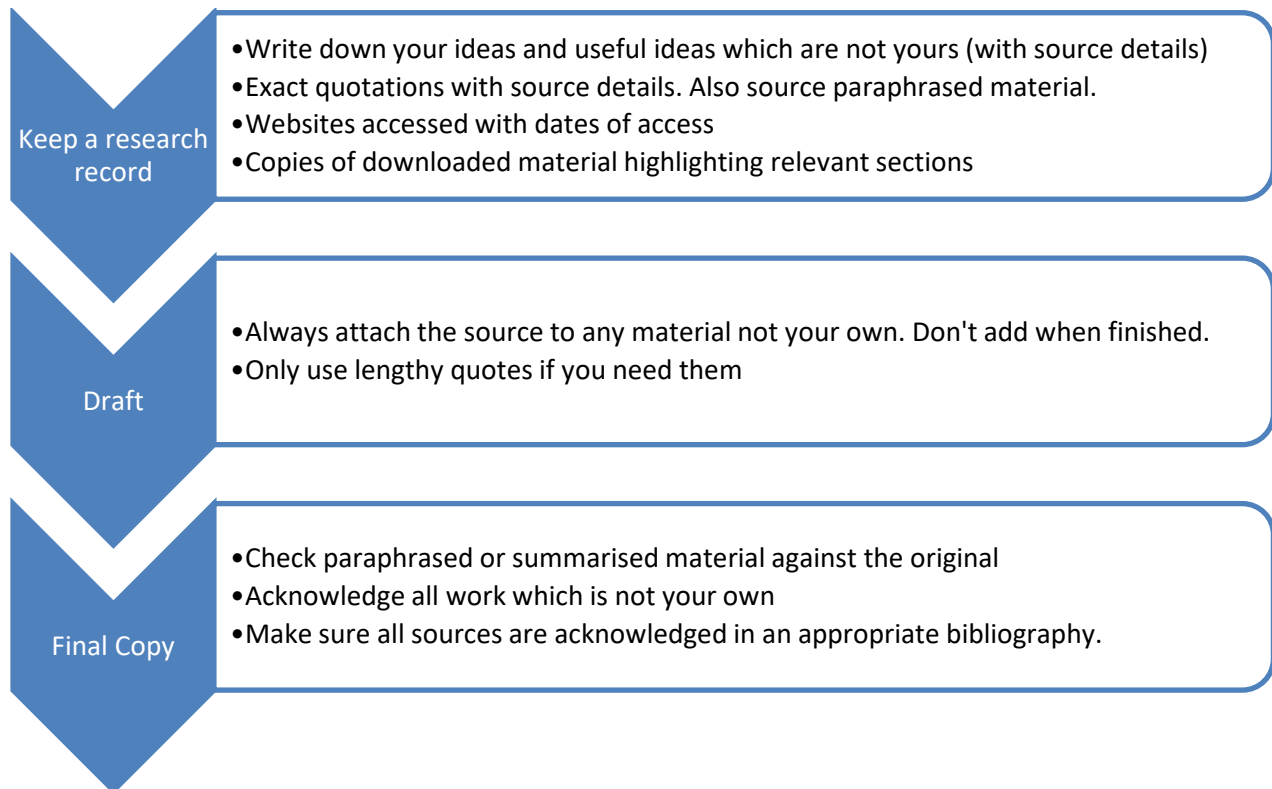
- Understand the relevant policies and procedures of both your school and the BSSS.
- Ask for help from your teacher if you are unsure.
- Allow sufficient time to complete the task. You may be more tempted to rely on another person's work if you are short of time.
- Keep files including all research notes, drafts and a copy of the final product.
- Never help others to plagiarise by lending your work or computer password.
- Understand how to work with other students - what you can and cannot do

## In practical terms what should I do?

First, read about it.

Web reference: [http://www.bsss.act.edu.au/information\\_for\\_students](http://www.bsss.act.edu.au/information_for_students)

Brochure: What's Plagiarism? How you can avoid it.



### What if I don't?

Any suspected case of plagiarism will be investigated (in A courses as well as in T courses). If plagiarism is shown to have occurred, then a penalty from those listed below will be determined and the incident will be recorded.

Penalties possible:

- reprimand, except in cases where benefit would have been derived from such breaches
- the making of alternative arrangements for the assessment (e.g. through a reassessment)
- the assessment marked without the material subject to the breach being considered
- imposition of a mark penalty appropriate to the extent of the breach
- cancellation of the result in the component of the college assessment concerned
- cancellation of the total college assessment result in the unit/course concerned
- cancellation of all results for years 11 and 12 in assessments conducted.

The material in this section is copied and paraphrased from:

BSSS webpage, viewed 5 Jan 2019, [http://www.bsss.act.edu.au/information\\_for\\_students/whats\\_plagiarism\\_how\\_to\\_avoid\\_it](http://www.bsss.act.edu.au/information_for_students/whats_plagiarism_how_to_avoid_it)

Spot the plagiarism...an exercise from the UC Library

Read the original text carefully and then study examples A & B. List or mark any examples of plagiarism you can spot in each. Take special note of the strategies which have been used in example C so that it is an acceptable paraphrase.

Original text:

"Language, then, like everything else, gradually transforms itself over the centuries. There is nothing surprising in this. In a world where humans grow old, tadpoles change into frogs, and milk turns into cheese, it would be strange if language alone remained unaltered. In spite of this, large numbers of intelligent people condemn and resent language change, regarding alterations as due to unnecessary sloppiness, laziness or ignorance " (Aitchison, 2001, p. 4).

<p><b>Example A:</b></p> <p><i>Language has transformed itself over the centuries. This is not surprising, as it would be strange if language remained unaltered. Despite this, many intelligent people regard alterations in language as a sign of sloppiness, laziness or ignorance</i></p>	<p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>
<p><b>Example B:</b></p> <p>According to Aitchison (2001, p. 4), for example, language is gradually transformed over the centuries, and is not caused by sloppy, lazy or ignorant thinking, and therefore change should not be resented. Aitchison clearly sees every change in language as neither good nor bad, but inevitable.</p>	<p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>
<p><b>Example C:</b></p> <p>An important question to ask about modern language has to do with changes in the way language is used. Many people believe that the dumbing-down of language is having disastrous results on English (Kline, 2001). One answer to this is that language change is natural, so there is no reason for people to condemn it (Aitchison, 1981, p.16). Aitchison clearly sees every change in language as neither good nor bad, but inevitable.</p>	<p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>

## **How can I help myself? UNICHECK**

All staff and students will have a Unicheck account created for them. You will be emailed a login early in the year.

