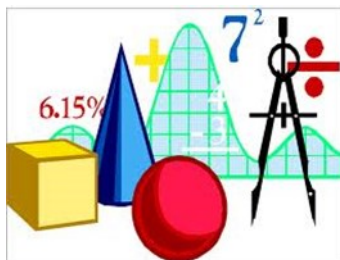Institiúid na gComhairleoirí Treorach

INSTITUTE OF GUIDANCE COUNSELLORS

STUDY
LEARNING TO LEARN

1st YEAR STUDY
GUIDELINES

The Institute of Guidance Counsellors

THE FUTURE

Contents

1. Introduction

Academic success in secondary school requires several elements to be in place. Regular attendance, good punctuality, adherence to school rules, and consistent attention to homework, are the basics needed for a smooth progression in secondary school. However, experience shows, year in year out, that it is a mistake to assume that once all of the above are in place, that success is guaranteed. Something extra is needed, i.e. study.

Study is often viewed as work carried out in the run up to exams. A week or a few days before exams, students become conscious of the need to revisit topics covered weeks or months previously in order to obtain a reasonable grade in the imminent exam. However, for most students such an approach is flawed.

If we define academic success as the student trying his/her best, the focus shifts from the results obtained to the efforts made in obtaining that result. It could be argued that studying in the run up to exams does not constitute a student's best effort. Students who perform to the best of their ability –regardless of grade achieved – are those students who consistently study throughout the school year and not just in the run up to a class or end of term exam.

If a teacher is teaching topic 7 in class, that teacher will be focusing on the class work and homework associated with that topic. However, as real learning is incremental, topics 1 to 6 cannot be ignored or let go by the wayside. Therefore, in order for a student to maintain *his or her best effort*, a routine should be in place that involves studying topics 1 to 6 when the teacher is focusing on topic 7.

It is natural for students to expect parents and teachers to check that they are keeping up with current topics by checking day-to-day homework. As a result there is no necessity on the part of the student to be concerned with the past topics. If these past topics are not studied nothing goes wrong today or tomorrow and there is no apparent immediate damage to progress. However, this focus on short-term goals neglects the longitudinal study that should be done. Without addressing this, only serves to store up trouble. Therefore, for a student to be able to say they have done their best – regardless of grades obtained – that student needs to have a weekly routine of study throughout the academic year.

Moreover, whatever year your son or daughter is currently in, it is useful to project ahead to 6th year to see what habits a successful 6th year student exercises. A successful 6th year student has a weekly routine *throughout the academic year* that consists of the following: keeping up to date with current homeworks, and studying 6th year material that had been previously been taught in the early part of 6th year and, studying old 5th year material. These habits do not suddenly switch themselves on when a study starts 5th or 6th year. They evolve over time i.e. a number of years, and have their origins in study habits developed earlier on the secondary school cycle. Therefore, the earlier in the Junior Cycle years that habits are formed, the greater the chance these habits will be implemented in the Senior Cycle.

2. Study: Learning To Learn

When students are asked how they study Maths, the general response is that they do different examples of problems over and over again. When asked why they do not just read the maths book, the response is that that does not work; the problems need to be written for the methods to be absorbed. What is actually happening is that the student is **_processing_** the information by carrying out a physical activity with a pen in the hand. Students agree that this is necessary for Maths. The argument here is that it is necessary for all subjects, i.e. reading only does not work - there should be some form of processing of the information for all subjects. Reading alone or re-writing or transcribing the text from a book into notes does not ensure retention. Indeed, using a highlighter or underlining key sections of text –while helping to highlight important points – does not help retention. Three mains ways students can learn.

1. **Visual** (seeing) learners like to learn through written language such as reading and writing. They remember what they have written down. They use bullet points, charts, graphs, mind maps, pictures, write stories, or use flash cards.
2. **Auditory** (hearing) learners make speeches or presentations, use recordings, read out loud, create musical jingles to aid memory or tell stories.
3. **Kinesthetic** (doing) learners learn by doing, touching or making. They often move about while studying.

Nobody falls neatly into any of these categories. While one or two styles may be dominant, we tend to move between the various methods. Any method employed will vary from person to person and will also fluctuate depending on the type of material being studied within each subject and from subject to subject. However, it can be argued that all of the learning styles above are just different forms of **_processing_**. There are as many ways to process information as there are individuals. Below are some examples of different methods of processing, but the challenge is for each student to find the best methods that work for him/her and vary these methods as the need arises.

3. Note Taking

One way of achieving quality and productive study is to make shorthand, concise, hand written notes *in parallel* with what is being read. (This should not be transcribing). These notes can be words or phrases preferably not long and full sentences. Each new point should be written on a new line. This should result in one page of text being condensed down to about 10 to 15 lines. It is also sometimes useful to skip every second line to create space in which to add comments/notes at a later date. In addition, once these condensed sentences have been written, the student can then say these sentences out loud and then automatically hear them. All of this has the effect of processing the information through the "cogs" in the brain, which does not happen if the student reads *only*.

This system of reading followed by a physical activity is effective for text based subjects like History, Geography, English, and Business. For subjects with a lot of text material e.g. English and History, it is very tempting just to read – this should be avoided. Other subjects like Maths, and some of the problem solving exercises in Science, should be studied by doing examples over and over again. Also, with the Maths type subjects making templates and/or spread-sheets for definitions or formulae facilitates the practice of writing out (repeatedly), this is what is needed to solve problems. The technique of making short hand notes can also applies to languages (Irish, French, Spanish and German). Here is an example.

Topic from History Book
"Slaves"

The Romans, like most ancient civilisations, used slavery.

Slaves were brought to Rome from Africa and other parts of the Roman Empire and bought and sold in the marketplace.

They were mostly used to do heavy manual labour; however, many slaves had been educated and these were used a teachers, clerks and scribes. A slave usually accompanied wealthy women and children as bodyguards when they went out.

When Rome was at its height, there were some 300,000 slaves in the city.

It was very rare for a slave to escape for any lengthy period – any Roman citizens who helped an escaped slave were severely punished.

Some slaves eventually got their freedom (manumission) by buying it or in reward for loyal service.

Think About it - What is it telling us?*

Tells us:
That Romans used slaves

Tells us:
Where they came from & what happened to them when they came to Rome.

Tells us:
The jobs they did

Tells us:
How many there were

Tell us:
About escaping & what happened if they did.

Tells us:
A new word for freedom & how they got it.

Bullet Points

· Like most civilisations, Romans used slaves.

· Brought Africa/other parts of empire
· Bought/sold market place

· Manual labour/educated – teachers
· Bodyguards è women/kids

· 300,000

· Escape rare/punishment

· Freedom = manumission/bought or reward

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1. **Read** it
2. **Think** about what it tells us
3. **Rephrase** it in your own words
4. **Write** (not transcribe/copy)
   (Note: it is really important that students do this* in their heads)
5. **Say** it out loud
6. **Hear** it

5

There are many variations on note taking.

- **Mnemonics** are various word games which act as memory aids which allows for personalisation and creativity. For example, to remember the colours of the rainbow (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet) the following sentence can be constructed "**R**ichard **O**F **Y**ork **G**ave **B**attle **I**n **V**ain.

- Using **synonyms** can also be useful. For example to help the understanding and meaning of the word 'compassion', the word 'pity' can be tagged along side it. The use of a Thesaurus can help with this.

- Thinking up an **analogy** to a particular point to be remembered can result in a high degree of processing the material.

- Using **antonym** can also help stimulate the retention of words. An antonym is a word that means the opposite to another word. Using the word 'eager' may help the understanding of the meaning of the word 'reluctant'.

