

# Ten Study Tips for Students

1. **Colour-code your timetable, giving each subject a different colour.**

Do several copies: one for the locker, the homework journal, your study area. Put in the name of your teacher and classroom the first time you put in a subject. It could look like this:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<b>English R. 2</b> Ms Daly	<b>Home Ec.</b> Kitchen Ms Daly	<b>Science</b>	<b>Maths</b>	<b>Science</b>
<b>Maths R. 14</b> Ms. Carroll	<b>Home Ec.</b>	<b>Art</b>	<b>Religion</b>	<b>Home Ec.</b>
<b>History R. 4</b> Ms Keogh	<b>English</b>	<b>Art</b>	<b>PE</b>	<b>Home Ec.</b>
<b>Geography</b> R. 23 Ms. Kelly	<b>PE</b> Ms. Wilson	<b>Maths</b>	<b>Irish</b>	<b>Art</b>
<b>Science Lab</b> Mr. Dunne	<b>CSPE R. 5</b> Mr. Boland	<b>Business</b>	<b>Business</b>	<b>English</b>
<b>Science</b>	<b>Business</b> R. 16 Mr. Malone	<b>Business</b>	<b>Science</b>	<b>Irish</b>
<b>Art Room</b> Ms. Walsh	<b>Irish R. 8</b> Ms. Grey	<b>Irish</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Geography</b>
<b>Art</b>	<b>Maths</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>SPHE R8</b>	<b>Maths</b>
<b>Religion</b>	<b>History</b>	<b>Geography</b>	<b>Irish</b>	<b>Religion</b>

## **2. Become organised. Use your homework journal for homework and to pack your bag for the next day.**

Write the names of the subjects in our journal for each day. It will save time when taking down homework in class. For your files/notes/books

- Have a weekly clear out and organisation of locker and work area.
- Use colour folders and covers/colour tabs for your copies. Use the same colour for the subjects as in your timetable. For example, English could be red, Maths yellow, Geography pink etc.
- Have your MOBILE switched OFF when doing homework.

## **3. Use SMART Goals for homework so you have an exact idea of what to learn within a given time.**



It will help to keep you focussed. This is far more productive than reading over a chapter three times. Here is an example from History on the Reformation. *At the end of 20 minutes I will know the following key facts and be able to test myself:*

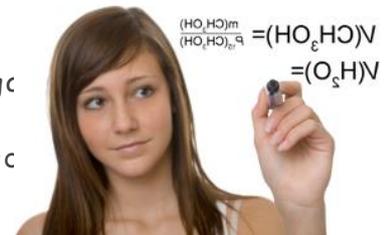
- 5 causes of the reformation
- 5 facts about Luther's life
- 5 facts about how his beliefs were different to those of the Catholic Church
- The names of 2 other reformers

#### 4. You need to put material to be learnt from short-term memory into long-term.

Rote learning (learning off-by-heart what you do not understand) is not recommended for students with dyslexia. It is better to learn with understanding or to see patterns. Use several senses rather than look over/read notes to make the material your own. It is hard work but it helps. Use activities such talking, listening, debating, drawing, visualising, flashcards, lists of questions etc.

#### 5. Know your preferred learning style and use it for learning.

- **Visual learners** - prefer diagrams, colour, mindmaps, orgc
- **Verbal/auditory learners** - like using highlighting, recorc talking and repeating information.
- **Movement**, movement, saying, writing.

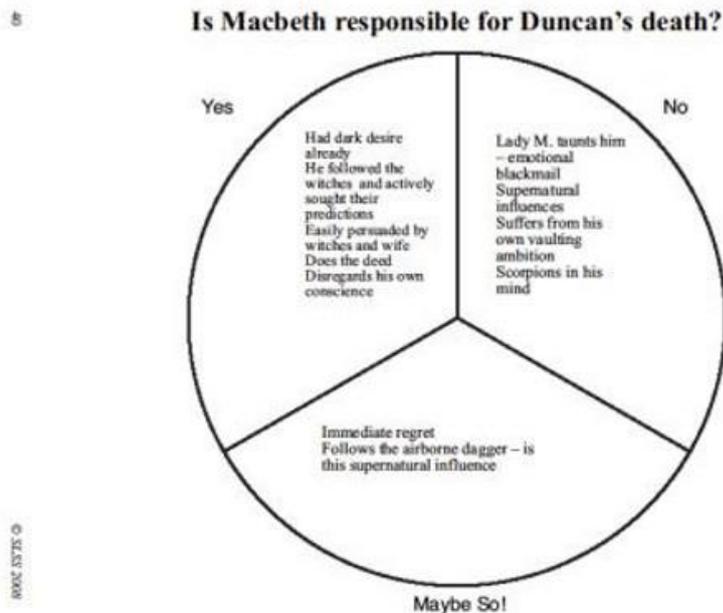
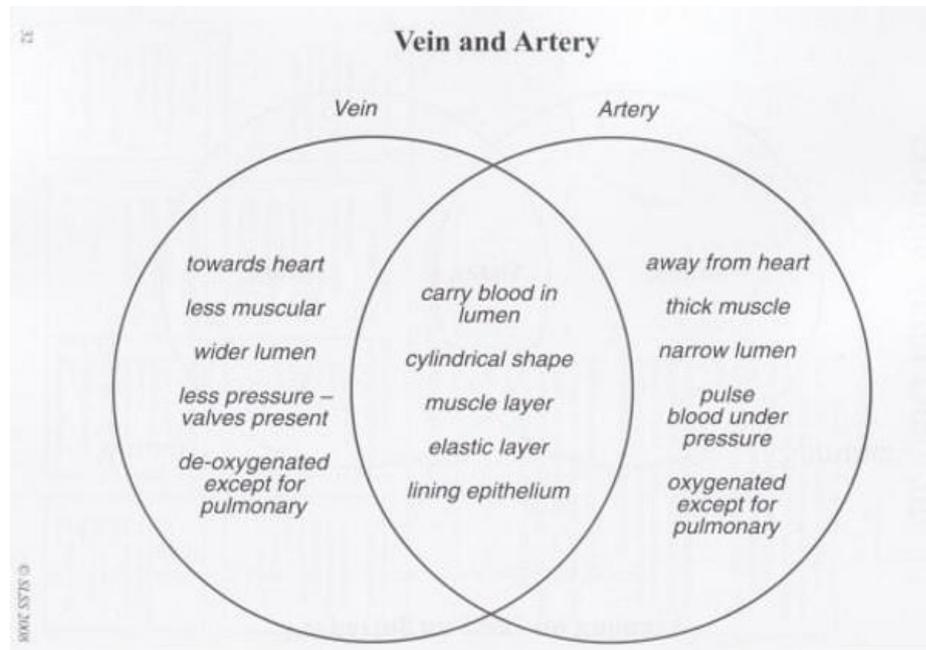