### **What will happen?**

For some of your subjects and assessment, your teacher will be provided a report of your work once you've submitted. Ask your teacher about how they will be using Unicheck this year.

### **What is plagiarism?**

The BSSS defines plagiarism as:

- If any part of your assessment item is not your own ideas, words or product, you must indicate the source to show that it is not your own work.
- Plagiarism is not restricted to words but includes unacknowledged ideas, thoughts, opinions, conclusions, diagrams, cartoons, art and practical works, photographs, music, graphs, pictures, statistics, tables, computer programs, computer graphics, visual information from the web, advertisements, interview responses, translations from a foreign language text, using a friend's mathematics assignment, etc – anything you can copy.
- Changing a few words or images does not mean you do not have to acknowledge the source. Paraphrased material must still be acknowledged.
- Purchasing/acquiring an assessment item and submitting it as your own.

### **Why are we checking for plagiarism?**

Plagiarism is something that we need to monitor as it is required by the BSSS. Accountability for one's learning is a key value of UC SSC Lake Ginninderra. Academic honesty is an aspect of accountability.

### **What are the consequences?**

The BSSS states that any work that is found to be plagiarised will incur a penalty ranging from a reprimand in writing, through to the cancellation of all assessment results for Years 11 and 12.

### **So, what can you do to avoid plagiarism?**

1. Speak to your teacher if you're unsure about what constitutes plagiarism.
2. Speak to Karinne, the teacher-librarian, and she will help you.
3. Check your work in Unicheck and ensure that it is your own and you have acknowledged all your sources.

### **I've forgotten my Unicheck password, what do I do?**

See Karinne in the library or Gerry the ICT officer.

## GOALS - SMART

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S.M.A.R.T is an acronym. An acronym is "a word formed from the initial letters or groups of letters of words in a set phrase or series of words" (dictionary.com)

In other words, each letter in the acronym 'SMART' stands for a word.

The meaning of SMART is...

- **Specific**
- **Measurable**
- **Attainable** (and sometimes Ambitious)
- **Realistic**
- **Timely**

When setting a goal, you need to make sure the goal has these parts to it.

### **Specific**

A specific goal has a much greater chance of being accomplished.

To set a specific goal you must answer the six "W" questions:

Who:	Who is involved?
What:	What do I want to accomplish?
Where:	Identify a location.
When:	Establish a time frame.
Which:	Identify requirements and constraints.
Why:	Specific reasons, purpose or benefit of accomplishing the goal(s).

### **Measurable**

Have definite criteria for measuring progress toward the attainment of each goal.

To determine if your goal is measurable, ask questions such as.....How much? How many? How will I know when it is accomplished?

### **Attainable**

When you have goals that are important to you, you begin to think of ways you can make them come true. You develop the attitudes, abilities, and skills, to reach them. You begin seeing previously overlooked opportunities to bring yourself closer to the achievement of your goals.

### **Realistic**

To be realistic, a goal must represent an objective toward which you are both willing and able to work. A goal can be both high and realistic; you are the only one who can decide just how high your goal should be. A high goal is frequently easier to reach than a low one because a low goal exerts low motivational force. Some of the hardest jobs you ever accomplish will seem easy because they are a labour of love.

### **Timely**

A goal should come with a time frame. With no time frame there's no sense of urgency. If you want to get fitter, when do you want to do it by? "Someday" won't work. If you anchor it, "by May 1st", then you've set your unconscious mind into motion to begin working on the goal.

A poor example of a goal statement would be... I will get fitter.

This is not specific. How much? What is the time period? How are you going to accomplish this?

A better example would be...

I will get fitter using a 10 week program. I will go to the gym three times a week, working out for an hour. I will also time myself for a three kilometre run, three times a week. I will run with my friends.

This goal is much more specific. It lists a measurable goal of timed runs. Being fitter is realistic because exercise is how you become fitter. Ten weeks is the time frame.

(Adapted from <https://sites.google.com/site/altedstudyskills/goal-setting/s-m-a-r-t-goals> accessed 5 January 2019)



## GEORGE ORWELL: 6 QUESTIONS / 6 RULES

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George Orwell earned the right to be thought of as one of the finer writers in the English language through such novels as *1984* and *Animal Farm*, such essays as “Shooting an Elephant,” and his memoir *Down and out in Paris*.

Orwell expressed a strong dislike of totalitarian governments in his work, but he was also passionate defender of good writing. Orwell’s writing tips still hold good today.\*

Someone making a serious effort to write will ask of themselves at least four questions about every sentence they are writing:

1. What am I trying to say?
2. What words will express it?
3. What image or idiom will make it clearer?
4. Is this image fresh enough to have an effect?

And then, probably, will ask two more:

1. Could I put it more shortly?
2. Have I said anything that is avoidably ugly?

The easier alternative is to let ready-made phrases (eg *lay the foundation, leaves much to be desired*, and so on) write the sentences for you. You may be in doubt about the effect of a word or a phrase you have constructed yourself, and it is useful to have rules to rely on as well as your instinct.

The following rules will cover most cases:

1. Never use a metaphor, simile, or other figure of speech which you are used to seeing in print.
2. Never use a long word where a short one will do.
3. If it is possible to cut a word out, always cut it out.
4. Never use passive voice (something is done) where you can use the active (am doing something).
5. Never use a foreign phrase, a scientific word, or a jargon word if you can think of an everyday English equivalent.
6. Break any of these rules sooner than say anything outright barbarous.

\* The tips are paraphrased from Orwell's essay “Politics and the English Language” available with many other essays by Orwell at:

<http://gutenberg.net.au/ebooks03/0300011h.html#part42>, viewed 7 Jan, 2015

## ESSAY WRITING

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### The essay writing process:

First, think deeply about the question. What do the key words mean? What content is required?

Next, plan your response. Jot down ideas and key points in logical order. These points will become the skeleton of the finished essay.

Now, think about evidence for each point. Can you support the points with examples? Jot down some additional details. Consult **How to evaluate sources**.

At this point it is a good idea to draw a mind map or a plan.

Then, write your introduction as a separate paragraph. Remember this should introduce and overview the question. Its style is important as it sets the tone for the rest of the essay.

Next, build each planned point into a paragraph. Add details, evidence, examples and comparisons to the skeleton. Remember to be grammatical, aware of format, "un-waffly" and concise. Think carefully about literary style.

Finally, having presented your key points, return to the question and sum up your argument in a concluding paragraph.

What was the most important point? What do you think about the question?

### Final check list when writing assignments

Polish and refine your first and last paragraphs.

Type your essay using an easy to read font such as Times New Roman 12 point. Make back-up copies in print and electronically.

Give your assignment a separate title page, clearly stating the title (question) of your assignment, your name, your teacher's name, the unit title, class and due date. This should be in addition to a 'declaration of original work' page.