- Other methods involve the use of **mind maps** or **flash cards**. The following illustrate some examples.
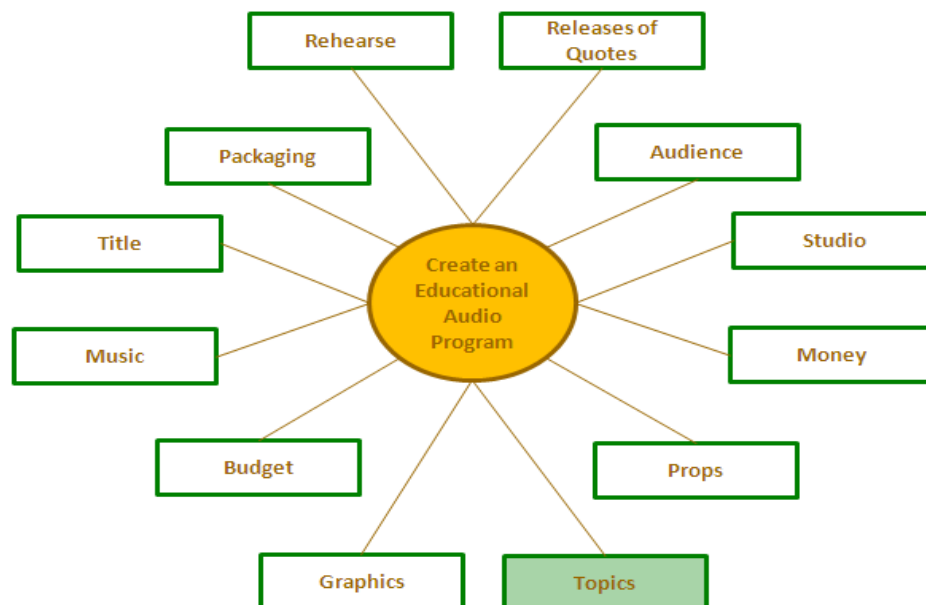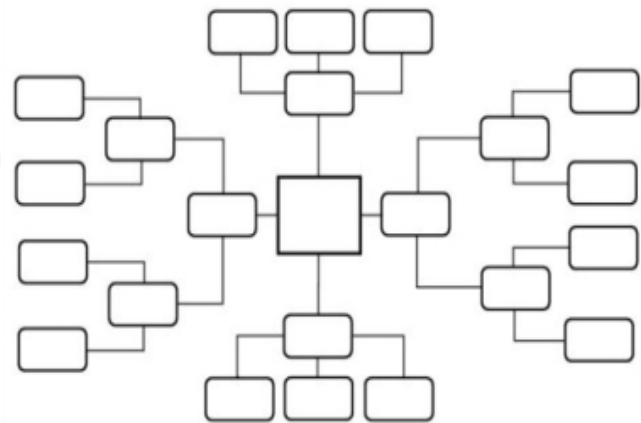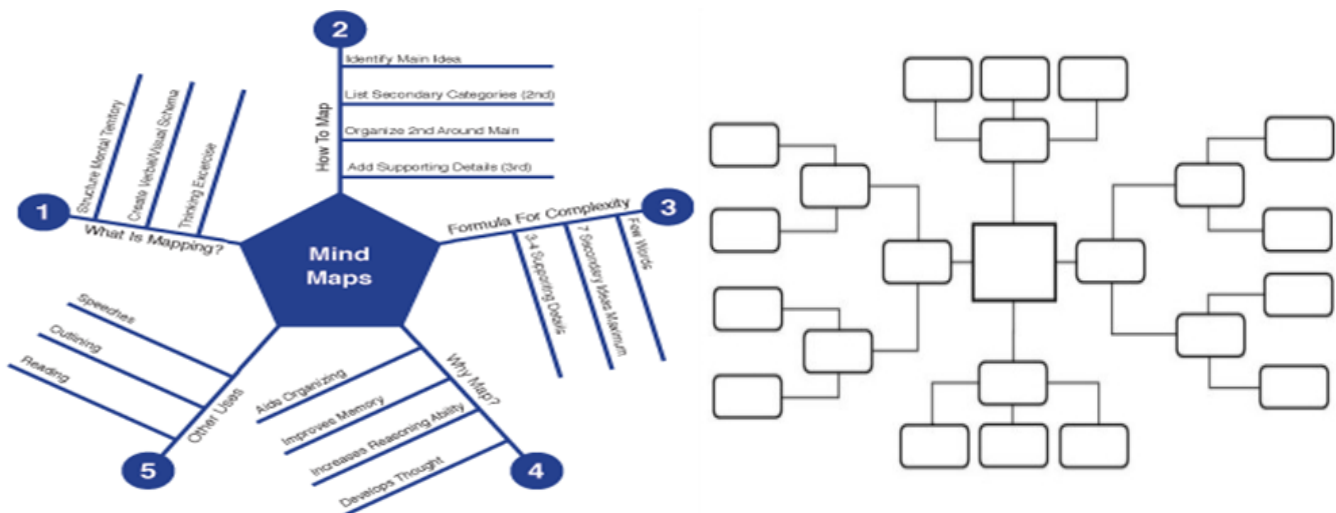
Flash Cards →
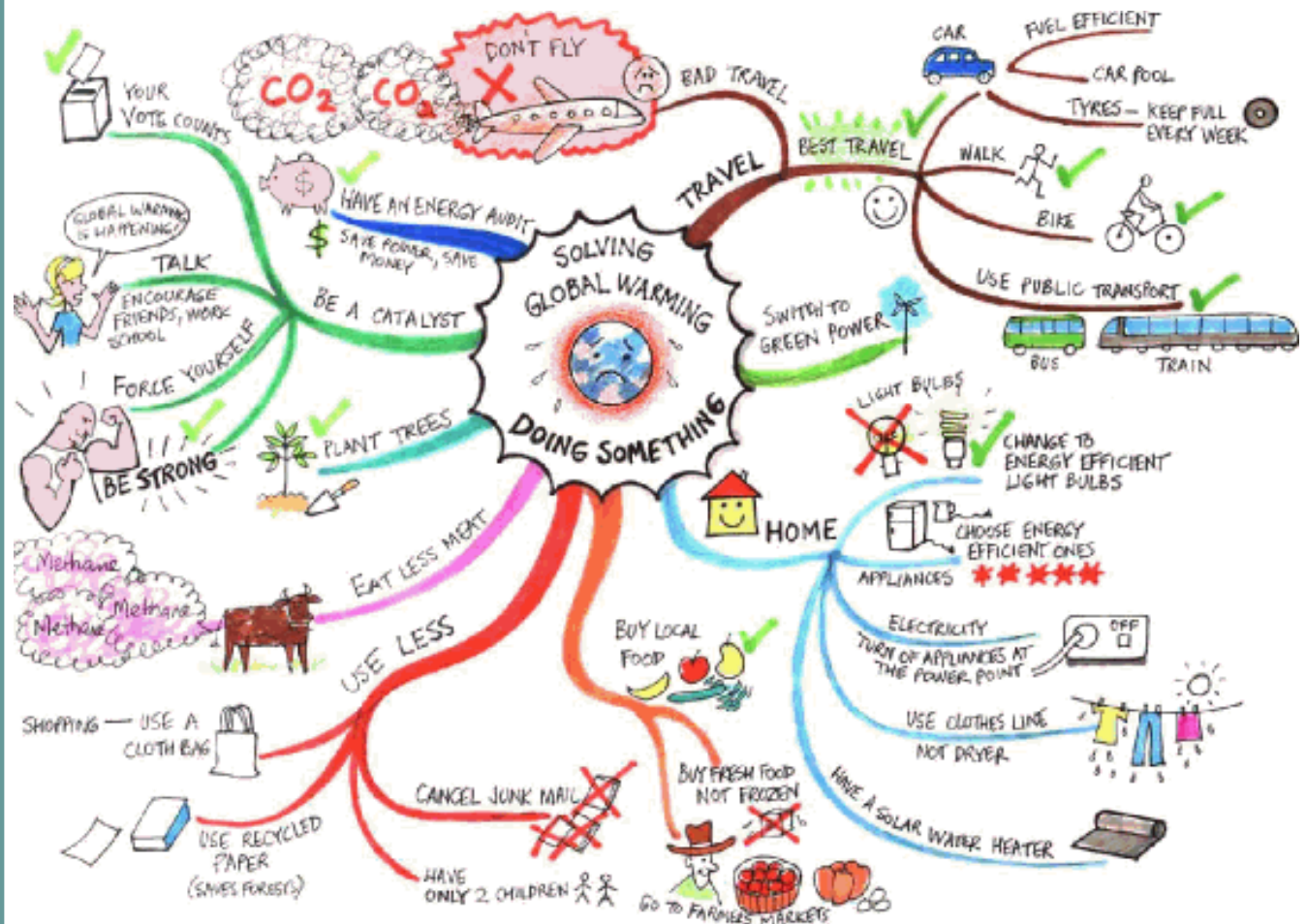
4. Processing Information

