

How to...



HECKMONDWIKE
GRAMMAR SIXTH FORM

...

make the most of your
Private Study sessions

Overview



Using your time effectively is really important, particularly when it comes to study periods; these are specifically designed to ensure that you can utilise your time to make maximum progress. It isn't just for study periods though; it is also for any 'free' periods that you have in school – the more you do in school, the less you have to do at home.

However, there is a big difference between being busy and being effective. In order to make the most of Private Study sessions, you will need to make sure that everything you do has value.

Details

Four strategies for how you can effectively spend your time in Private Study sessions:

1. **Use the Study Guide** that you should have received from each of your subjects which details what you should be doing each week – make sure tasks are completed thoroughly and ask for help if you need it from subject teachers. There is a section on the Library website that has these study guides if you are unsure where to find them: <https://libraryheckgrammar.co.uk/>
2. **Consolidate what you have learned in class and make sure that you understand it**
 - Start by getting all of your notes from previous lessons or a particular previous lesson out in front of you. Make sure that you have all of the notes from the lessons, getting them as soon as you can if you don't have them.
 - Then, summarise the notes – just reading over them or highlighting key information will not help you to retain and check your understanding. Aim for a quarter of the amount of words as a starting point, then see if you can narrow it down further. Ideally, you will end up with a list of key words that you can use later to prompt recall from scratch. This will also help you to ensure that you understand it.
 - Make explicit links between information that you have learned previously – how does what you have learned relate to what you already know? Write this down as part of your summary. Maybe link to homework or additional reading that you have done. This will allow you to retain information more easily.

- Challenge the information you have learned – ask yourself additional questions about the content or research further to extend your knowledge. You could also add comments about the work to help you when revising (see the How to Revise booklet for more information)
- Have a go at exam style questions about this information to apply the information learned. If you cannot find any online or that teachers have given you, make them up. Use mark schemes where possible to check where you have answered correctly and find out what you really do know and what you don't.
- Make it part of your learning that, in each study period, you recall from memory something that you learned in the last lesson, last week and last month. Use your list of key words from the first bullet point to help with this; turn the word into a sentence then a paragraph, then check against your notes to see what you have remembered and what you have forgotten.

3. **Fill any gaps in your knowledge**

Use the consolidation of learning tips to identify what you do not know or cannot remember. Anything that you cannot remember from scratch or are struggling to articulate, write about or summarise is a gap that needs filling. The sooner you deal with these gaps the better so that you don't end up with a huge amount that you don't know. To fill these gaps, consider the following:

- Ask someone in your class or your teacher for notes on that topic and add them to your notes, following the steps for consolidating knowledge to make sure that you understand them.
- Ask your teacher if you are really finding you don't understand.
- Research online or in the Library (checking that your sources are giving you accurate information – see the How to Research booklet for help) and make sure the notes you make are organised into appropriate folders.
- Practise using the information that you are struggling with in different contexts – a range of exam questions for example – and use sample answers to help you
- Use apps such as Seneca to do quizzes on the material that you are struggling with – test yourself often so that you are sure that you remember and understand the information.

4. **Pre-load** ahead of the next lesson in that subject

If you know roughly the content of upcoming lessons, you can be very effective if you research these elements prior to the lesson. If you know some of the content, you can focus on making sure that your knowledge is secure and extending that knowledge in class. You can also ensure that you can ask relevant and interesting questions to allow you to explore the topic further. Pre-loading vocabulary as well as content is very useful; if you have a knowledge organiser or textbook, use these to read ahead and be fully prepared so that you can make the most of each and every lesson.

- 5. **Revise:** Start revision as early as possible and use the How to Revise booklet to help with how and the How to Plan your Revision Time

Actions: what you need to do next

- Evaluate how well you are using your study periods – are you getting done what you need to get done or not and why? What needs to change?
- If you are using your study periods for homework, see whether you can complete homework at home and try the strategies above instead; this will help you in the long run much more as you are constantly checking what you know and revising too which will mean that you remember much more when it comes to your exams.
- Create a plan for what you are going to achieve in each private study session so that you don't waste time procrastinating and deciding what to do rather than actually working.
- Make sure that your notes are complete for each subject and, if they aren't, complete them/find them/copy them up.
- Find the gaps in your knowledge and use the strategies above to fill them
- Speak to a member of the Sixth Form team if you are struggling with implementing any of the strategies above.

Useful links

<https://www.educationcorner.com/habits-of-successful-students.html> - an overview of some habits to get into to study effectively

<https://www.lifehack.org/articles/featured/11-practical-ways-to-stop-procrastination.html> - tips on how to stop procrastinating

If you need any further support, please speak to Mrs Whitelaw, Mrs Barnard or Mr Ellis