

# How to Improve Study Skills in High School

Teaching study skills to high school students can pose a significant challenge. High schoolers often feel that they have heard everything before, but here's a new twist.



Students have also grown up hearing that study techniques vary from person to person, so they should select techniques that work best for them. Certainly, this is true to an extent. However, students often select study methods that aren't necessarily meeting their needs. Plus, these needs change over time. Here's a lesson idea that will help students take stock and learn to improve their current homework habits.

Designing a lesson around improving study habits is well worth the instructional time. The objective is not to introduce students to new study habits but to have them analyze their current habits. Then they can decide what is working and what needs to be improved. Naturally, students can learn from the suggestions and “best practices” of other students, so this will be a collaborative activity.

For this activity, arrange your students into four collaborative groups. Be sure to construct mixed ability, mixed gender groups in advance and assign students to groups at the very beginning of class. Before you begin, you may want to establish some [ground rules for discussion](#). Then, give each group one section of this questionnaire. These sections are as follows:

1. Location
2. Time
3. Company
4. Priority

Then, instruct each group to write down everyone's responses and discuss among themselves which methods they feel are most effective and why. Inform them that half way through class groups will be reporting back to the class to discuss the results of the questionnaire.

## **Location: Where Do You Study?**

- on your bed
- at a desk in your bedroom
- on the living room couch
- in the family dining room
- at the library
- at a friend's house
- in the car
- at a tutoring center
- at school in between classes or during study hall

## **Time: When Do You Study?**

At what time do you study or complete homework?

- immediately after school
- right before dinner
- right after dinner
- just before bedtime
- only on the weekends

### **Company: With Whom Do You Study?**

- alone
- your best friend
- a motivated student who is just an acquaintance
- your sibling
- your parent
- a supportive teacher during extra-help sessions
- a private tutor

### **Priority: How Do you Prioritize Your Assignments?**

- big projects first
- difficult assignments first
- easy assignments first
- a specific piece of a large assignment first

### **Priority: Which Assignments Do You Postpone?**

- studying for a test
- short less important assignments
- major assignments like an essay or research paper
- projects with creative elements
- projects with extensive research
- collaborative projects with other student

Once you return to whole group discussion half way through the class, you may want to draw a graphic organizer or chart on the board to represent the four categories. Ask one student to write the best practices of each group on the board as each group reports their findings.

Naturally, you will want to point out that different methods work for different students. You can also suggest [ways to improve time mangagement](#). However, students should continue to explore and experiment if they find one method is not as effective as they would like. Encourage them to select at least two new methods recommended