Research shows that we remember 20% of what we read, 30% of what we hear, 40% of what we see, 50% of what we say and 60% of what we do. However, we remember 90% of what we read, hear, say and do at the same time. Indeed, some argue we remember 95% of what we teach. In other words, use as many senses as possible when learning i.e. read, think, write, say and hear. Whatever method of note taking is employed, one method used to help with retention is to recite out loud the notes taken. This can take various forms.

- Some students practice as if they are making a **speech to a pretend audience**.
- Some students **tell the story to another parent.**
- Some students put themselves in the shoes of an examiner and try to think of questions they would ask students if they were setting the exam. They can then give these questions to a parent. This allows them to be **examined by another person.**
- Some students **record themselves** and listen back to these recordings.
- One variation on recording can be particularly useful with vocabulary for languages. For example, if the student has to know a few phrases or words, he/she should press record on a disc, say the first phrase/word then leave a five second gap. Say the second word/phrase and leave a gap. Say the third word/phrase and leave another gap, and so on. When the disc is replayed it is then possible to hear the phrase and then repeat it during the gap in the recording.
- It can be argued that we remember 95% of what we teach. Therefore, **teaching what has been learned to another person** can be a very effective method of retention.
- One other way of using more of the senses is to find, **listen and watch videos on the internet**. However, this is only useful if the material is relevant to what is being learned and is not the sole method of studying and is used to prompt additional processing.

(Students are very often given learning homework to do. Most will spend a few minutes just re-reading what they are told to cover. To them this constitutes the work being done. No so. At least some of the methods above should also be used when approaching learning homework).

In summary, there are as many learning styles as there are students. What is outlined here iare a few examples of different methods of **processing** information. Employing some of these methods will help your son/daughter start the process of studying. No method will make the task of studying easy. However, what each student should be searching for is the optimum method that works for them. Each student also needs to acquire the skill of altering any methods as the task demands. **It's all about learning how to learn**. Some students may find the concept of learning to learn somewhat abstract. Therefore, when discussing the topic of study methods with your teenager, it might be preferable to talk about "**finding their best method of processing**".

5. Time Spent Studying

The quantity of time spent by each student studying will vary considerably. The length of time spent by each student should be determined by when the quality starts to decline e.g. daydreaming etc. For some students this may be as short as 3 x 15 minute sessions (with short breaks in between). Some students may do 2 x 20 minutes. Other students may do 2 x 20 minutes plus 1 x 15 minutes. Others 3 x 20 minutes, and others 4 x 20 minutes. The combinations are as numerous as there are students. Remember, the moment the quality starts to decline the student should stop and have a short break and/or move onto a different subject. If a student has had a particularly long day perhaps they could still do e.g. 3 x 15 mins. If a student has not done much study to date then they should start off with e.g. 2 x 20 mins. and then progress from there. Shorter time slots e.g. 10/15 minutes are very useful for languages especially when C.D.s or recordings are used. Language teachers recommend that 10 minutes a night spent on vocabulary is better than 2 hours once a week. When starting this process in first year, it is recommended that each student has at least three study sessions in a week, two from Monday to Thursday and one session at the weekend.

There should also be a session at the weekend, slotted into Saturday morning or afternoon or evening and/or Sunday morning or afternoon or evening (preferably not Sunday evening). This session at the weekend should be a little more ambitious than the week night sessions. For example, more subjects, longer time slots, or more/extra time slots of the same length. It is also worth remembering that a student will know on Friday what they are likely to be doing over the weekend, as a result a slot for studying should planned. It may be useful for any weekend homework to be done on Friday between 5 pm. and 7 pm. (what else would they be doing at that time?). This will allow the session at the weekend to be devoted entirely to study. No student can do all subjects every night. A student should pick 2 or 3 subjects each time, and all subjects should be covered at least once from Monday to Sunday.

At the end of this document a generic study timetable is provide. Normally, such a timetable relies on the student filling in what _they intend to do_ and making a commitment to this. Human nature being as it is, this is very difficult to stick to. Moreover, to avoid the mind set of failing, or not sticking to a routine, or to avoid the guilt of not doing what they intended, students will often do nothing at all. This is easier than facing up to the task at hand. With this in mind the timetable should _not be filled_ in with what the student _intends to do_, but rather with what they _have done_ that day/week. _After_ each study session the number of minutes spent at each subject should be filled in. Over time this can mount up considerably. This results in a very positive and cumulative effect that will hopefully will produced/spur on more work. This will hopefully happen as the student fills in the boxes. There are daily, weekly and subject totals. A student may use all or just some of these. This log of time spent studying also highlights what subjects are being neglected. Also, adding up the totals for each subject at the end of each week/month can achieve a sense of accomplishment, as well as pointing out any subject that he may be neglecting. It is worth repeating that it is more positive for a student to write in what _they have done_, however small, rather than what _they intend to do_.

Remember, the time spent doing homework should not be filled in but rather the time spent studying. Some students might find this childish and as a result do not need such an aid, but others might find it useful, especially those who stick with it and can see the very positive the cumulative effect it can have. At the start of each month students should be given a new monthly timetable. It is also worth pointing out that it is not necessary to have every box or indeed every day filled in. Everyone needs a day off. If a student beings studying twice from Monday to Thursday, and one at the weekend, if they are able, this should be increased as they adjusts to this new habit. In addition, no two weeks will have the same routine. Therefore, if a teenager's extra-curricular activity is cancelled, or if the homework is finished more quickly than expected, this should be view as an opportunity to do an extra bit of study.

MON.	TUE.	WED.	THUR.	FRI.	SAT.	SUN.
(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)
mins.	mins.	mins.	Mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.
(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)
mins.	mins.	mins.	Mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.
(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)
mins.	mins.	mins.	Mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.
(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)
mins.	mins.	mins.	Mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.
(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)
mins.	mins.	mins.	Mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.
Total	**Total**	**Total**	**Total**	**Total**	**Total**	**Total**

6. Fitting Study Into A Weekly Routine

There is more to life than study, family, friends, socialising, and sport. All have to be taken into account. While these areas of life should not interfere with study, it is also true to say that study should not interfere with these other areas either. This is possible, with the right time management and self-discipline. Getting this balance right can only be achieved over time. For example, on weekdays, as soon as a teenager arrives in the door, it is very easy to collapse into the sofa. If this is done, it is very difficult to get back up and do quality productive homework and study. The time spent between coming in the door and going to the desk is vital to maintaining the adrenaline levels. It should be kept to a minimum and the body and mind should not be allowed to relax too much. Yes, there should be a small break but the mind and body should be kept active. Ideally, homework should be done in a time slot before dinner, while study should be done in a time slot after dinner. If homework is left until late in the evening, there is very little chance that a study session will be done after this. This routine may have to be adjusted if a teenager takes part in extracurricular activity immediately after school or locally in the evening. Some students like the idea of doing their study session first, then because homework must be done for the next day, doing this after the study session. Furthermore, a teenager knows on Friday how the weekend will pan out. Homework and study session/s should be slotted in accordingly. Experience shows that no student who gives up their chosen extra-curricular activity would directly replace it with study. If a teenager is not allowed out on a particular night, does they actually replace this time directly with study?

