



Douglas College

Douglas College Learning Centre

SCIENCE STUDY SKILLS: A TUTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

Five doors lead to the world of science success, and here are the keys to those doors:

Key #1: Attend Class:

Attending classes regularly is crucial for doing well in science. Two main things you need to do in class are:

- a) Listen to every single word said in the class concerning the class material. Pay attention to what the teacher says, what the students ask, and what the teacher answers.
- b) Take lecture notes and make sure to record the important points mentioned in the class; NEVER trust your memory more than your paper. Sometimes we think that we will remember what the teacher says after class, but it rarely happens. We will forget it the moment we leave the class.

Key #2: Read and update your knowledge:

Attending the lecture gives you helpful knowledge, but without reviewing what you have been taught in the class, you will lose it all. The most important thing is to review the class notes as soon as possible after class. Try all the examples that were done in the class without looking at the correct answer. Only check the answers after you have attempted them all.

Key #3: Take effective notes while reading:

Reading without taking notes is like smelling food without eating it. Smelling your food helps you to have an idea of how it might taste, but never gives you the opportunity to actually taste it or take advantage of its nutritious value. Summarizing the main important points in a short form is the best way of taking notes. Therefore, you need to take good notes on your reading. This is the information you can concentrate on when you study for an exam.

Key #4: Prepare efficiently for exams or quizzes:

Now it is time to prepare for an exam or a quiz. As long as you have been attending class, practicing and reading, you do not have to get stressed out. You just have to study to refresh your memory about what you have already learned.

First: Make a study plan. This should include:

- a) Studying your notes and reviewing new vocabulary and concepts.
- b) Practicing examples.
- c) Answering all the assigned questions, and
- d) Doing some old quizzes or exams, if you have any.

Second: Try to follow your study plan. Make sure to take breaks so that you don't get bored with what you are doing. Losing interest in what you are doing makes your job very tough.

Finally, try to relax and think about your exam in a positive way. Be confident but NEVER overconfident. In other words do not panic about writing a test, but at the same time, do not overestimate your knowledge by thinking that you know everything and do not need to study.

Key #5: Use good exam taking strategies:

As long as you have done all the work above, there is no need to stress about the exam. Instead, you have to think of the exam/quiz as a good opportunity to show your ability, to prove that you have been studying, and to improve your knowledge. The best way of writing an exam is to:

First: Start with questions that are worth several marks and that you feel confident about solving. It has been proven that when you start answering questions you know, you activate your brain so that you have a better ability to deal with the other questions that you find difficult.

Second: Use your time wisely. Do not waste a lot of your time answering one question. At the same time, do not keep jumping from one question to another.

Third: Before you hand in your exam, review all of your answers and check for any mistakes. Never waste the opportunity of reviewing your test if you have the time. Most of the time, students lose many marks because of simple mistakes they could easily correct if they had reviewed their exam before handing it in.