

Parenting Partners This Week

Success Starts At Home

Top Study Skills

Game Plan for Test Preparation—Part Two

Study skills are your students' game plan for success. You can coach them on some of these skills, so here are some ideas that other families have been using successfully. We started with some ideas last week – here are some more!

Think Tank – Test Preparation Ideas

Visual learners

Test information sticks better for visual learners when they get creative by drawing something that relates to the information they are studying.

- Use flow charts and diagrams.
- Draw doodles and pictures.

Learn from your old tests

Spend a few minutes with a previous test. Which questions tripped you up? Was it the way that teacher gave the instructions? Does the teacher do multiple choice tests where all the answers sound similar?

What can you learn about the teacher or test writer that will help you understand their approach better?

Do you need to read the directions more carefully?

Did you change answers, and then you discovered that your first answer was actually right?

Learn from practice tests

What kind of questions does your teacher ask on tests? Ask your teacher and former students.

Then as you study your notes imagine what kind of questions the teacher may ask. Write down some questions that occur to you. You'll be making your own practice test.

Avoid drama

You're ready for the test! Now all that can throw you off is reading your Twitter and seeing someone criticize you or pick on you. Turn it off –avoid the drama.



Ideas & Tools—Celebrate together!

Parents—when your students have completed studying for the day, or completed a paper or project, take some time for family fun. It can be just talking with you about whatever they're interested in, playing a game, or just running around the house.

That creates a positive reward for their studying, and increases their motivation. They'll feel more positive about learning and feel more confident about their progress in school.

Celebrating together helps your students clear their minds and get ready for bed, or ready for the next project.

Ideas & Tools—Thrive by bouncing back!

To really prepare our children to succeed, we need to guide them through disappointments. How can they learn to pick themselves up after a disappointing test result or class grade?

Our children learn from failure and frustrations, right? Should we shield them and protect them from all adversity? Maybe it's more valuable for them to learn resilience – the power to recover from difficulties and rebound from disappointments!

Researchers asking, “How do parents prepare their children for success in college and the workplace?” are focusing on character qualities such as resilience, persistence, self-control, curiosity, grit, and honesty.

“Character, even more than IQ, is what leads to real and lasting success. Overcoming adversity is what produces character.”¹

How can you walk your children through this process?

What ages or school levels do these skills apply to?

Most of these skills were contributed by college students.

Do you notice how well they apply to High School students? How about Middle/Jr. High? They apply well there, and also to elementary students.

What's the point?

When your students learn great study skills early, they will be able to use them all the way through their school careers!

¹ Paul Tough, *How Children Succeed: Grit, Curiosity and the Hidden Power of Character*, (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2012). Cited in *The Wall Street Journal*, 9/8/12, p. C3.