7. Testing Themselves

Having accumulated a set of notes students can feel a sense of satisfaction and a sense of achievement. However, caution needs to be taken. Because of the sense of accomplishment, students want to reinforce this. They do so by accumulating more and more notes. This results in the main goal as being the writing of notes. This can take the focus away from *knowing* what is in the notes. Therefore, students should not forget to *test* themselves that they *know* what is in the notes. Time needs to be set aside by the student to test themselves that they know the material they have made notes about. This can result in delaying making new notes on the next topic. So be it. It is better to have less notes that are known well that a lot of notes that are not known at all.

8. Revision

If homework is work that needs to be done immediately based on the current topic being taught, study is working on previous topics that have been taught in the past. Having studied for 3/4 weeks students might find it useful to *revise* the work studied. Therefore, at some point, say every 3rd /4th week, it might be useful if no new study was carried out. Instead, that week or next few days should be spent revising the study notes that have been compiled over the last number of weeks. This revision may help cement the information long-term, and help it to be retrieved when needed. These revision sessions do not require new notes to be written. The original study notes should be retrieved and re-read so that steps 5 & 6 (see page 5) can be activated again. However, this does not apply to a subject like Maths, where problems should be re-done even if they have been done before. Some students may opt to do their revision (instead of study) every second week or every second weekend. Here is some interesting research.

> *"The secret to remembering material long-term is not to cram and over-learn but rather to periodically review what you've studied. That's according to Doug Rohrer and Harold Pashler who have identified an intriguing relationship between how long to leave it before returning to previously studied material, and the ultimate duration for which you want to remember it. The technical definition for 'over-learning' is any time you spend continuing to study material which you have already mastered. So, for example, once you've correctly recalled a list of French vocab without any errors, any additional time you immediately spend learning that vocab is over-learning. The evidence shows that time spent over-learning is only beneficial over the short-term. For example, one study found over-learning was advantageous when tested a week later, but not when tested four weeks later. According to Rohrer and Pashler, if your aim is long-term retention, time spent over-learning would be better spent reviewing material at a later date. Just how much later depends on how long you want to remember the material . Their research suggests the optimal time to review material is after a period which is 10 to 30 per cent of the time for which you want to remember it.* **Another study that looked at retention over 6 months, found the optimal time for reviewing material was one month.***"[1]*

Note: Revision should also include a large component of testing.

_____
[1] Doug Roherer et al. *The Effect of Overlearning on Long-Term Memory.* Applied Cognitive Psychology,

9. Filing

Each student should have a good filing system that allows information to be retrieved almost instantaneously. One suggestion is that each student should have a separate copy/folder for each subject. This copy should be for study notes only (not homework). There is tremendous benefit to be gained, coming up to class exams and end of term exams. This will ensure that the study notes written can now be found during these important later date/s. When this happens the information should come flooding back and will be easily remembered especially if the technique of speech making is used.

10. What to Study

One common problem that students verbalise is that they do not know *what* to study. Every day when doing homework students take out their homework diary and work through the to-do list that they have compiled throughout that day. This idea can be used for study. Each student should write out a to-do list. This study list should contain a number of past (not current) topics that need to be covered that week or over the coming weeks. The differences between subjects dictate how such a list should be compiled. For example, History and Geography may list topics and sub-topics that need to be covered, but Maths may simply be a list of problems that need to be done. If a student is trying to start a study routine it is very unlikely that they will develop the good habits necessary by beginning with the subjects they dislikes the most. Therefore, initially, it might be more productive to start off with two/three of the subjects they feel more comfortable with, and then once the habit has been established, expand this to include the subjects they find more difficult.

To Do List		
Subject: History		
	Bronze Age	
1.	Smelting	
2.	Farming	
3.	Homes	
4.	Daily Life	
5.		

To Do List		
Subject: Maths		
	Algebra	Statistics
1.	P17 Q. 3,4,5	2010 Q. 1
2.	P19 Q, 5,6,7	2012 Q. 4
3.		
4.		
5.		

11. Understanding V Knowing

The points made in the above paragraph are useful in exploring the difference between a student *understanding* and *knowing* academic material. Part of a teacher's job is to help students *understand* new concepts. When this task is carried out to a satisfactory level by the teacher a student will leave the classroom confident that they *understand* what has been taught. However, this is not the same as *knowing* the material. If the student does not return to the material that was explained, and if the student is then asked to explain the material, e.g. two weeks later, more than likely they will be unable to do so. It can therefore be argued that given that the student *understood* the material at the time, they actually did not *know* the material. So in order to <u>understand and know </u>the material it is necessary for the student to return to the material as soon as possible after the material has been explained. Homework on the material will indeed help towards knowing the material, however, study – as outlined in this booklet – is needed for the material to be continued to be *understood <u>and</u> to be known* into the future.

12. Parent/Teenager Conversation

When your teenager is studying, it is important for them (with your help) to regularly check what is being done is of good quality. It is wasteful to be putting in the time and receive no pay off because what is being done is not productive. Bearing this in mind, here are some prompts/ questions you might occasionally mention to your teenager so that, at the very least, they will mentally question themselves while they are studying.

• Are your notes short/concise?
• Have you got a pen in your hand all of the time?
• Are the notes being filed?
• Are you transcribing?
• Is your concentration slipping?
• Is there anything disturbing you?
• Can I see your notes?
• Are you making speeches?
• Are you using the recordings for languages?

Most of these questions are asking the same thing in a different way and they are not intended to be used all at once but occasionally over period of time. Furthermore, whatever techniques you use to persuade your teenager to study, be they carrot or stick, it is advisable to vary these techniques as much as possible and not to use them all at once, remember, the more you repeat this conversation the less effective it becomes. It is a long road ahead.

It is useful to note what the experts say – the students themselves – about the influence of parental involvement. Those who seem to achieve their best stated the following.

- *"The deal with my parents is that I do two hours in total each day Monday to Friday, made up of homework and study. I do ½ before dinner and ½ after dinner."* [2]

- *"My Mum checks my homework and sometimes gives extra questions".* [3]

- *"My Dad tests me after I have done my study".* [4]

- *"I study with my Mum and do 20 minutes three times each night on different subjects".* [5]

- *"I am let watch T.V. only after all my work is done".* [6]

- *"I always have to do my homework immediately when I come home and always do my homework on Friday and never over the weekend".* [7]

- *"I am not let use the computer* [games or internet] *until I have done all my homework and study".* [8]

Those who struggle to achieve their potential stated the following:

- *"I only study when I have tests".* [9]

- *"I leave my homework until around 8.00 p.m. after I have relaxed and watched the T.V. and checked Facebook- I leave my weekend homework until Sunday night"* . [10]

- *"My parents don't check my homework or push me to do any study".* [11]

- *"I am allowed one hour on my computer before I do my homework".* [12]

- *"I go to bed at 11.00 p.m. after I have watch X".* [13]

- *"When I go to bed, before I go to sleep I spend an hour or so on my i-pod or on the internet using my phone or texting".* [14]

- *"I hang around town until 5/6.00 p.m. Then I have to do home".* [15]

Parents are also find it helpful to throughout the academic year.