Write your bibliography alphabetically. Consult **How to write a bibliography**.

### Important:

A good essay must be clearly focused on the topic. It must show evidence of wide and critical reading. It must present a logically arranged, well-reasoned argument. A 'formal' literary essay is written in the third person, for instance, "The witches in Macbeth foretell tragedy".

Do not write "I think..." or "I feel..." or "I'm writing this essay..."

Do not use contractions, for instance "don't".

Write in the present tense, for instance "Romeo and Juliet contains all the elements of a soap opera".

Use quotations to back up your points. Consult **How to Cite References in Your Essay**.

## HOW TO EVALUATE SOURCES FOR YOUR ESSAY

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Evaluating information sources is an important step in the research process. From books to journal articles, media reports and, most importantly, Internet sites, it is essential to critically evaluate information before including it in your assignments. This checklist of crucial questions is intended to help you identify information sources that are reliable and appropriate.

### **Who is the author?**

- Does he/she have any listed qualifications or credentials?
- Is the author affiliated with an organisation/university etc?

### **Has there been a review process?**

- Is your article from a refereed (reviewed by peers) research journal?
- Is the publisher known in this field of study?

### **Is the information accurate?**

- Can you verify the facts and statistics?
- Is there a bibliography of sources used?

### **Is the information objective?**

- Is there a discernible bias – does the author seem to be promoting a particular idea and could this bias have affected research results?
- Is the information published by an organisation with a particular point of view?

### **Is the information current?**

- Is this the most current information on your topic or is it too old to be pertinent?  
(This is very important in fields such as economics, science and technology but in subject areas such as history or literature, older materials may be just as valuable).

### **Is the content, style and tone appropriate for your purposes?**

- Are you satisfied these aspects reflect the impression you want to convey and suit your audience?

### **Evaluating Internet sources**

Evaluating sources found on the Web can be tricky. Remember, it's easy to publish on the Internet, often without any review process. To help you find reliable information check the following details:

- Is there a named author or data custodian?
- Can you determine if the author is qualified to write about this topic?
- Are personal opinions being presented as facts?
- Are there any references/bibliographies which you can check?
- When the site was last updated or is there a 'publication' date?
- Are any images authentic? (*digital images can be easily manipulated*)
- Are there any spelling and grammatical errors? (*this could imply that the information has not been thoroughly checked for inaccuracies*)
- Is there a mail-to link if you want to forward questions or comments?

If you have doubts about any information you retrieve, investigate additional sites on the topic  
(taken from the UC Library training handouts 2014)

## HOW TO CITE REFERENCES IN YOUR ESSAY

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When writing an essay, it is sometimes necessary to make a reference within your text to another author.

How do you do this? One method used at this college and at the University of Canberra is the Harvard system of citation. The following information refers to the Harvard system.

Put the following information in brackets:

**The author's name:** if no author, use the title of the article

**Year of publication**

**Page number**

### 1) Direct Quote: indent the quote from your text:

Shelley applies this argument to any endeavour not especially to scientific discovery. Victor Frankenstein says:

A human being in perfection ought always to preserve a calm and peaceful mind, and never to allow passion or a transitory desire to disturb his tranquility. I do not think that the pursuit of knowledge is an exception to this rule. If the study to which you apply yourself has a tendency to weaken your affections, and to destroy your taste for those simple pleasures in which no alloy can possibly mix, then that study is certainly unlawful, that is to say, not befitting the human mind. If this rule were always observed; if no man allowed any pursuit whatsoever to interfere with the tranquility of his domestic affections, Greece had not been enslaved; Caesar would have spared his country; America would have been discovered more gradually; and the empires of Mexico and Peru had not been destroyed. (Shelley 1818, pp49-50)

Victor's own motivations are entirely idealistic ones concerning the apparently innocent ambition of distinguishing himself in science and discoveries.

### 2) When you are quoting a few words or a short sentence

**Include the quote in your text**

**Identify it by double inverted commas**

**Example:** Spanier points out that Marx was committed to democratic ends, "the inalienable rights of the individual and social justice for all men." (Spanier 1972, p.284)

### 3) When you summarise or paraphrase an author's work, make sure that you acknowledge the author's ideas:

**Example:** Historians believe if Lincoln died in 1860, before he became a presidential nominee, he would have been a forgotten man. (Neeley 1993, p.8)

or

**Example:** Masson (1998, p.13) believed that in the 12th Century, the legend of Arthur was seen as an example of Celtic vitality and magic.

### 4) If you use data, statistics, charts, diagrams etc.:

**Example:** By 1819 settlers had crossed the Blue Mountains. There were 24 flocks of sheep and 1400 cattle near Bathurst, where there was the beginnings of a village. (Blainey 1966, p. 128)

## HOW TO WRITE A BIBLIOGRAPHY

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### Why do I need a bibliography?

You need to write a bibliography:

- to acknowledge your sources
- to give your reader information to identify and consult your source
- to demonstrate that your information is correct

The college uses the Harvard system in most areas. Other referencing systems include APA (American Psychological Association).

More detailed guide is on the University of Canberra Library page at:

<http://canberra.libguides.com/referencing>

A bibliography is placed at the end of your essay or assignment and is arranged in alphabetical order according to the author's surname (or title when there is no author). The usual form for each entry is author (surname first, then give names or initials), date, title, (underlined or in italics), place of publication, publisher. Follow the punctuation given in the examples.

**Book with one author.** Capitalise only the first letter of the title and proper nouns.

Palmer, Bruce. (1995). *Better Basketball*. Scoresby, Victoria: Magenta.

**Two authors.**

Smith, S. & Webster, M. (1997). *Library skills*. Sydney: Allen & Unwin.

**More than two authors.** As above except in the author section you would write: Smith, S. and others.

**Books with editor/compiler.**

Hergenham, L. (Ed). (1994). *The Australian short story*. Brisbane: UQP.

**Encyclopaedia.**

*World Book Encyclopaedia*. (1992). Chicago: World Book Inc., 17:283-285.

**Newspaper article.**

Abjorensen, Norman. (1996). 'The bloke next door'. In *The Canberra Times*, Feb 24: 1996.

**Magazine article.**

Williams, John. (1993). How to study at school. in *Time*,(4), Mar 3: 1994.

**CD-ROM, Video, Computers.** Treat as for book format but include the format in square brackets after the title. e.g. *Encarta '95*. [CD-ROM]. (1995).USA: Microsoft.