The website [www.vark-learn.com](http://www.vark-learn.com) has an on-line questionnaire that takes about ten minutes to complete and tells you your preferred learning style.

#### 6. Note taking

- If you cannot take good notes, can you get photocopies or use revision books. This will allow you listen in class and understand what is being taught. There are websites that can be helpful. See end of this article.
- Put page numbers, date, subject and topic at the top of each page.
- When summarising the summary should be less than a quarter of text.
- Use lots of space, numbering, bullet points, headings, sub-headings & colour.
- **Graphic organisers** and **mind maps** help organise your thinking, help when learning/memorising material and then help in structuring

written answers. There are some examples of graphic organisers below. The Assistive Technology Outreach Service at UCC has online videos showing the use of mindmaps at [www.ucc.ie/en/dss/callouts/resources/videos](http://www.ucc.ie/en/dss/callouts/resources/videos).



## 7. Memory techniques can help with learning.

### Visualisation

Make up images in your mind to help you remember. Here is an example. The colours in the wires in the electric plug are **blue, green/yellow, and brown**. See the image of a Teddybear (brown for the live wire,) on green grass (green for the earth wire) and a blue sky (blue for the neutral).

### Grouping

Don't try to memorise long lists of unrelated facts. Group them in blocks.

### Mnemonics

Make up sentences or words that help you remember facts. Here are some examples.

- FATDAD: 6 counties of Northern Ireland
- Colours of the Rainbow: - Richard of York gave battle in vain
- Stalagmites and Stalactites: Mites go up, tites come down
- Spring Forward, Fall Back: (the change in hours in Autumn & Spring)

## 8. Reading

Try to make time to read something every day. It will develop reading stamina and speed. It is like training for a race. You cannot run a 5KM race immediately. You train for it over time.

Active reading means asking yourself questions about the text before you start, then try to find the answers to those questions as you read. It will help keep your mind focussed. When you finish, check if you can now answer the questions.

See if a plastic colour overlay helps or use a ruler to keep your eyes focussed on the page. Maybe enlarged print (on computer or Kindle) may help. Digital copies of textbooks are available so you can read and hear the text at the same time. Factsheet 16 under downloads at [www.dyslexiacourses.ie](http://www.dyslexiacourses.ie) has details on how to access them. There is a

scanning pen available now which reads aloud text as well as capturing text to file. See [www.scanningpenshop.com](http://www.scanningpenshop.com).

Reading aloud or subvocalizing (saying the words quietly to yourself) can help you read more accurately particularly in exams.

## 9. Spelling and Vocabulary

Dictionary/notebook when reading will help you find where each letter begins in the dictionary. Always choose a dictionary with large print. Collins' alphabet is printed on each page.



Keep a vocabulary notebook for each subject.

Develop mnemonics for spelling words you confuse:

- Dilemma Emma has a **dilemma**
- Separate There is a **rat** in separate
- Innocent **In no century** is murder an innocent crime
- Principal/Principle The principal is your **Pal**, a **rule** is a principle

Become a word detective. Lots of longer words come from Latin and Greek. If you understand the meaning of some of these words, you will be able to understand new words you might come across. For example, if *aqua* = water, *phobia* = fear, *hydro* = water, *bi* = two, *lateral* = side, *--cide* = killing, you might be able to guess the meaning of the following:

- Aquaphobia, hydrophobia,
- Hydrotherapy
- Bilateral, multilateral,
- Herbicide, infanticide, insecticide.

## 10. Writing

Make up three characters in great detail such as how they look, clothes, hobbies, family, school, jobs, friends, opinions etc. Collect pictures from magazines etc. to illustrate your characters. It makes it easier to compose a short story if you have people already in your head.

Use your five senses when writing a description of a scene.

When answering questions think of 3 points to support your answer, then 2 references /quotes to back up each point.

Use the question to start your answer. So if you are asked *What the key causes of climate change?* begin your answer *The key causes of climate change are..*

Write and don't stop for spelling, check it afterwards otherwise it will interrupt your thinking.

Have checklists of points to prompt you to write more. For example when writing about a person in history, think about clothes, food, farming, houses, rulers, religion, schools, beliefs, death.

Templates which show how to structure an answer help with planning. Examples are available with Inspiration Software. Here is an example.