- Create a study-friendly environment away from distractions such as T.V. computers and other siblings that may cause a distraction.
- Mobile phones should be left in another room where they are not a distraction.
- Ensure there is a space i.e. desk to study and they have all the necessary equipment.
- Provide a healthy diet.
- Encourage exercise and good sleeping patterns which are also necessary to allow good study habits to develop.

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[2] *Student I.*
[3] *Student II.*
[4] *Student III.*
[5] *Student IV.*
[6] *Student V.*
[7] *Student VI.*
[8] *Student VII.*

[9] *Student VIII.*
[10] *Student IX.*
[11] *Student X.*
[12] *Student XI.*
[13] *Student XII.*
[14] *Student XIII.*
[15] *Student XIV.*

At some point your teenager will "*fall off the wagon*" in terms of study. If this happens they may continue to go through the motions of going to the room and sitting at the desk. This going "*through the motions*" can actually make the situation worse. To get out of this rut there are two suggestions. Firstly, your teenager should stop studying for a few days (while continuing to do their homework). This break should allow for a fresh mind to tackle studying from the following Monday. Secondly, another option might be to study 2-3 of the subjects that they he find easiest to study. Do this for one week and then get back into the habit and then tackle the rest of the subjects the following week. It should be noted that a few students have will go through the motions of going to their room and sitting at their desks. This is done to keep their parents off their backs even though they know they are not doing quality study.

13. The Emotions That Block Study

All of us, adults and teenagers, strive to do our best at tasks we engage in or are given to do. Doing well, or doing our best, makes us feel good about ourselves, and gives us a sense of purpose and of well-being within ourselves. Experience shows that the vast majority of teenagers will admit privately to themselves that they would love to do well academically (even if they say the contrary to others). They would love to be in a situation where they have the habit of regular study and to be able to say they have done their best.[16] It is important to help teenagers to learn how to study and how to organise themselves. However, if after providing this help, they are still not attempting to do their best, it is more important to address what may be blocking them from engaging to their potential? For most students the biggest barriers to learning *to their potential* are rarely technical, but are emotional.[17]

13.1 The Signs & Symptoms of Avoid Studying

Most teenagers, and indeed adults, use various strategies to avoid working. Some of these strategies are practical, and all are driven by some emotion. Here are some avoidance or scapegoating strategies[18] that teenagers use to avoid tasks.

1. 'Non-performance', where the individual may avoid eye contact with a teacher or parent when discussing academic issues.
2. 'Shame effort', where the individual asks a teacher or other adult questions to which the teenager already knows the answer.
3. 'Procrastination' and delaying any effort to attempt a task so that they can later blame time management in order to direct attention away from the real issues.
4. Using 'unreachable goals' so that they can use the excuse that no adolescent could possibly achieve what they had aspired to.
5. The 'academic wooden leg' whereby the adolescent admits to minor failings such as panicking in an exam in order to avoid acknowledging a greater weakness. Some teenagers say they freeze in exams. This is normally caused by (i) the student not knowing the material due to poor or no study habits, or (ii) an emotional fear of the consequences of doing poorly (discussed later).

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[16] This is not the same as enjoying or liking study.

[17] Josh Kaufman, *The First 20 Hours – How To Learn Anything Fast,* (London: Penguin Books Ltd, 2013) p 144.

[18] John Colman and Leo Hendrey, *The Nature of Adolescence*, 2nd ed., (London: Routledge, 1990) p 47.

6. Some teenagers adopt negative aspirations[19] which rubbish the benefits of studying and comfort themselves by associating with others who have the same beliefs.

7. Teenagers can also adopt a 'negative identity'[20] and do the opposite to what is expected in order to distract attention from the real issue. A row about not studying is a useful distraction from actual study.

8. Some students compare their results with the results obtained by their peers who may be achieving lower scores as a way of finding comfort and/or distracting from their own performance.

9. Others blame the teacher, while some use hatred of a subject as a reason not to get stuck in and perform, or some claim that the exam was too hard or too long.[21]

10. Some students resort to (i) only studying what they already know, or (ii) revising the homework that was just finished, or (iii) revising material recently done in class instead of doing genuine study. These activities act as a comfort blanket as they are relatively easy because the material is fresh in the mind. While sometimes these activities are academically useful, if they are being used as a tactic to delay studying older material or more difficult material or material that is not understood or known, it can be detrimental in the long term.

11. Some students develop the habit of relying on an adult to help them do their work. This can become over reliance if they cannot, over time, do without that help. This can be one factor that prevents a student taking ownership of their own study routine.

12. Some students say "*if only I had a new desk, I would study*". They never do when they get that desk. Some say "*the computer or T.V. distracts them*". No it doesn't. They switch on the computer or T.V. It doesn't switch itself on. This is to seek an external distraction that helps avoid getting stuck into the work.

13. Some students constantly resort to the line "*I don't know how to study*". This is particularly common for students who may have actually studied and who (i) find that method is difficult i.e. it is not simple and easy, (ii) or they do not get a perfect result or the result they wanted. In these cases it needs to be pointed out that there is no study method that is easy and there is no study method that can produce perfect results. Sometimes students just need to accept that studying will always be difficult and these students need to learn to be happy with their effort and the results they obtain. It's all about the *optimum methods* (even though this may be difficult) and the *optimum results*.

From the adolescent's perspective such coping mechanisms make sense and indeed work in that they hide the truth, avoid exposing any weakness, and prevent further failure and thereby avoid feelings of incompetence. It can be argued that these strategies are rooted in some emotion that brings about these avoidance strategies, or these strategies are being used to avoid a specific negative emotion.

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[19] E.Hurlock, *Adolescent Development*, 4th ed., (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1972) p 184.
[20] J. Dacey and M. Kenny, *Adolescent Development*, (Brown & Benchmark, Publishers, 1994) p 185.
[21] E. Hurlock, *Adolescent Development*, 4th ed., (McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1972) p 197.

13.2 Self-Esteem

All students lie on a spectrum of academic ability. Some find academics easy and achieve (with work) high results. Others lie on the lower end of the academic spectrum. Some of these do not have a learning difficulty while some do. The vast majority of students are average and lie somewhere in the middle of this academic spectrum.

From experience, one of the main determining factors in how students perform is their self-esteem, i.e. how they feel about themselves as a person (as opposed to as student). One of the main drivers that determine a teenager's view of themselves is how those that matter to them react to what they do. People don't fear failure; they fear the consequences of failure. One of the main consequences is how adults react to their efforts. If we react with anger they may learn to withdraw or not try. If they don't try, there is no failure (in their eyes). If we react with anxiety, they may also withdraw to avoid eliciting this anxiety or they may absorb this anxiety and become anxious themselves. If we react with disappointment they may, inadvertently view this as disappointment in them as an individual. If their efforts or results are compared to others e.g. brother, sister, cousin or friend, they may feel they are not accepted as the person *they* are.

Research has shown that self-esteem is important to adolescent motivation towards success, achievement, and mental health.[22] Since self-esteem is recognized as a powerful motivational force,[23] it is necessary to be conscious of the sources and symptoms of low self-esteem and how the adolescent "acts out" such perceptions of him/herself.

Whatever the source or cause of low self-esteem, adolescents will work to protect their self-worth and be motivated to avoid failure[24] by developing the various coping strategies as outlined above in an effort to protect themselves from further negative attention and/or prevent further erosion of their view of themselves.