**INTERNET.** You must give enough information to retrieve the item. (The example is no longer accessible)

- Author's name (some sites may not give the author's name)
- Title of the document
- Note that it is an online source
- Complete URL (Universal Resource Locator, http location)
- Date you visited or downloaded the information

Orwell, George. *Politics and the English Language* [Online]

<http://gutenberg.net.au/ebooks03/0300011h.html#part42>, viewed 5 Jan, 2019

## Email

- Author's name
- Subject line of the message
- Online source
- Person sending the email
- Address
- Date of the document or download

Hood, J. The importance of the saddle in medieval times. [Online] Available email: [teacher@ucan.edu.au](mailto:teacher@ucan.edu.au)  
March 10 1999.

## DIRECT CONTACT

In subjects, such as Outdoor Education, which value direct contact with knowledgeable people you need to reference:

- Name of contact
- Date contacted
- Method of contact – telephone, interview, email etc
- Role or position of contact

Notes of the interaction should be included in your appendix.

## THINGS TO REMEMBER

1. Get into the habit of writing down the details of each resource as it is used.
2. Remember, for the date of publication, it is the dd/mm/yyyy
3. Punctuation is set out in the examples.
4. If you need any further information, check with the library staff.
5. Your bibliography is arranged in alphabetical order, by author's family-name or title (for an encyclopaedia).

### College Expectations

- Students are expected to complete any work set during a lesson.
- Mathematics courses usually have considerable sequential content. The course content fills much of the available teaching time, so review takes place progressively during classes as new connections with previous work are made.

### Tests

- Revise by re-doing questions from the material supplied (there will usually be many questions in addition to those set in class). The skills of mathematics are like the skills of sport or music. You need to practise them.
- It is good exam technique (for all subjects) not to assume that the test questions will only be like those questions which appear in the text book or in review materials.
- Make sure that you show your method of working in any work submitted. Most questions give credit for the mathematical method and evidence of thinking.

### Assignments

- Communication is an important criterion for assignments. This means mathematical working and WORDS describing what you are doing and why.
- As a guide to the level of explanation required, an assignment response should be able to be understood by a student in your class who has read and understood the task.
- Please use correct mathematical notation and terminology. e.g. use  $x^2$  not  $x^2$ , and “reflect” rather than “flip”.
- It is not necessary to type an assignment. Legible hand-written assignments are acceptable.
- Typed assignments should show use of Microsoft’s Equation Editor or similar so that your mathematics is set out correctly.
- Technology should be appropriate to the question. Make sure you include work done on Graphics Calculators, spreadsheets or graphing packages and online calculators.
- Include graphs or tables at the point they are referred to in the assignment. It is difficult to follow your working if all figures and tables appear as an appendix.
- You will need to use a spreadsheet for some work. If any formulas are used, please include a formula sheet with row and column headings. Ask your teacher how to do this.
- Screen shots from the Graphics Calculator should be shown as evidence of working.
- Before starting an assignment, check the assessment criteria with the teacher. Make sure you understand what the assignment is about before you start.

### Information for Students in T Mathematics Courses

- For Specialist Mathematics and Mathematical Methods, you will need to be proficient at algebraic processes such as expansion of brackets, factorisation and solving equations as well as basic graphs such as straight lines and parabolas and basic trigonometry.
- Excel spreadsheets and graphing data using Excel or Sheets are skills you will need. The line and curve fitting facility is also very useful for modelling in science subjects.
- Graphing software such as Graphmatica is available for download on the internet for drawing graphs and curve fitting. Other internet programs such as [Desmos](#) will draw the graph on screen and allow you to download it as a picture ready to paste into an assignment.
- Many ‘Apps’ are available which will also help you. Desmos and Graphmatica are examples of software available as a smart phone App.



- Work hard at college from the beginning of Year 11. You may be able to complete a major with a good course score in 7 terms so it may be well worth the effort.
- The scores that are used to calculate an ATAR come (via a statistical process) from the tests, assignments etc that are done in each unit. The numbers that are important are your score, the mean (the average) and the standard deviation (a measure of how spread the scores are). An indicator called a z-score can be calculated from the mean and standard deviation which shows where you stand in relation to the average student. Ask the teacher for a z-score for your items. Above 0 means you are above the average. These will give you some indication of how you are going in each subject.

### **Student Assistance**

If you are having difficulties with the work, ASK for help. Mathematics is a sequential subject, so do not wait too long on any topic you have not understood.

Some students engage an outside tutor. However, before doing so, consider the options for assistance available at the college.

- Ask your classroom teacher for help in class. Some problems are very simply overcome.
- Ask any teacher in the Mathematics staffroom for help at any time when they are available.
- There is free online help in mathematics at various websites.
- Youtube, including the 'Khan Academy' channel also has videos of lessons in specific topics. The Khan Academy website also has graded exercises with hints and answers for many topics.

### **Still having difficulty?**

All college courses are approved by BSSS to be delivered at certain standards and must be taught at the appropriate level of difficulty and within the time allocated.

It is possible in Year 11 to change your maths course if you are not finding success. As a guide, you should be achieving a C grade if you are placed in the correct level and complete all the work asked of you. Choosing to change courses is NOT admitting failure, but that you are moving to a course where you can experience success. Many students make such a change.

It is important for reasons relating to achieving an ATAR that no changes are made to your enrolment in any 'T' Mathematics courses after you have begun year 12.



## STRUCTURE FOR PRACTICAL REPORTS IN SCIENCE

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### **Abstract** - *What it is all about- very briefly*

- A summary (100 to 200 words) of the essence of your report
- The abstract should cover;
  - a. The purpose of the investigation;
  - b. The major items used;
  - c. Brief comment of the procedure;
  - d. Summary of results.
- It is usually written after the rest of the report has been completed.

### **Introduction** - *Why you did it.*

- This is usually a short section of about a page.
- In your introduction, you include:
  - a. Background information from texts and articles you have read;
  - b. State the aims (or purpose) of the investigation;
  - c. State any hypothesis being tested.
- The rest of the report must relate to the aims.

### **Methods and Materials** - *What you did.*

- This is a detailed section which would allow others to duplicate your research.
- You will need to describe:
  - a. The materials used;
  - b. The equipment used, specify types and number or special requirements;
  - c. Your method/s;
- Diagrams are essential in this section.
- This section must be written in your own words to demonstrate your understanding of what you have done.

### **Results** - *What you found.*

- This section describes what you found out in your investigation.
- You need to provide:
  - a. A summary of your results;
  - b. Supporting tables, graphs and charts of your results, as appropriate;
  - c. Additional drawings (if relevant).
- Graphs and diagrams etc. must be relevant, well presented and provided with appropriate labels.
- Your information must be easily understood by those reading it.
- If you collect large amounts of data, present this in an appendix. Summaries of your results should be presented in an appropriate manner in the results section.

