

News & Announcements

Fall Workshops

Three more fall workshops left to register for through Pearkes and Juan de Fuca Recreation Centres:

- ▶ KidSpeak! (public speaking for middle school kids) 3 hours: Nov 7
- ▶ Provincial Exam Preparation 3 hours: Nov. 26, Dec. 3, or Jan. 7
- ▶ Essay Writing 4 hours: Nov 5

Workshops focus on building understanding through practical, engaging activities.

For more information on workshops, visit us online, contact us via telephone, or register directly through Pearkes or Juan de Fuca Recreation Centres.

Space is limited, so please register early to avoid disappointment.

Study Skills

Are you satisfied with your current study habits? Are you satisfied with the results you're getting from your current study habits?

In December, Smart Tutor Referrals is offering a 2-hour study skills workshop for Mt. Douglas Secondary Students.

The workshop focusses on building study skills tools and learning how to apply them for:

- ▶ organization,
- ▶ time management and
- ▶ test preparation.

If you're interested in having Smart Tutor Referrals come to your school to give a workshop, please contact us to arrange the details.

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by Dahlia Miller

"You may delay, but time will not, and lost time is never found again."

Benjamin Franklin

From time to time we all experience disruptions in our regular schedule. For students, missing school can cause a great deal of tension as they scramble to catch up. Luckily these disruptions are typically temporary and can be made up for with focus and support. This article explores the realities of making up for lost time in school and strategies for doing so.

We've all taken time off school for one reason or another. Sometimes the break is an educational one, sometimes it isn't. Some typical reasons for students to miss school include: illness; travel; family event; involvement in extra-curricular activities, like sports or theatre; or exchange program.

Some typical responses to returning to the classroom include:

- ▶ Feelings of confusion and embarrassment, watching as everyone else understands or uses new information;
- ▶ Feelings of being frantic or nervous about marks;
- ▶ Feelings of being overwhelmed – that too much time will be wasted in playing catch up.

Have you heard this story?

Once a young man went to a martial arts master to ask if he could be his apprentice. When they met, the young man said that he would study full-time and was willing to work hard. Then he asked how long it would take for him to become a master. "If you are willing to study full-time and work hard," the master said, "it will take you five years."

The young man was surprised. "But my parents need my support at home. I can't be

absent for so long. If I study very sincerely, with great effort and focus, how long will it take me to become a master?"

"If you study very sincerely, with great effort and focus, it will take you ten years," replied the master.

The young man was very shocked. "I will study day and night," he said, "How long will it take me to become a master if I study day and night?"

The master responded, "In that case, it will take you twenty years."

The point of the story? If we put an extraordinary amount of pressure on ourselves with great expectations, we'll be less likely to succeed. It's best to relax into the moment, accept the present situation as it is, and focus.

The Focus For Students

1. Know What's Expected Are you expected to make up missed assignments? Some teachers won't allow assignments to be made up. In this case, a focus on new assignments would be most productive. Some courses, like math, are cumulative – meaning that the new content is based on an understanding of old content – for these courses you'll be lost if you don't understand what was missed. In this case, you'll need to work quickly to bring yourself up to speed with the rest of the class.

2. Scheduling & Time Management Increase the amount of time you study for a limited time. If you don't already use a calendar or day-timer to keep track of study time, now is a good time to start. Begin by marking in due dates for upcoming assignments, tests, and assignments you hope to make up. What will you give up in your schedule to make room for extra study time? What time of day are you most alert? Schedule extra study time then. Choose your study times and make the most of them – get rid of distractions.

About Us

Our Mission Is:

- ▶ To provide top quality, flexible learning support and service to students and parents of students through:

Superior private tutoring matched specifically to each student's needs.

Stimulating workshops building skills in a practical and creative way.

- ▶ To enhance students' skills and increase learning confidence through individualized support, recognizing each student's unique abilities.
- ▶ To improve the quality of life, in individuals and communities through education.

Our tutors are certified teachers and professionals. Each is carefully screened and selected to match individual students' needs.

We help students to achieve.

For more information, and free study tips, visit us on-line at:

www.SmartTutorReferrals.com

Contact Us

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3. Make Use of Teachers Find out when your teachers are available to meet with you. Ask about missed content and how much material they expect you to make up. Will they let you rewrite tests or reports that were missed? Do they have any extra practice worksheets for you? When asking for extra help, be specific about what you don't understand (this will help your teacher to answer more of your questions).

4. Make Use of Classmates Choose a student whose note-taking skills you trust and ask to borrow his/her notes (copy them by hand). Ask this student or others to discuss the content that you missed (this would benefit them as well in understanding the topic more thoroughly). Form a study group if a number of students have been away.

5. Make Use of Parents If you are away unexpectedly, ask a parent to pick up study packages for you. Teach your parents materials that you are learning (they don't need to understand what you are talking about, just listen while you practice explaining the topic).

6. Make Use of Tutors Tutors can help you by teaching missed content and by keeping you on track with new materials and assignments.

7. Study Space Study without distraction. Put up a "Do Not Disturb" sign. Find an alternative location, like a library, to study, if necessary.

8. Study Health Treat yourself like an athlete on an intensive training program – focus on schoolwork as though you have a coach standing beside you. Study for 50-minute periods, take short breaks (especially for active exercise), eat healthy foods, drink plenty of water, and laugh often.

9. Study Techniques Some techniques can be particularly helpful in making up lost time... *Mapping* – create diagrams to represent relationships between topics you've studied and those you've missed; *Summaries* – create or find summaries of the topics that you've missed (you may not have time to review all of the details, a surface understanding of the topics may be enough); *Flashcards* – make use of spare moments to study missed material (while waiting for a bus or in lines); *Mnemonics* – stories, songs, rhymes, and acronyms can help you to quickly remember information.

10. Course Syllabus Review your course outline, if you were given one – it can help you to recognize what topics you missed, what they're worth, and how they fit into the general context of the course.

11. Goal Setting Set clear, achievable goals to help you to stay on track. How many missed assignments can you, or do you hope to, make up? What types of grades would you like to maintain in new course work as you catch up on missed work? Is there a grade that you would like to achieve by the end of the term? Remember that goals need to be realistic.

12. Positive Self-Talk Whatever your goals, you'll be more likely to achieve them if you have positive belief in your-self. Recognize the extra effort that you are putting in and reward yourself for it.

The Focus For Parents

- ▶ Gather your student's work from his teachers if he is sick.
- ▶ Support a more intense study schedule – provide snacks, decrease chores, offer healthy foods, be sure that the student has a quiet study space.
- ▶ Help your student to get organized and stay focussed on the big picture.
- ▶ Discuss your student's expectations and goals. Be sure to praise and reward efforts appropriately and often.
- ▶ Provide study materials (e.g. big poster paper) to encourage your student to create maps and context for missing materials.
- ▶ Provide opportunities for your student to explain topics to you. This gives them an opportunity to teach and reinforce their own learning.
- ▶ Suggest getting help from others – classmates, teachers, or tutors.
- ▶ Help your student to keep a broad perspective on missed school time – sometimes time off can be educational or beneficial to the development of the individual. Hopefully time off can at least help the student to recognize the benefits of education and being in school.

"Never regard study as a duty but as an enviable opportunity to learn."

Albert Einstein