13.3 Defining The Teenager Solely By Their Academic Ability

Consider student X. Early on in their education it is discovered that they have very high academic ability. Their proud parents, understandably, tell aunts, uncles, and grandparents who are equally proud. However, from then on, student X is constantly defined by those around them as a high achiever. The focus is constantly on the next result. Student X may now feel an overwhelming weight of expectation that they must *always* perform well. Over the years, student X learns to define him/herself solely by the position they occupy on the academic spectrum. The weight of expectation can result in unhealthy levels of anxiety that can actually have a negative impact on their performance.

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[22] J. Dacey and M. Kenny, *Adolescent Development*, (Brown & Benchmark Publishers, 1994) p 173.

[23] T. Gullotta, Markstrom, *The Adolescent Experience*, 4th ed., (California: Academic Press, 2000) p 96.

[24] John W. Santrock, *Adolescence*, 10th ed., (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2005) p 439.

Consider student Y. Early on in their education it is also discovered that they have very high academic ability. Their proud parents, understandably, inform their teenager of this. They understandably outline how well they can do academically, and that, given their abilities, can pursue any career pathway in life. Student Y is delighted and sees the world as their oyster. However, student Y misinterprets what they are told. They assume that they can take any academic course they want because they have the natural brains to do so. They mistakenly think that having the brains *alone* is all that is necessary for success. They fail to grasp the fact that it is not enough to just have the natural ability, and do not realise that without hard work and study, their achievements will be below their abilities and expectations. In these situations care also needs to be taken if there are other siblings in the house. It might be unhealthy for one sibling to constantly hear how 'brainy' the other sibling might be.

There is one cautionary note that needs to be taken into account when dealing with students who have a very high academic ability. In very rare cases it can sometimes have an unintended negative consequence. An E.S.R.I. study found that among teenagers, being studious is seen as acceptable as long as it is not seen as showing off.[25] This gives the impression that other teenagers do not like their peers 'showing off'. However, is there more to it than just 'showing off'? How does the 'showing off' make the other teenager/s feel? Does it make them feel inferior? Does it make them feel inadequate? Therefore, teenagers with a very high academic ability should –while never ever hiding who they are – be conscious as to how they come across to their peers and never show any intolerance to anyone who has less academic ability.

Consider student W. This student finds academic work difficult. This may be because that is just the way they are or it may be that they have a learning difficult. Quite understandably, students W's parents are anxious to want the best for their teenager and improve the situation. Every time an exam result is received, there is constant focus on how this result can be fixed. This can continue over of a number of years. Over time, student W learns to define themselves solely by the position they occupy on the academic spectrum. This burden of needing to fix things can lead to teenagers viewing themselves *only* in terms of their academic performance. Experience shows that these teenagers at the lower end of the academic spectrum can still reach their maximum academic potential if their other aptitudes are constantly praised, encouraged, and reinforced. All of us are good at some things and poor at others. Unfortunately, the secondary school system may not tap into some students positive attributes. Teenagers need to be reminded that there is nothing wrong with them, it is the secondary school system that is wrong. Focusing on what teenagers *can do* – even if it is not academic or is a non-school based activity - rather than what they *cannot do* has the result of bolstering their view of themselves as an individual. It allows them to have a positive view of life and their activities, and allows them to be optimistic and hopeful about their future. These positive feelings allow them to cope with the disappointment of exam results because they now see this as only one part of who they are and that while they may not be brilliant at academics, they are brilliant at other things! This focus can also have the effect of allowing them to accept what they cannot do, because they now feel there are other things they can do.

In summary, a teenager's sense of value and self-worth should be based on who they are as an individual and should not solely be defined by the position they occupy on the academic spectrum. Focusing on the former can give them the inner strength to cope with their academic outcomes and therefore, strive to improve themselves as best they can, regardless of the grade achieved.

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[25] Smyth, E., et al., *Pathways Through The Junior Cycle: The Experiences of Second Year Students*, (Dublin: E.S.R.I.), 2006.

Consider again student W. This student finds academic work difficult either because they have a leaning difficult or it is simply because that is just the way they are. Student W tries to develop strategies to hide their lack of academic difficulty. For example, they may avoid talking about school or avoid doing homework. They may even want the parent not to tell others of their difficulties. These strategies are not about academics, but rather designed to protect their feelings of self-worth. These avoidance strategies are fulfilling an emotional need. However, in the long run these avoidance strategies are destructive both academically and in terms of self-esteem because as adults, they continue to avoid anything that makes them feel bad about themselves both personally and professionally. Parents should avoid being tempted to collude with these strategies. Instead, parents should focus, not on the academic issues, but rather the self-esteem issues. Parents should remind the teenager that they are not defined by the academic ability and that it is Okay not be good at school work as long as they try their best. Parents should talk to them about how well they perform at other things and that they have other attributes and talents and encourage them towards believing that they can still be successful. It can also be useful to address their fear about what other people might think of them. If they are preoccupied about what others might think of them, this thinking is actually based in what they think of themselves. Again, this is a self-esteem issue and all the more reason to boost their own view of themselves. If they come across somebody who might think less of them because of their academic abilities, remind them this says more about the other person than it does about them. Remember, there are plenty of teenagers who have difficulties with academics and don't feel the need to hide it. Why? Because they have strong feelings of self-wroth and recognise that effort is more important than results and that they are valued for who they are and what they can do, rather what they cannot.

In summary, a teenager's sense of value and self-worth should be based on who they are as an individual and should not solely be defined by the position they occupy on the academic spectrum. Focusing on the former can give them the inner strength to cope with their academic outcomes and therefore, strive to improve themselves as best they can, regardless of the grade achieved.

13.4 Avoiding The Pain

What about the teenager who does not have low self-esteem but still does not study to their potential? Or teenagers who have a high or average level of academic ability and do not engage? Indeed, there are students who find academics difficult or have some diagnosed learning difficulty, but their level of difficulty does not fully account for their underperformance in terms of effort put into study. In these cases there may be another type of emotional blockage.

When learning something new, people can become aware of their limitations and are frustrated by the gap between what they want to accomplish and what they are capable of. When a student's work requires improving skills or learning new material, the biggest barriers to their learning (to their potential) are rarely technical, but are emotional.[26] When learning something new, teenagers can experience a form of mental pain and discomfort. The more difficult the new task, the greater the level of pain. So in order to terminate these negative feelings teenagers stop engaging and stop trying. This helps them stay in their comfort zone. Teenagers need to understand that what they are feeling is perfectly normal and that the uncomfortable feelings are a normal part of the learning experience. It also needs to be realised that this mental discomfort will not last forever and will get easier as progression is made through the task. Teenagers need to learn to persevere and push through the pain barrier. They need to recognise that the mental discomfort will eventually dissipate as the task nears an end. They need to be willing to suffer through something uncomfortable if they are to obtain what is on the other side and have a vision of what life will be like when the task is complete.[27]

In these situations it should also be noted that if the learning is described to the learner as 'easy' in order to convince them to start when it is actually difficult, this will eventually backfire. Furthermore, it is worth observing if the help provided by parents or other adults (as discussed above) is preventing the teenager from having the experience of working through the pain barrier. They need to feel and experience the pain if they are to learn to work through it.

13.5 Learning To Take Ownership

From an early age parents teach their children to tidy up their toys when they have finished playing. As they grow, children are taught to tidy their room and to help set the table for a meal. Parents do this so that when their child is an adult they can live as independent individuals, able to cook, clean, and look after themselves and survive in the world. Does this learning need to continue when children turn into teenagers? Should teenagers, over time, learn to cook for themselves, wash and iron their clothes, and make their way from A to B on their own, e.g. by bike or bus, rather than be given a lift everywhere. Learning these skills teaches teenagers to take ownership of their lives and to do things for themselves. This *taking responsibility* for themselves can have an enormous impact of teenager's attention to study. Without being taught to take responsibility in other areas of their lives, students will find it very difficult to take ownership of their academic lives. Sometimes such difficulties can be evident when a teenager gets into the habit of not doing the academic work they should do when they have no valid excuse not to do this assigned work. This can be compounded when they are continuously given a 'note' from a parent to avoid the consequences. They may even risk coming across to others as being *lazy*. Indeed, if this continues beyond the teenager years and is still evident when employment begins, they are unlikely to progress their career as well as they would like.