### **Discussion** - *What did your results mean?*

- In this section interpret the results and explain their significance in relation to the stated aims in the introduction.
- You need to:
  - a. Point out trends;
  - b. Provide evidence for your interpretation;
  - c. Declare any weaknesses in your investigation;

- d. Make suggestions for improvement.
- e. Provide answers to any questions on the task sheet

**Conclusion** - *So what?*

- This is a short paragraph which summarizes your results in relation to your stated aim and hypothesis.

**Acknowledgements** - *Who helped you.*

- Here you should recognise those who have given you assistance and advice.

**References** - *What sources of information helped you.*

- In this section you need to list all sources of information that were useful in your investigation.
- Where appropriate, textual referencing is to be done.
- All references should be recorded in the format specified in **How to Write a Bibliography**

## KEEPING A READING JOURNAL

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Students write Reading or Response Journals as they read and interact with various forms of literature.

### Why keep a reading journal?

The purpose of your reading journal is to:

- Help you capture your developing responses as a reader
- Help you understand what you are reading
- Show how you are improving as a reader

It is a record of your thoughts as you read and it should be individual to you.

### What should you write about?

- Speculations about how the story might develop (what you think might happen next)
- Comparisons with things that have happened to you
- Accounts of things that have happened to you that events in the book remind you of
- Reflections on things in the book that really strike you as interesting or curious
- Reactions to the characters and what they do
- Comments on how the author is telling the story
- Comments on other books, films, plays, or poems which you reminded of by parts of the book
- Questions that you think of as you are reading
- Things that are puzzling you as you read
- Anything else you think of as you are reading

### How often should you write an entry?

It is best to write often while you are reading the book and write more after you finish it. You should be writing once a week at the very least. Do not write it all at the end!

### What should entries in your reading journal look like?

Always date each entry, and note the author and title of the book on your first line. Remember to write down the page or chapter number at the beginning of your entry. It is definitely not a collection of book reports. Remember to separate your journal from other parts of your work.

### Ideas to help you write a better journal

1. Do not tell the story over - the teacher has read it!
2. Write in the first person e.g. "I feel" or "I wonder"

3. Write a journal entry before you start reading.  
Here are a few ways to begin:
  - Write about how you respond to the title and cover.  
Compare your cover with another edition if available.
  - Write a response to the first sentence. Does it intrigue you?
  - Write a response to the first page
4. Reading journals are the place for you to write your response to the literature or film.
5. Think of your journal as a conversation with yourself or with your teacher.
6. Comment on setting, time, character development and theme. Is the dialogue successful? Is the plot complicated?
7. Use quotes from the novel or play to support your ideas.
8. Ways to start journal entries:
  - I notice...
  - I wonder about...
  - What puzzles me is...
  - I predict...
  - I do not understand...
  - I now understand...
  - What impresses me about this section is...
  - What I dislike in this section is...
9. Do not forget to comment on the ending of the story. Was it predictable? Did you feel 'let down'? Is there an alternative ending which you think may work better?
10. You are not expected to love the novel/play but you will learn more by searching for the positive in your writing.
11. Your journal can be a source of ideas if you need to write an essay about the novel/play/film/poetry.

## RESEARCH

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You can access free online information by using the University of Canberra library, the ACT Public Library system, The National Library, subject gateways and portals and various search engines. Ask the library staff to help you do this.

### SOME HINTS FOR ONLINE DATABASE RESEARCH

- You need to belong to the ACT Public Library to access their databases. You can join online and then apply for a password and PIN to access the databases.
- Join the National Library of Australia.
- Use keywords in your searches or Library of Congress subject headings if you are familiar with them.
- Explore all of the Google features – Google Scholar is excellent but you have to pay for many of the articles. Advanced Search uses Boolean operators to refine your search.
- Include American spelling in searches in order to get as many hits as possible e.g. aging, meter.
- Use Google or other search engine and type in your topic and then portal, or information gateway. e.g. Middle Ages history portal, or ecology gateway. This gives you access to academic sites that have been pre-sorted for you.
- Use quality resources on your bibliographies, not just Wikipedia, preferably including a journal article. Wikipedia articles will often include links to original sources including journal articles.

### THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF AUSTRALIA

[www.nla.gov.au](http://www.nla.gov.au) offers access to:

**TROVE** - a gateway to collections of maps, pictures, music and more

**Catalog** – search the NLA catalog

**E - Resources** – it helps to find websites, indexes, full text e-journals and subject guides. Subject-based. Access to some databases requires library membership.

## **UC LIBRARY**

The home page for University of Canberra is <http://www.canberra.edu.au/>

A link to the Library is on the top of the page. In subjects your teachers where research is required will usually organise visits during class time to the library.

Searching the library collection is easily done using the UCanFind box on the library home page. Abstracts of articles are available by passing your mouse pointer over the article name. Correct citing is also given.

## **ACT VIRTUAL LIBRARY**

<http://www.library.act.gov.au/> Click on eResources. Free access – over 30 databases including Australia/New Zealand Reference Centre, Grove Art, Literary Reference Centre, Science Reference Centre. You will need to be a library member and have a PIN.

You are encouraged to join the local library. Every student should belong. Search the catalogue and reserve materials from home or school.

Search online databases 24/7.

A password and pin are required for many of the databases.

Tick full text if you do not want to have to chase around or buy articles.

## **SEARCH ENGINES**

### **SCHOLARLY INFORMATION SEARCH ENGINES**

<http://scholar.google.com.au/> index to the internet for scholarly (reviewed) articles

### **IMAGES**

<http://images.google.com.au>

<http://classroomclipart.com>

## IMPROVING LISTENING SKILLS

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### Do you daydream? Does your attention drift?

Use this acronym as a guide to help you concentrate.

- Tune in
- Question
- Listen
- Review

## TQLR

### Tune in

Prepare your mind, pre-read, listen to opening sentences associated with the subject and things you already know.

### Questions/inquire

Frame a question you think the lesson/talk will answer. Frame others as you go. Try to anticipate. Ask yourself what is the point? What will be next?

### Listen actively, not passively

Anticipate what the speaker will say. Keep your thoughts a little ahead. Make connections. Feel free to doubt, challenge and applaud what is being said.

### Review

Did you get the answers? Consolidate in your mind the main points. Ask questions.

### How:

Main Ideas	Details

### Listen

Most people arrange their talks by:

- Stating what the talk or lesson is about
- Delivering the message
- Summing up.

## Readiness

- Prepare for class by previewing notes of last lesson.
- Look over study done the night before.

This will arouse your interest and put your mind on track and prompt you to anticipate and maybe do some research before the lesson. You will then be a much more involved student.

