

What are Study Skills and How Do I Get Them?

by Winston Sieck - June 14, 2014

<https://thinkeracademy.com/study-skills-101/>

Do you believe these two common myths about learning in school?

1. Getting good grades is just about trying hard.
2. You need to be [born smart](#) to do well in school.

Those wrong ideas hold you back. They keep you from achieving all that you can. Trade them in for some good ideas about study skills.

What are study skills?

There are different ways to engage with your schoolwork. Some of these ways of learning work better than others. Study skills are strategies for learning well. They include [study tips and techniques](#) you can use to motivate yourself and master content.

An example of one of the [top science-backed study skills](#) is called, "self-explanation." To do it, you occasionally pause when reading. Explain what you've just read to yourself. Maybe ask yourself why a fact from the passage is true. This learning strategy helps you connect what you are reading to things you already know. And that helps you learn better.

Want more examples?

Go read this article with 5 examples of [study skills to accelerate your learning](#). I'll wait.

Back again? Ok, let's press on.

To accept the study skills idea, you have to give something up. You need to let go of the idea that your teachers are responsible for whether or not you learn.

Learning is mainly up to you.

Many good teachers have different ideas about how best to teach their subjects. Oddly, the best ones don't always make it super clear and easy for you.

Studies show that you learn better when things are a little hard. The ideas stick better when you have to put them together yourself. You really get it when you have to unravel a little puzzle.

Don't try to control how the teacher teaches their subject. Don't try to get them to make it really easy for you. Control how you learn it. [Study skills and learning strategies give you that control](#).

These ideas about study skills are not idle chitchat. Study skills are backed by science.

Cognitive psychologists and educational researchers have been vigorously testing these ideas for over 40 years. There is now a lot of evidence about what works and what doesn't.

One overall finding is that students who master study skills perform better academically. Period.

What are study skills? They are learning strategies and techniques you can use to improve your grades.

So, how can you get good study skills?

Study skills are, well, *skills*. You aren't born with them. You've surely figured out some on your own by trial-and-error. If you're like most of us, you've probably picked up some bad ways, too. Do you know which is which? Do you know what study skills you're missing?

Mostly, you need to study(!) good study skills. Learn ways that are proven effective. Then, practice the skills regularly. Just like you would for basketball or soccer. Dance or violin.

School is a good place to practice your study skills. Yet, you won't likely learn them in school. Schools teach core subjects. They debate what subjects to include and how deep to go. Few schools teach study skills outright. That's a problem.

Fortunately, Thinker Academy's [online learning skills program](#) fills this gap. If trial-and-error is the standard way to learn how to learn, then the Thinker Academy course gives you an unfair advantage. It shows you the strategies, and gives you practice them on a class or topic of your choosing.

Check out our [study skills course](#) and see what it can do for you.

Retrieved: 01-03-2019

Updated: 01-01-2019

Published: 06-14-2014

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