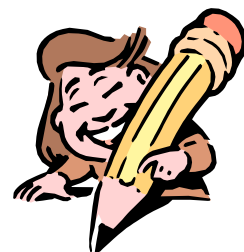


How to Get an "A" in Living Environment



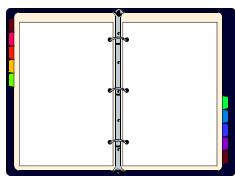
1. **Set up Your "Office"** - a desk or table (in your room or at the dining room or kitchen table). Your office should be quiet (no TV or noisy family members). Get comfortable - nice chair, good light, maybe a mug of cocoa.

Office Supplies - pencils, erasers, paper, calculator, ruler, scissors, tape.

References – review book, dictionary, encyclopedia, class notes, handouts, agenda, computer, Internet.

2. **Establish a routine** - plan on devoting a specific hour or two to homework every weeknight (4:00 - 6:00pm or 7:00 - 9:00pm). Once you get into the "groove", you'll be adept at polishing off your work in less time than this.

Make your parent or guardian your personal secretary! Tell them to "please take messages - I am not to be disturbed while in my office except in emergencies." They'll be impressed - WHOA! - and you'll get your homework done in record speed when you have no interruptions!



3. **Agenda** - You need an assignment calendar to keep track of your busy life - assignment due dates, special events, holidays, parties, etc. Use your AGENDA to write down assignments at the beginning and end of each class. Keep looking at your agenda to give yourself time to finish assignments before they're due.

4. **Taking Notes / Writing in your notebook**

- A. Date your notes - Put the date in your notes at the beginning of each class. This will help you find your place quickly, and help you figure out which notes you missed while you were sick.
- B. Mark the sections you'll need to know for each quiz or test - before taking a test, write "TEST TO HERE" in big letters in your notes to mark the end of the material you need to study for the test. Then study the material up to that point. Before the next test, you'll know you don't need to study anything before that mark in your notes. Mark the worksheets you need to study and keep them all together in one location in your notebook or folder.
- C. Write down anything that I write down on an overhead or on the chalkboard - when in doubt, take notes! It's an art to be able to tell what's real important and what's less important. Try to work at recognizing important points. When in doubt – ask me!
- D. Ask questions - about anything you don't understand or would like to clarify. Ask questions whenever you feel like it, just because you'd like to know! Then write it down!





5. **Reading & Studying** - While reading or studying for a test:

- A. Keep asking yourself "does this make sense? Do I understand? Try to figure out what it is that you don't understand, then see if you can figure it out based on context clues (all the parts you do understand which are found just before and after the part you don't understand).
- B. Take notes, outline or summarize the key points, and write down questions to ask me or to look up.

While reading, jot down the headings in the text, followed by key points, concepts or new vocabulary under each heading (anything you think sounds important and that you want to remember). Then write down the next heading and jot down the key points under it, and so on. If you're reading the review book, or your notes or a handout, you can write your summaries / notes right on the sheet, of course.

Another option is to make photocopies of assigned reading pages, then summarize key points in the margin, right on the page next to the text (a college trick!)

Practice doing problems – do the review problems.



6. Take **responsibility** for yourself - pull your own weight; you should do your own work - not your parents, not your friends.

7. **Neatness and Accuracy** - strive for them in everything you do.

8. **Practice makes perfect** - homework, work sheets & labs give you practice at some of the kinds of problems you'll need to be able to solve in life - so complete your assignments regularly and on time. If you stay on top of your assignments, you'll know whether or not you need extra help with something in plenty of time *before* it's due or before the next test.

9. **Stay on task and on time** - when doing any assignment, don't drift to other subjects or allow yourself to be distracted. Pace yourself, and use your time wisely and efficiently - you'll finish the assignment much more quickly and do a better job too! It's a good idea to take short breaks to stretch and maybe have a laugh or two with someone. But stick with it until you've finished your work. Make a habit of glancing at your agenda and make a To-Do list with top priority items at the top. In the "real" world and in my class, late work is unacceptable (unless you have a legal excuse).

10. **Make up missed work** – Check the web site (danling.com) and calendars or contact a friend for info. The bins in 319 have ALL the handouts, assignments and labs. See me to make up missed lab work.

11. **Seek help** - I'm here to help after school on most Thursdays. But don't wait until the last minute. If you don't keep up with assignments in your agenda, put everything off until the last minute, and never ask questions or seek extra help until just before the test, there won't be much I can do to help you!