## Active listening.

Listen to headings e.g. "Today I'll cover the following"

- Listen for new topic signals:
  - "Let's look at..."
  - "The next problem to consider..."
  - "Now I will cover the following..."
- Listen for key words and phrases:
  - changes in volume
  - pauses
  - repetitions
  - change in tone
- Listen for the last sentence:
  - "Finally it should be clear that..."
  - "So we have seen that..."

## Components of being a good listener

- **Motivation.** You must be motivated.
- **Enthusiasm.** You must be interested, determined and engrossed in the experience.
- **Memory.** Use links to what you know to help your memory.
- **Observation.** Observe the speaker and watch body language for emphasis.
- **Confidence.** You must believe that you can learn effectively.
- **Concentration.** Marshal your thoughts. Choose to concentrate and use positive self-talk.
- **Relaxation.** Your attitude must be one of relaxed awareness.
- **Note-taking.** Where possible take notes.

And lastly, you need to eat healthy food, drink lots of water, exercise regularly and get adequate sleep at night!



## ORAL PRESENTATIONS

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### What makes a good presentation?

Preparation - what to say

Delivery - how you say it

### Preparation

- Involves:
- thought and research
  - planning and organising
  - writing and editing

### Steps

- **What do you want to achieve?** Is the aim to inform, provoke thought, or convince?
- **Who is your audience:** How much do they know? How are you going to involve them?
- **Brainstorm** your topic.
- **Research** your topic.
- **Organise** your information and write a **draft. Mindmap** – there are ‘apps’ to help with this.
- **Summarise** your draft into **points** and **supporting details** for slides, and/or cards.
- Prepare your **visual aids**. A slideshow? Props?
- **Rehearse** your presentation and get the length right. Ask a friend to listen and time you.

### Content

- Structure - introduction, body and conclusion
- Clarity
- Logic

### Introduction

- *Capture your listeners’ attention. How?* Begin with a question, a funny story, a startling comment, or anything that will make them think.
- **State your purpose;** for example:  
‘I’m going to talk about...’  
‘This morning I want to explain...’
- *Present an outline of your talk;* for example:  
‘I will discuss the following points: First of all...Then... This will lead to... And finally...’

### Body

- Present your main points one by one in **logical** order.
- Pause after each point (give time to take notes, or to think about what you have said).
- Transition clearly from one point to the next
- Use clear examples to illustrate your points.

## Conclusion

- Provide a clear summary of the main points.
- Restate the purpose of your talk, and say that you have achieved your aim:  
'I think you can now see that...'  
'My intention was ..., and it should now be clear that ...'
- Thank the audience, and invite questions: 'Thank you. Are there any questions?'

## Delivery of your presentation

**Talk** to your audience, don't read to them!

### Why?

If you read out your presentation as if it were an essay, your audience will probably understand very little and will lose concentration quickly.

Use notes, cue cards or presentation software as prompts, and **speak to** the audience. Include everyone by looking at them and maintaining eye- contact.

### Language

- **KIS** - Keep It Simple.
- **Emphasise** the key points—and make sure people realise which are the key points. **Repeat** them using different phrasing.
- Check and practise the **pronunciation** of difficult words.

## Use your body and voice to communicate clearly

- Speak **loudly** enough for the room to hear. If people can't hear, they won't listen.
- Speak **slowly** and **clearly**. Don't rush! Speaking fast makes it difficult for your audience to understand your content and maintain interest.
- Key words are important. Speak them out slowly and loudly.
- Vary your voice tone and pitch. If you always use the same volume and pitch (for example, all loud, or all soft, or in a monotone) your audience will switch off.
- When you begin a new point, change pitch and volume.
- Use pauses—don't be afraid of short periods of silence. (They give you a chance to gather your thoughts, and your audience a chance to think.)
- Posture. Stand straight and comfortably. This presents confidence.
- Hold your head up. Look around and make eye-contact with all of your audience, not just your teacher. If you don't include the audience, they won't listen to you.
- Use hand gestures and facial expressions as this is a form of communication you use naturally. It will make things far more interesting for the audience.
- Don't turn your back on the audience!
- Smile!

## **Interact with the audience**

- Be aware of how your audience is reacting. Are they interested or bored? Stop if necessary and explain a point again.
- Check if the audience is still with you. 'Does that make sense?' 'Is that clear?'
- Be open to questions.
- If someone raises a hand, or asks a question in the middle of your talk, answer it. If you can't answer it, put the question to the audience and let someone else answer!
- Questions are good. They show that the audience is listening with interest. They should be regarded as a collaborative search for deeper understanding.
- Be ready to get discussion going after your presentation. In case nobody has anything to say, have some points for discussion ready to ask the group.

## **Using visual aids**

These can help your audience to understand what you are presenting. People learn visually as well as orally. It can be very helpful for your audience to see keywords.

- clear
- visible (do not stand in front)
- should add to audience's understanding

## **Presentation Displays**

**Do not** read word-for-word

Be careful to:

- Use bold and large typeface, and a minimum of size 16 font
- Have no more than seven or eight main points
- Give your audience time to take notes
- Be colourful but not busy with colour
- Graphs should be self-explanatory and simple
- Remember that PowerPoint may look great, but if the technology goes wrong you may be very embarrassed. It's a good idea to have a printed handout as a backup just in case.
- Sometimes students are tempted to spend more time on producing presentation graphics than on the actual talk. Remember—if your talk is poor, no amount of fancy graphics will save it!

## Handouts

Handouts are a great idea. Think about whether you want to distribute them before or after your presentation. It is a good idea to include your references on a handout, so that people can follow up on them later. You could also include some follow-up questions for discussion.

Put your information on the whiteboard **before** the talk begins, otherwise you will have to turn your back on the audience and break your eye contact with them. Writing on a board is also time-consuming.

If you use a whiteboard, come prepared with the right pens (use pens clearly marked 'Whiteboard Marker'— don't use anything else) and write in large neat writing, so that people can read it.

## Checking out the facilities

Whenever possible, check the facilities of the room where you are going to deliver your talk. Can I use the equipment? Do I need anything?

## Dealing with nervousness

The first few times you make a presentation, you will be nervous. That's okay—a bit of nervousness is a sign you are focussing on what you need to do

However, to make sure that your nervousness does not become a problem, here are some things to consider:

- Smile!  
Your audience will react warmly to you if you smile and look relaxed.
- Treat your audience like friends.
- Breathe deeply. It will calm you down and help to control any slight shaking that you might get in your hands or your voice.
- Be well-prepared. Practise giving your talk.
- Be organised. If you are well organised, your task will be easier. If your notes are disorganised, you may get flustered.
- Slow down! When people are nervous, they tend to get confused easily. So your mind may start to race, and you may feel panicky. Make use of pauses; force yourself to stop at the end of a sentence, take a breath, and think before you continue.
- Remember, the way you perform is the way your audience will feel. Giving an oral presentation is a performance—you are like an actor. If you act the part of someone enjoying themselves and feeling confident, you will not only communicate these positive feelings to the audience, you will feel better, too.
- Accomplished public speakers feel nervous before and even during a talk. The skill comes in not communicating your nervousness, and in not letting it take over from the presentation. Over time, you will feel less nervous.

