Study Skill Development - A Psychological Study

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Introduction:
Every child uses different techniques for studying effectively. Some children study on the basis of different mnemonics taught to them by teachers. Some listen attentively and put everything directly into the long-term memory. Children are only born with the ability to study but the skill in studying is acquired automatically. Study skills help them to concentrate and study for a few hours and thereby giving them high academic achievement.

I. Definition of Effective Learning: Effective learning implies undivided attention to a certain theme or topic. It implies the use of intelligence on the part of the learner, definiteness of a goal, interest in meanings and recognition of the relatedness of various aspects of the total learning situation. Effective learning does not consist merely in the ability to remember verbatim or learning the words over and again without understanding their meanings or their interrelationships. In order to make one's learning effective, one needs to cultivate a few study habits and techniques.

II. What is Study?: Study is concerned with a planned programme of subject-matter mastery which will not only enrich an individual's life experience but will also develop desirable attitudes in the student. Effective study, according to Yoakam, implies the development of such attitudes and interests as:
A. Liking of study activities.
B. Interest in a particular field.
C. Ability to observe, listen and gain experience directly.
D. Ability to communicate ideas, in speaking and writing.
E. Ability to think, associate ideas, compare, evaluate infer, draw conclusions and apply operation and worthy use of leisure time.

1. Real learning is a self-active process: The learner is physically and mentally active when learning anything. The learning activity in response to a felt need from within. He/she learns only through his/ her own reactions or initiative through his/her own effort and self-realisation.
2. Intelligent learning is goal-directed: One who has clear purpose learns better than one who does not have.
3. Intelligent learning implies the learner's interest meanings: What is being learned should be understood.

Moreover, the learner recognizes the relation that exists between the various aspects of the total learning situation.

III. Habits of Effective Study: Crow, Crow and Skinner have listed 15 suggestions that may be of practical value to the reader in the development of habits of effective study.
1. Study with a definite purpose in hand.
2. Evaluate immediate and remote goals.
3. Provide a definite place for study.
4. See that the physical conditions are conducive to study.
5. Plan and follow a definite time schedule.
6. Look for the main ideas of reading material.
7. Cultivate the habit of reading rapidly and carefully.
8. Outline the study material.
9. Evaluate the difficulty of the material.
10. While reading, raise significant questions on the material to be learned, and then answer them.
11. Study with intent to recall.
12. Attend carefully to all illustrative material.
13. Complete all study assignments.
14. Make intelligent use of the dictionary.

IV. Developing good Study Habits: You will learn quickly and easily if you have a plan for study. Begin your study by developing the following habits.
1. Discipline your time. Make a written plan for when you will study and stick to it. Allow enough time for the subject which is difficult for you. If you know you will procrastinate, try a written schedule for study and play. Know you can play at a certain time will help motivate you to study.
2. Begin to study immediately in the time you have set aside for this. Have pencil, paper, books and everything you need before you begin.
3. Set up a good physical area for study. Plan it for neatness, comfortable seating and temperature without distractions.
4. Plan one full day free of study each week.
5. Ask for help and explanation from your teacher whenever necessary.

V. The SQ3R Method: Reading a textbook is different...
than reading anything else. You cannot learn from textbook materials by scanning or reading rapidly as you would a novel or newspaper. You need a plan of study which will help you to learn the important concepts most thoroughly and quickly. Such a plan was developed by Dr. Frances & P. Robinson some years ago and is called the SQ3R method of study.

The symbols, SQ3R stand for each step of this study technique.

1. S-SURVEY: Take two or three minutes to look over the main headings of general content of the chapter. Read the summary or review the headings of graphs and pictures. This will give you an overview of what is in the chapter and will help to focus your thoughts on the subject.

2. Q-QUESTION: Turn each heading of a section in to a question. This will help you to take an active part in learning by forcing you to concentrate on the material. It will help you to understand new ideas and information more quickly and will keep you interested in the subject.

3. R-READ: Read to find the answers to the questions which you have asked. Read only one section or topic heading and then stop.

4. R-RECITE: When you have completed a section, answer your questions and summaries in your words. If you cannot answer your questions, go back over the material until you can. Make brief notes of the important ideas and information.

5. R-REVIEW: When you have read the entire chapter, read through your notes and recite the answers to your questions again. Have another person ask you the questions, if possible.

V. Note Taking: Taking good notes during a lecture requires active listening just as taking notes from your textbook requires active reading.

The LISAN method for taking good notes was developed by Carman and Admans. Using this technique faithfully will give you excellent notes for study.

The letters LISAN stand for each step of this technique.

1. L-LEAD, DON'T FOLLOW: If you have read your assignments and scanned the study guides, you can try to foresee what the teacher will be going to say. You can come with your own questions prepared just as you do for your reading technique. You may want to add other questions as you listen to the lecture.

2. Ideas: Each subject or topic in a lecture is an important idea, mentally ask questions about the main ideas of the lecture until you understand what it is.

3. Signal Words: Listen carefully for the teacher to use words that will give you direction for your note taking.

4. Actively Listen: Do anything that will help you to listen carefully. Be punctual, sit where you can see and be seen and list directly with everything you need for note taking.

5. Note-Taking: Listen carefully but write only the main ideas. Try to organize the material in a meaningful outline form and write legibly. Review your notes regularly and use them to study for a set.

References:
6. Dr. S. Thenmozhi, MA., Ph.D., Lecture in Psychology, Psychology Practical's, IDE, University of Madras.
Dr. Sahil Agrawal
Dept. of Orthodontics, won the First prize for Clinical Poster Presentation at 15th IOS PG Students Convention Manali 2011 on “Medicolegal Issues in Orthodontics”.

Dr. Prakruthi BV
Dept. of Oral Medicine, won Best Scientific Paper Award in 39th IDA Karnataka State Dental Conference 2011, Mysore, Karnataka.

Dr. Prajna Kini
Dept. of Oral Medicine, has been awarded “The Best Essay Award” on the “Role of Oral Medicine in Palliative Care” in the post graduate category of IAOMR Essay Competition 2011 held at the National Level.

Dr. Barsh Mishra
First prize for Clinical Paper Presentation at Zonal PG Students Convention, South Zone, Chennai 2011 on “Accelerated Orthodontics - A Paradigm Shift”.

Dr. Shruthi B S
Dept. of Oral Pathology, won 2nd Prize in 9th National Conference of Indian Association of Forensic Odontology.
Venue: Vinayaka Mission Sankarachariyar
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