

## How to Help Your Students Learn Good Study Skills

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Many children, particularly those with learning disabilities, lack basic study strategies. The following is a compilation of skills that can be used to help in learning. The skills are divided into categories based on the types of tasks they are typically used with. However, many can be used across subjects.

### Reading

Teach students to use pre-reading strategies. For instance, they may want to look at bolded words, titles, outline headings, etc. in order to get an idea about what they will be reading.

Provide a highlighter and encourage students to make note of topic sentences and key phrases they will need to know later.

Give students opportunities to pick what they want to read. Give credit for creative explanations of what they read. For instance, students may want to draw a picture of their favorite scene, make a diorama, write a follow-up to the story, write a pretend journal article describing the book as if it was a real event, etc. This increases willingness to read, facilitates comprehension, and provides the children with a creative outlet where they can play to their own strengths.

### Writing

Give choices regarding what students can write about. One way to facilitate thoughts is to provide a variety of pictures taken from popular magazines and encourage the students to write about the picture. Another is to let them choose from a list of story starters.

Teach students how to make an outline of what they want to write about. Examples are making a story map or web, a traditional outline, or simply writing down three ideas related to the topic.

Teach children how to use reference materials such as a thesaurus, dictionary, and encyclopedia. Encourage them to use outside sources if they are having difficulty thinking of what to say.

### Math

Help students create games to facilitate learning of rote material. An example is math bingo. Students create playing cards with numbers in each square. The teacher creates “tiles” containing various equations. When an equation is called students have to complete the equation to know if they have the matching number. Another example is memory using a similar set-up as Bingo. These games can be photocopied and sent home for students to practice with their families.

Teach students how to use math in practical ways so they can see the utility of what they are doing. Show them how to use math facts to know how much change to get back when they buy something, balance a checkbook, figure out the odds that their favorite basketball team will win the next game, etc. Encourage them to think about the skills they are using in new ways other than just completing worksheets in class.