## PLANNING FOR STUDY

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College semesters are short; 16 weeks or less of time to prepare for 20 or more assessment tasks. Planning will help.

- Spread your time evenly. Do not spend your time only on your favourite subjects.
- Separate similar subjects with others between, e.g. History, Mathematics, English or Mathematics, Geography, Physics.
- Make a timetable e.g. if you know you have to revise topic A and topic B just before a class, write them onto a timetable. **Revise and update timetables.**
- Plan to do the more difficult subjects when you are alert.
- Do not assume all subjects need the same amount of time.
- Plan leisure time on your timetable. Physical activity and rest are necessary inclusions.
- Have 'stretch breaks' if you are seated at a desk for long periods.
- Use short time periods to advantage, e.g. waiting for a bus or travelling. Revise Mathematics formulas or read over an essay.
- A good night's work should consist of four parts:
  - set homework and preparation for next day
  - revision of the day's work with updating summary
  - study
  - 20 minutes of exercise
- Avoid over-commitment.

### Environment for Study

- **Physical spaces.** Set places aside for your study
- **Quiet is best.** It is proven that very quiet background music has no effect on concentration. However, as soon as an announcer comes on, e.g. commercial break, the ability to study falls.
- **Free from interruptions,** e.g. telephones, radios and friends.
- **Fresh air.** The mind needs it to work best.
- **Special place.** Have a desk, light, pens, pencils, books, calculator etc.
- **Studying in bed.** Only if planning to sleep instead of study!
- **Attend to general health:** Diet, sleep, exercise, recreation are important.

## HOW TO STUDY

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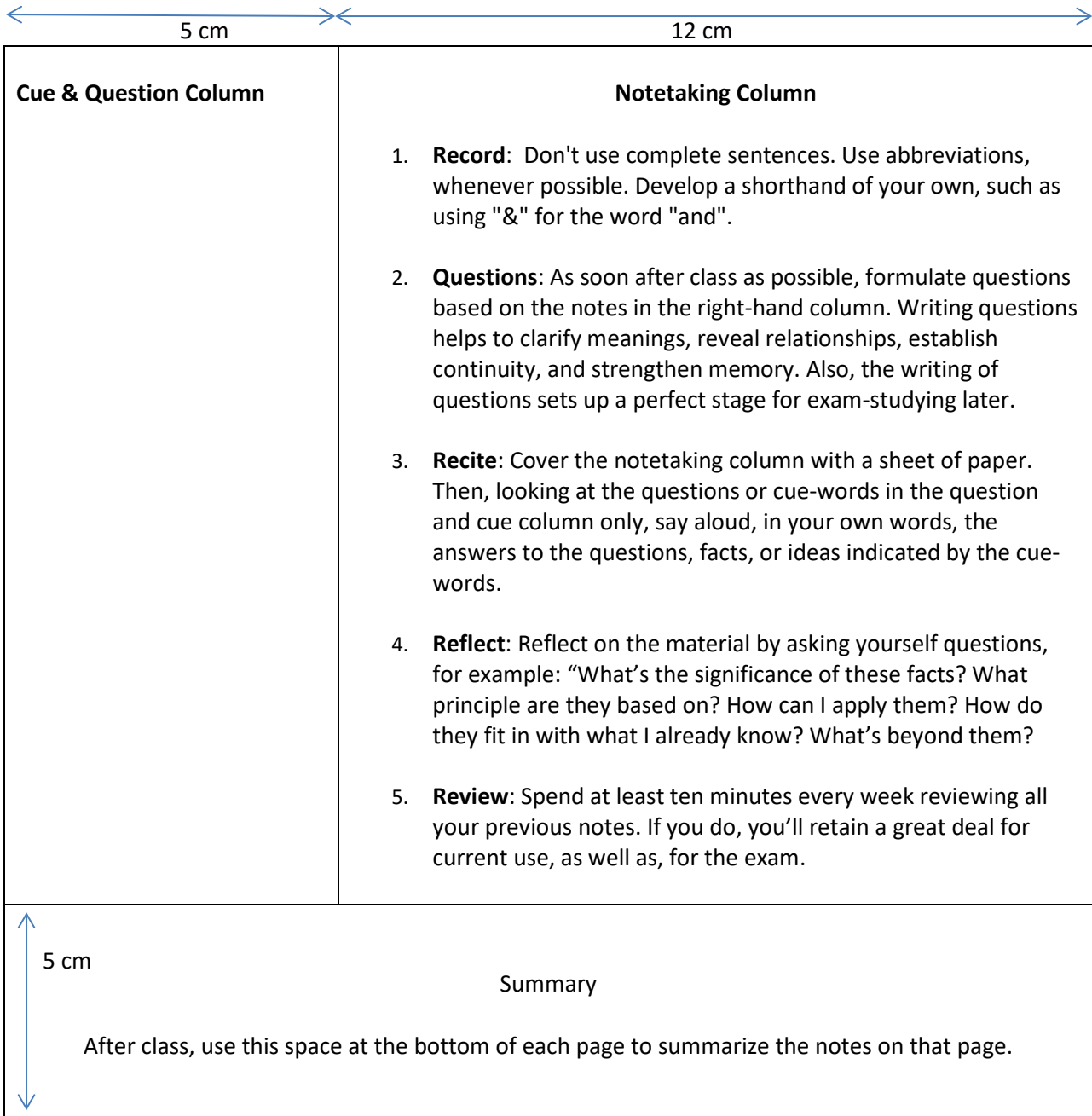
(In 10 easy lessons)

1. **WHERE?** In a quiet place, with light shining over your left shoulder.
2. **WHEN?** Stick to a timetable. Be strict about it or it will not happen. Ask your teachers how much time you should spend on each subject.
3. **HOW SOON? NOW!** Do not leave it until the end, or you will find there is too much to do in a short time.
4. **EXHAUSTED ALREADY?** Rest is important. Try working for forty minutes and resting for ten.
5. **MOTIVATION!** Be determined. Teach yourself to concentrate on something you know and understand. Concentration comes from practice and it means you have to make an *effort*.
6. **ACTION!** Drawing maps is better than looking at them. Teaching someone is better than having them teach you. Writing a practice answer is better than reading one. Closing the book and trying to remember is better than just reading it over.
7. **THE FIVE SENSES!** Use them. You can read aloud. You can listen. You can discuss things with your friends. You can draw, write and make diagrams. Be creative!
8. **VARIETY IS THE SPICE OF LIFE!** When you think you are becoming jaded in one subject, *CHANGE!* Remember to separate one literature subject (such as History) from another (such as English).
9. **ROYGBIV** The first letters of the colours of the spectrum make a little formula which helps us to remember things. So does "*Every Good Boy Deserves Fruit*"? (Ask a Music Teacher). There are plenty of them. Find out about the ones you need. Maybe "*Ernie Gave Bert Dead Frogs*" works better than the fruit mnemonic for you.
10. **ONE MORE TIME!** Revision starts *now*, not before the next test. If you read over your days work each night, you will find it easier to recall when you go over it later.