[26] Josh Kaufman, *The First 20 Hours – How To Learn Anything Fast,* (London: Penguin Books Ltd, 2013) p 144.
[27] Josh Kaufman, *The First 20 Hours – How To Learn Anything,* (London: Penguin Books Ltd, 2013)

13.6 The Square Peg In A Round Hole

> *"Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree,*
> *it will spend its whole life believing that it is stupid"*

There is another type of teenager who, when asked how they feel about secondary education, says they feel like a square peg in a round hole. Despite everybody's best and extensive efforts these students cannot or will not engage academically. Is there something wrong with them? No! What is on offer in secondary school does not suit everybody and that at this stage in their career development they are not suited to an academic environment? This may be because they are not mature enough or simple not ready or may never be. For some this may never change. For others this changes at a later stage. Perhaps it may change in transition year, or in 5th year or as late as 6th year. For some this change may happen sometime after they finish school or at a later stage in adulthood.

Most parents aspire for their teenager to obtain a degree. For some this is the best option.   A second best option may be doing a course in further education that equips them with the additional skills not obtained through the Leaving Certificate and increases their employment opportunities. A third best option might be to do straight into a trade or employment. However, if a person is made happy and content with going into a trade or directly into employment, it might be that this is not the third best option, but actually the best option. If they are happy and content shouldn't we be?

13.7 Other Issues

All families have their ups and downs. There may be periods of difficulties with relationships between husband and wife, between parent and child, or between siblings. Indeed, there may also be the trauma of redundancy, illness, or bereavement that may impact on the atmosphere in the home. Some students who experience such family difficulties can continue on and cope without these difficulties impacting on their school lives. However, other students can, and do, encounter situations whereby difficulties in the home have such an emotional impact that they hinder their emotional and academic progress within the school. In such situations it is recommended that the provision of information to the Year Head is vital if the school is to help. Such a request will always be treated in the strictest confidence and the information only used to adapt the school responses to cater for the circumstances the teenager is in. Without such information schools may inadvertently treat the teenager's possible *acting out* or *acting inwards* as purely a disciplinary matter and, without knowing, add to their difficulties. Experience shows year in year out, that when parents withhold vital information – mainly through an unfounded sense of embarrassment – they prolong their teenager's difficulties and prevent the school from acting in the student's best interests.

13.8 What Can Parents Do?

13.8.1. Praising The Effort V Praising The Result

An American psychologist, Carol Dweck, of Columbia University carried out two studies into the effect of praise on students in a dozen New York schools. In one study[28] students were randomly divided into two groups. One group was praised for their *intelligence* ("*you are really smart*"), and the other group was praised for their *effort* ("*you must have worked really hard*"). Each group was exposed to the same academic tests.

Some, in both groups, scored poorly in some of the tests. Those that were praised for their *effort* assumed that they hadn't focused enough and subsequently with later tests got more involved and were more willing to try different methods to solve problems. Those that were praise for their *intelligence* and had subsequently scored poorly became stressed and opted out in future tests. In addition, on further testing, those that were praised for their *effort* improved their scores by about 30%, and those that were praised for their *intelligence* scored worse by about 20%. Subsequently, the groups were given a choice for further tests. They were informed that some tests were harder and some tests were easier. In the group that were praised for their *effort*s, 90% consciously chose harder tests and the majority of those who were praised for their *intelligence* consciously chose easier tests. The conclusion from this study was that those that were praised for their *efforts* "came to see themselves as in control of their success" and that "the brain was a muscle" and "that the harder you work the bigger it gets and the smarter you become". In addition, "emphasising effort gave [students] a variable that they can control". Those that were praised for their *intelligence* learned intelligence was more important and "discounted the importance of effort" and felt that "intelligence determined your success". The above observations were the same regardless of gender or socioeconomic class.

Another study[29] by the same psychologist carried out over a twenty year period reinforced the idea of focusing on the effort rather than the result. This study concluded that while it is certainly important for children to learn to succeed; it is just as important for them to learn not to fear failure. [Children] worry that making mistakes reflects on their inherent abilities. Over a period of twenty years Carol Dweck observed who students who were praised for their efforts in mastering new challenges. Others were praised for their intelligences and ability, with the kind of thing many parents say when their children do well; '*You're a natural maths whiz, Jonny*'. Yet these messages to children had profoundly different consequences. Children who are praised for their efforts, even when they don't '*get it*' at first, eventually performed better and liked what they are learning more than children praised for their natural abilities. They are also more likely to regard mistakes and criticisms as useful information that will help them improve. In contrast, children praised for their natural ability learn to care more about how competent they look to others than about what they are actually learning. They became defensive about not doing well or about making mistakes, and this sets them up for a self-defeating cycle. If they don't do well, then they resolve the ensuing dissonance ("*I'm smart and yet I screwed up*"), by losing interest in what they are learning or studying ("*I could do it if I wanted to, but I don't want to*"). When these kids grew up, they will be the kind of adults who are afraid of making mistakes or taking responsibility for them, because that would be evidence that they are not naturally smart after all.

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[28] www.nymag.com "*How Not To Talk To Your Kids*" New York Magazine.
[29] Carol Travis & Elliot Aronson, *Mistakes Were Made- But Not By Me*
 Why We Justify Foolish Beliefs, Bad Decisions and Hurtful Acts (London: Pinter & Martin Ltd. 2008) p 233-234.

13.8.2 Shifting The Focus To Address The Emotional Block

Parents are quite rightly concerned that their teenager performs to the best of their ability. As a result parents try to help teenagers on a practical level. This can be a very useful and worthwhile strategy. However, if the strategic help given by parents or other adults continues over a considerable period of time, it can be detrimental in the long term. The practical help being provided may become a necessary constant in the student's life. Such continuous help can prevent the teenager from taking ownership of their own work. Indeed, if the student becomes dependent on such help it is more than likely that there is one or more of the aforementioned emotional issues at the root of the problem. What can be done in such situations?

- It might be appropriate for the adults to ask themselves are the unintentionally colluding in practical activities that only serve to prolong finding a long-term solution. Should the help provided by parents focus on teaching teenagers to help themselves? Is the help provided an external solution when it is an internal solution that is needed?

- It might be useful to shift the language from *telling* students to study, and instead, switch to asking the student what is *blocking* them from doing what they know they should be doing, and for the majority of students, what they want to be able to do. (This is not the same as liking or enjoying study).

- It might be time to have a conversation around the emotions a student feels *during* study?

- It might be appropriate to talk about the emotional outcome *after* receiving exam results?

- Should the focus shift away from tactics designed to get them to study to bolstering their self-image?

- Is it necessary to remind them that they are not defined as a person by their place on the academic spectrum?

- Might it be necessary to remind teenagers that for some students an A or B is a good result while for others a D might be a brilliant result?

- Finally, it is important to remember that the earlier in the education cycle such an approach is taken the greater the chances of it succeeding.

13.9 Conclusion

- There are some students at the high end of the academic spectrum who reach their potential, while others who have the same academic potential, don't.
- There are some students who are average on the academic spectrum who perform above average while others – with the same potential – perform below average.
- There are others students who find academics difficult but perform above average while a similar student performs below average.
- Also, there are some teenagers with a learning difficulty who perform poorly, while others with a *similar* learning difficulty perform well above what their academic abilities would suggest.

