

# Study Techniques and Scheduling

Advanced Placement Biology is a college level course. To be successful, students must put forth college level effort. The following information can be used to help students develop a system of preparation and study techniques, which meets their individual learning style. Please review this information with your child and contact me if you have any questions.

## **Tips for organizing study time**

1) Create a study plan.

Set time aside on a weekly schedule and have an agenda for each day. This should include time spend for new material as well as time for reviewing past information. This will have to work around your other responsibilities. Provide enough time for reviewing as well as reading new material

Sample Study plan

Monday -	10 min review of today's class notes 30 min reading text 20 min unit review
Tuesday -	10 min review of today's class notes 30 min reading text 20 min unit review
Wednesday -	(extra curricular obligation) 10 min review of today's class notes 30 min reading text
Thursday -	10 min review of today's class notes 50 min reading text (long scheduled reading) 5 min unit review
Friday -	10 min review of today's class notes 20 min unit review
Saturday -	30 min unit review
Sunday -	30 min unit review 30 min reading text 30 min reading text

Modify the above plan to your individual schedule (average 60 minutes a night)

- 1) Always review of class notes from that day.
- 2) Time per day will vary as some days you will have other obligations. Make sure the assigned readings get done before the class period they are discussed.
- 3) Study no longer than 30 minute per sessions with short breaks (5 min) if you need more time.
- 4) You may alternate activates or subjects to stay alert.

## **Tips for Effective Reading**

- 1) Before starting to read a book or a chapter, do you glance quickly through it? This gives you a general ideal of the subject matter and will lend direction to your study. (Know what the main topic of the reading is before you begin. Look on the class schedule and section headings of the text.)
- 2) Make short notes and summaries while you read. This does not mean copying out passages from the text, but rather jotting down the *main ideas and principles*.  
(Read with a pencil in your hand if you want to remember what you read. It's a neat trick which works for some people.)
- 3) Stop at the end of each section, look back and tell yourself what the topic was for each paragraph you just read. Note the theme of each paragraph: the paragraph is the unit of thought and should have one main theme. Pick out the key sentence or key phrase which sums up the paragraph: it is often the first sentence or the last in a paragraph.

## ***Tips for Learning and Remembering***

- 1) Understanding is the key to learning and remembering. If you understand a principle, it is easy to remember it. Trying to learn details which you do not understand is a hopeless task. If you do not understand a topic, get further explanation.
  - a) look it up in a textbook (use the index),
  - b) Topics can also be researched on the internet
  - c) Discuss it with another member of the class.
    - i) Set up a communication network with other students will be studying around the same time. So that you can get fast answers.
      - (1) phone
      - (2) e-mail / instant messaging
- 2) Make a list of the questions you come across during reading so that you will remember to ask the instructor.
- 3) Periodic revision of previous work often helps in understanding. Don't assume that, just because you have read a book or have looked over your notes on a piece of work, this aspect is "done" and finished with. All the topics in this course build off each other and will be seen again.

## ***Tips for Taking Notes***

- 1) Leave plenty of space when you take notes, so that afterwards you can add your own annotations and summaries. Use space intelligently, so as to bring out the relative importance of the various items and their logical structure. Notes should not be written like paragraphs in a book. Write lists vertically, not horizontally along the line. Use underlining and capitals
- 2) Do not try to write down everything that is said in a lecture. Distinguish key points from details. Some of the detail may be readily available in a text-book, and some detail may be quoted only for illustration. Concentrate on the main points, summarizing them as briefly as possible. Leave large spaces. (If you think you have missed a point, leave a gap and fill in later). Go over your notes as soon as possible afterwards and fill in details or examples (with reference to text book) to amplify the general points.
- 3) Read over all your lecture notes fairly soon after each lecture, marking important points and making summaries? Even if you spend only a few minutes on this, it will help your memory and improve your understanding. This is a good way to get started promptly in an evening's work. "Writing up your notes" means working over them in this way, thinking about them, checking points, annotating and tidying them - not just copying them out neatly.

## ***Things that have been shown to work for AP Biology students:***

- 1) Organizing class notes each night. Typing your notes works well when you summarize and organize the content as you go. If you type them word for word this will not help.
- 2) Make flash cards. This is a good way to help memorize terms and concepts. This can be shared with other and used in various types of review games.
- 3) Concept maps (free form, make on large paper or on PC and continually add to it)
- 4) Question writing. Choose the main topics of the unit and write questions which you think will appear on the test.
- 5) Discussion groups and study groups. This works great however they must meet regularly (at least weekly) and they should have a detailed agenda of topics. Meeting once before the test does not work well.
- 6) Ask for help as soon as you realize you don't understand. Friend, family, teacher, e-mail, phone, txt message. It doesn't matter.

## Know Your Preferred Learning Style

### **Are you an Auditory Learner?**

Auditory Learners learn best when information is presented in an auditory language format. Do you seem to learn best in classes that emphasize teacher lectures and class discussions? Does listening to audio tapes help you learn better? Do you find yourself reading aloud or talking things out to gain better understanding? If YES, you are probably an Auditory Learner.

### **Are you a Visual Learner?**

Visual Learners learn best when information is presented in a written language format or in another visual format such as pictures or diagrams. Do you do best in classes in which teachers do a lot of writing at the chalkboard, provide clear handouts, and make extensive use of an overhead projector? Do you try to remember information by creating pictures in your mind? If YES, you are probably a Visual Learner.

### **Are you a Tactile/Kinesthetic Learner?**

Tactile/Kinesthetic Learners learn best in hands-on learning settings in which they can physically manipulate something in order to learn about it. Do you learn best when you can move and handle things? Do you do well in classes in which there is a lab component? Do you learn better when you have an actual object in your hands rather than a picture of the object or a verbal or written description of it? If YES, you are probably a Tactile/Kinesthetic Learner.

## **AUDITORY LEARNER**

*Translate the things you see into things you can hear*

1. Sit where you can hear well and be un-distracted during class time
2. After you have made notes on something, or have read something, read it into a tape recorder, then listen to it to help remember it.
3. Write up practice exam questions from notes, orally practice answering them with a friend.
4. When you study, say the information out loud to yourself after you have looked at it.
5. If a word seems unfamiliar when you look at it, have the teacher read it to you, (especially on a test) because you'll probably understand it more easily through hearing it.
6. Read important parts of your text onto tape and listen with earphones.

## **VISUAL LEARNER**

*Translate the things you hear into things you can see*

1. Take notes while your teacher is talking.
2. Use different color pens to accentuate the important points.
3. Take written notes and rewrite in chart or graph form. e.g. use a time line to chart events to remember in history
4. Write definition words on flashcards, words on the front, meanings on the back; use colored pens.
5. When memorizing, look at information, then look away and try to visualize it in your mind
6. Carry a small notebook to jot down important ideas or points.

## **TACTUAL/KINESTHETIC LEARNER**

*Translate the things you see and hear into things you can do*

1. Write facts that you must learn and remember several times.
2. Take information from the textbook and make drawings, graphs, flashcards, maps, time lines.
3. Take notes while your teacher is talking
4. Take notes while you are reading your textbook or notebook.
5. When memorizing, walk instead of sitting.
6. When memorizing, bounce a ball (seriously)