## WHAT TO STUDY

Everything! Obviously you need a shortened version so you do not have to re-live every class. This is where a note taking system such as the Cornell Notetaking System can help you. It is a consistent organised method of drawing up your page to keep a record of what you learn in classes. An example of the template in use and a template to copy is on the following pages.

### The Cornell Note-taking System



Adapted from How to Study in College 7/e by Walter Pauk, 2001 Houghton Mifflin Company

**Examples of Cornell Notes in Action**

**ORIGINAL**  
 questions,  
 comments,  
 or other  
 cues that  
 serve as  
 evidence  
 student is  
 personalizing  
 their notes:  
 about 1/3 of  
 every page

September 6<sup>th</sup> 2010  
 p. 64-68 Section 3.1

What is Ecology?  
 Absent


QUESTIONS	NOTES
1. The Oil Spill in example of gy?  I use biology or is something ecologist be?  How old is ecology when were first records.	• <b>Biosphere</b> - all life on earth & parts of earth where life exists. • <b>Ecology</b> - Study of interactions among organisms & between organisms & their physical environment. • <b>Biotic Factor</b> - Any living part of the enviro with which an orgs might interact. i.e. Animals, plants, bacteria. • <b>Abiotic Factor</b> - any nonliving part of the enviro. i.e. heat, wind.  • 6 Different levels of Organization (smallest to largest) 1. Species 2. population 3. Community 4. ecosystem 5. biome 6. biosphere  • <b>Observation</b> - where questions & experiments come from. • <b>Experimentation</b> - test Hypotheses. Answer questions. • <b>Modeling</b> - when things can not be test normally such as globe worms or something too big.
Excellent 7/4	(SUMMARY) is make observations & question then Experiment to Answer biology is the study of how all living things act with each other, how living things & their environment ecologist organize these levels of interaction into different groups. Biotic - living interactions Abiotic - nonliving interactions

**HEADING**  
 (on every page)

**NOTES**  
 from the  
 lecture:  
 about 2/3  
 of page

**SUMMARY**  
 (not on every page)

From: [http://biologyknights.blogspot.com.au/2013\\_02\\_01\\_archive.html](http://biologyknights.blogspot.com.au/2013_02_01_archive.html)

Cornell Notes 	Topic/Objective: Identify significant literary devices that define a writer's style and use to interpret work.	Name: Class/Period: Date:
Essential Question: How does Langston Hughes' poem, "Mother to Son", advice the reader to overcome difficulty and keep from giving up in life?		
Questions: ① What is the significance of the speaker in the poem?  ② How does a poet's choice of speaker affect the mood/meaning of a poem?  ③ How does Hughes use vocabulary to contribute to and convey his message?	Notes: ① <b>Speaker</b> - voice that communicates a poem's ideas, actions, descriptions, & feelings. - similar to narrator. - can be unknown or specific (like character).  ② <b>Imp't.</b> - poet's choice of speaker - contributes to the poem's mood/meaning. - who speaks is as imp't. as what is said. - different points of view regarding same event (i.e. parent, child, elderly person). - the person telling the story gives point of view and affects the message told ← P.O.V.  ③ <b>Writer's/poet's style</b> - helps to understand meaning. "crystal stair" = luxuries (metaphor) - compares 2 things. i.e. "Life for me ain't been no crystal stair." "reachin'" - replace letter at end of word (dialect). "cause" = because → slang. var. lang. used by group of speech act.	Name: Class/Period: Date:
Summary: The speaker/voice in the poem is important because it communicates the ideas/feelings of the poem. Who the poet chooses as the speaker identifies the point of view and affects the message/meaning. Hughes uses vocabulary and style to convey the message that life is hard when Mother says "Life for me ain't been no crystal staircase."		

From: <https://theconversation.com/whats-the-best-most-effective-way-to-take-notes-41961>



# Cornell Notes

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Subject \_\_\_\_\_ Line \_\_\_\_\_

Textbook & Topic \_\_\_\_\_ Page Numbers \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Reduce &amp; then Recite</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Create questions which elicit critical thinking, not 1 word answers</li><li>- Write questions directly across from the answers in your notes</li><li>- Leave a space or draw a line separating questions</li></ul>	<b>Record for Review</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Write headings and key words in colour</li><li>- Take sufficient notes with selective &amp; accurate paraphrasing</li><li>- Skip a line between ideas and topics</li><li>- Use bulleted lists and abbreviations</li><li>- Correctly sequence information</li><li>- Include diagrams or tables if needed for clarification or length</li></ul>
	<b>Reflect &amp; Recapitulate</b> <p>In your own words and in complete sentences, write a 3 – 4 sentence summary paragraph. Your summary should cover the main concepts of the notes, be accurate, and have adequate details</p>

### Learning Skills

Learning is not one, simple activity. It takes place at different levels of consciousness, and in different ways, in everything we do. Moreover, individual people learn in different ways and have their preferred learning styles.

### Learning at University (and at College)

Learning at university is likewise not simply one activity, or even one kind of activity. There are many kinds of academic learning, and many ways of learning.

You will have to work independently, in small groups, and in large groups. You will have to make sense of lectures, discussions, literature of all kinds, and the Internet. All these different activities involve different ways of learning.

Below is a list of some of the learning contexts you will find yourselves in, and a link (use the QR code) to pages about the learning styles and skills which you may find useful to apply to those contexts.

### General Learning Resources:

<https://www.monash.edu/rlo/study-skills>

Topics covered include

- Study and time management
- Reading and note-taking
- Participating effectively in classes
- Referencing and academic integrity
- Researching
- Writing
- Critical Thinking
- Working in groups
- Preparing for exams
- Digital Literacy
- Listening







**UC Senior Secondary College  
Lake Ginninderra**

**Telephone  
Web  
Location**

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