How does this this come about? Can we conclude that 'brains' are not the main determining factor in how teenagers perform? If so, what are the personality traits that are seen in successful adolescents? Are these characterises as follows?

- Teenagers who are self-aware enough to realise that they are subconsciously using scapegoating strategies (as listed above) to avoid studying? Are they self-aware enough that - when they realise they are deluding themselves with these strategies – they stop doing so and start working?
- Do successful teenagers have a healthy degree of self-esteem nurtured by those that matter to them? Do these successful teenagers define themselves as multi-faceted i.e. not solely on the basis of their academic performance? Do these teenagers accept themselves for who they are, i.e. good at some things and not so good at others things?
- Have successful students learned to push through the pain barrier when things get difficult? Have they leaned to have the s tamina to push themselves to finish a job and not give up when the going gets tough? Have these teenagers accepted that studying is not easy, and that they have to find their own optimum way to study? Have they accepted that there is no method of study that (i) makes studying easy or (ii) produces perfect results?
- Have teenagers who perform to their optimum ability learned, through previous experiences outside school life, to take ownership of their own study? Have they realise that *they alone* have the power to determine the outcome, and they have the potential to determine their own results and the capability to dictate their own future?
- Finally, certain academic standards may be necessary to gain entry to a particular course or career path. However, in the vast majority of working environments it is not academic qualifications that allow an individual to progress within a particular career path. Are the following non-academic characteristics just as important?

⇒ Determination to succeed, enthusiasm, and confidence
⇒ Integrity, loyalty, and honesty
⇒ Initiative, creativity, and inventiveness
⇒ Ability to persuade, help, and motivate others
⇒ Empathy, team spirit, and leadership
⇒ Refusal to accept defeat and having a sense of humour
⇒ Having good int*ra*personal and int*er*personal skills
⇒ Being independent, having impulse control and having stress tolerance
⇒ Being optimistic, realistic, flexible and adaptable
⇒ Not letting what they can't do interfere with what they can do
⇒ Finally, it is worth remembering,
   Success is not about how smart you are, it is about what you are smart at!

14. Keeping An Eye To The Future

Research has consistently highlighted the importance of the 1st and 2nd year learning experience in influencing what might happen later on in the secondary school cycle. Engagement with learning in second year [which, in turn, is determined by engagement in 1st year] can determine if a student engages positively or negatively with learning in later years. To underpin this statement, here are a series of findings from E.S.R.I. studies.

From: Pathways Through The Junior Cycle:The Experiences of Second Year Students,
By: Smyth, Emer; Dunne, Allison; McCoy, Selina; and Darmody, Merike,
Dublin: Economic and Social Research Institute, 2006.

1. There "is a desire for greater independence and an increased involvement in non-academic activities and with peers during" second year.
2. "Second year was a critical year in shaping the future trajectory of students, with some students becoming more disengaged, and others studying harder and becoming more engaged as learners."
3. A lot are "embarrassed by praise from the teacher and some pretend that they haven't studied for tests so that they won't look stupid if they do badly."
4. "Below average students were more reliant on their peer group rather than their academic achievement for their identity."
5. In general, "students become less engaged in school and enjoy their schoolwork less as they move through the system."
6. "Attitudes to teachers are found to become less positive over the course of first year with a further decline during second and third year."
7. "The prevalence of misbehaviour increases significantly between first and second year of the junior cycle."
8. "The nature of transition to second year is predictive of students academic self-image with more positive views among those who find schoolwork easier and more negative views among those who find schoolwork in second year more difficult."
9. "Being studious is seen as acceptable as long as it is not seen as showing off."
10. "Students who rate themselves as below average academically appear to be most strongly influenced by their peer group. These students are more reliant on their peer group for their identity rather than academic achievement."
11. "The second year of secondary school has been characterised as one in which [some] students drift."

12. "The proportion of students who report liking their teachers, who feel they can talk to teachers about a problem and who think there is a good working atmosphere in their class declines" towards the end of 1st year into second year.

13. "Misbehaviour increases significantly between the first and second year of junior cycle."

14. "Students perceptions of their own abilities become more negative over the course of first year with a further and larger decline during second year."

15. "Towards the end of second year students are less likely to find their school work easy, to feel they are working hard, to feel they are doing well and to be pleased with their school work than they had been in first year."

16. "Attitudes at the end of first year are highly predictive of attitudes in second year."

17. "Important divergences take place in the learning trajectories of students in second year, with some students intensifying their academic engagement while other drift or actively disengage from school life."

From: Leaving Certificate to Leaving School A Longitudinal Study of 6th year Students
By: Smyth, Emer; Banks, Joanne; Calvert Emma.
Dublin: Economic and Social Research Institute, 2011.

1. "Student perceived capacity to cope with schoolwork was predictive of exam performance, with this pattern established as early as second year."
2. "Leaving certificate performance is found to be very highly correlated with Junior Certificate performance".
3. "Those students who feel better able to cope with school-work in 2nd year tend to achieve higher grades subsequently".
4. "Those who still have difficulties coping with their schoolwork in 2nd year go on to achieve lower grades subsequently".
5. "Second year emerges as a key phase in shaping students engagement with learning".

15. Conclusion

The guidelines outlined in this booklet are exactly that, just guidelines. It needs to be remembered that each individual is unique and will spend different amounts of time studying and that the number of methods of studying (processing) are as numerous as there are individuals. There is no fixed definite schedule and there is no single easy was to study.

Think back to when they were toddlers and they were learning the letters of the alphabet and how to recognise words. The mastering of these skills did not happen as a result of one action, event, or a single conversation. It was a *process* that was spread over a considerable amount of time. Similarly, the concept of studying at secondary school cannot be acquired by one action, event, or single conversation. It needs to be seen as a continuous process that both parent and student need to engage with and in, and revisit, assess, and adjust constantly over *all* the years spent in secondary school.

Topic 1: ___	Topic 2: ___	Topic 3: ___	Topic 4: ___	Topic 5: ___	Topic 6: ___
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
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10.					

Bullet Points

Study Log

MON.	TUE.	WED.	THUR.	FRI.	SAT.	SUN.
(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)
mins.	mins.	mins.	Mins.	Mins.	mins.	mins.
(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)
mins.	mins.	mins.	Mins.	Mins.	mins.	mins.
(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)
mins.	mins.	mins.	Mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.
(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)
mins.	mins.	mins.	Mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.
(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)
mins.	mins.	mins.	Mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.
Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total

MON.	TUE.	WED.	THUR.	FRI.	SAT.	SUN.
(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)
mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.
(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)
mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.
(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)
mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.
(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)
mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.
(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)
mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.
Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total

MON.	TUE.	WED.	THUR.	FRI.	SAT.	SUN.
(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)
mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.
(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)
mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.
(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)
mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.
(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)
mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.
(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)
mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.
Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total

MON.	TUE.	WED.	THUR.	FRI.	SAT.	SUN.
(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)
mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.
(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)
mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.
(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)
mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.
(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)	(Sub.)
mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.	mins.
Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total

Mind Map

Acknowledgments & Bibliography

- Student I.
- Student II.
- Student III.
- Student IV.
- Student V.
- Student VI.
- Student VII.
- Student VIII.
- Student IX.
- Student X.
- Student XI.
- Student XII.
- Student XIII.
- Student XIV.

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The Institute of Guidance Counsellors is the professional body for Guidance Counsellors in Ireland. Its members work in the Second, Further, Adult and Higher Education sectors. The main object of the Institute is to discuss, promote and research matters relating to guidance counselling services. The Institute also seeks to promote best practice and the professional development of its members in order to serve and protect the interest of those whom they serve and to maintain, develop, and advance the personal, social, educational and career development of individuals and groups through supporting guidance counselling practice.

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