This is a 30 page sample of a larger book.

See details online for more information
Acknowledgements

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Images and Text

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Mighty Minds Educational Systems Pty Ltd is an educational consultancy company that specialises in assisting students to develop their thinking and problem-solving skills. The success of Mighty Minds in this area is reflected in the achievements of students and the hundreds of schools, Australia-wide, that each year utilise the many services offered by Mighty Minds.

In response to client feedback, which has highlighted the need for students to develop strategies to solve problems in unfamiliar situations, Mighty Minds has produced Pathways to Success. As well as meeting those needs, this workbook also includes work on essential examination skills making it a highly desirable resource for all senior students.

Pathways to Success is:

- a durable, full-colour student workbook with 280 pages containing more than 100 activities and tasks. The workbook can be used throughout Years 11 and 12;
- a valuable resource for educators, providing them with a cost-effective, time-saving tool that features proven, educationally sound activities and techniques;
- an interactive, step-by-step student guide/workbook specifically created for senior students, irrespective of their intended pathway. It has been designed to improve the effective learning skills of all senior students, showing them how to invest in themselves by using strategies that will be invaluable for life.

Pathways to Success contains four main sections.

In Section One, students are encouraged to reflect on their present position in life and to consider which possible pathway might, in the future, lead to a successful career. Included are numerous activities designed to make learning an enjoyable experience. The overall aim of this section is to encourage students to consider employing active and productive learning methods rather than passive and ineffective techniques. By analysing the outcomes after completing activities such as A Week in My Life and The Wheel of Success, each student will be able to decide whether the choices he/she is making are the correct ones. Students are given the opportunity to set goals, organise study groups, create a workable timetable and develop effective learning routines.

Section Two focuses on Fundamental Learning and developing higher order thinking abilities. It is obvious that to be successful in any senior curriculum, a student must have a solid foundation in the basic skills that underpin literacy, visual literacy and numeracy. Further, to achieve more than a sound level of achievement, a student must demonstrate higher order thinking skills. To facilitate this process, we have included a section that demonstrates (by worked examples) various methods for problem-solving and how they can be applied in a variety of situations.

Section Three is specifically focused on the Queensland Core Skills Test. All aspects of the Writing Task, Short Response and Multiple Choice tests are clearly explained and are accompanied by techniques and tips this section reveals have been specially developed by Mighty Minds as a result of feedback from thousands of state-wide workshops and the marking and detailed analysis of hundreds of thousands of past QCS Test papers. The Fourth Section contains tasks related to the Common Curriculum Elements (CCEs), as well as tips on what to look out for in these questions. This section helps students to better tackle the tasks with which they are faced.
**HOW TO USE THIS BOOK**

*Pathways to Success* is designed to promote active learning, so students show their working in the spaces provided.

Equipment, including coloured pencils, pens, a calculator, an eraser times be required to complete tasks and activities.

Answers are given at the back of the workbook.

Additionally, schools that purchase this book will be provided *Fundamentals of Senior Learning*, which includes extra activities, as well as some that have been taken from the previous edition of *Pathways to Success*.

Remember, the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority provides the marking scheme and model responses for all Short Response Items in the Retrospective for each year. These can be downloaded from the QCAA website: https://www.QCAA.qld.edu.au/2322.html.

A selection of these has been included in *Pathways to Success*.

In association with the marking schemes is the percentage of students who achieved each grade in each item. For each Multiple Choice or Short Response, has been clearly labelled at the top of each item with the CCEs used and the associated learning basket indicated. If you wish to find activities about a particular CCE or basket, refer to page 279.

A feature of the Sixth Edition is the handy symbols scattered throughout the book. These link to fun brainteasers and editing exercises through our website (www.mightyminds.com.au) or our mighty minds Assistant App.

- symbolises an idea or a suggestion.
- symbolises an activity or task that requires a response from you.
- symbolises an important tip or item you should remember. Once you've finished *Pathways to Success*, reread all the pages with this symbol.
- symbolises an interactive activity to ignite your thinking.

**SAMPLE**

Any activities or tasks appearing in a purple box are to be completed.

The text in the blue boxes are for your own information. Some of these boxes contain commonly used rules that should be learnt.

Mighty Minds welcomes any feedback or questions. Your responses can be submitted to Mighty Minds via our email address: director@mightyminds.com.au.


Now, we invite you to pick up your pen and begin your journey – your Pathway to Success.
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**Pathways to Problem-Solving**
- Which Level of Problem Solver are You?

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**SAMPLE**
GET MORE OUT OF YOUR
PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS

Follow the steps below to unlock more engagement.

1. Download the Mighty Minds app by scanning the QR code below. The Mighty Minds QR code is available through the link. Scan the QR code to access additional content related to pathways to success.

2. Each time you scan the QR code, you unlock a video illustration and get your instant copy of the app here.

Get your instant App from the App Store to get started.
DESIRING SUCCESS

THE RIGHT ATTITUDE

How do we achieve the success that we desire?

Perhaps we can gain some insight into this question by looking at the philosophies of those who have achieved considerable success.

“Always bear in mind that your own resolution to succeed is more important than any other one thing.”

Abraham Lincoln

"Being confident and believing in your own self-worth is necessary to achieving your potential.”

SHERYL SANDBERG, CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER OF FACEBOOK

As with most successful people, Lincoln and Sandberg had no doubt that the most important factors in achieving success (or otherwise) are a person’s belief in themselves and their determination to succeed.

What is true in life is also true in education – our success is largely determined by our attitude and behaviour. If you believe your schoolwork as being important to achieving success, you will be much more likely to succeed.

From our experience, it is true that:

“Your thoughts lead to your actions; your actions form your habits; your habits become your behaviour; and, in turn, your behaviour determines your destiny.”

MIGHTY MINDS

A common example of this is a student who studies late at night (often past 10pm) and then still expects to gain the most benefit from their schooling the following day. Obviously, working late at night will reduce your ability to concentrate in class the next day.

Also, many students study in their bedroom, which contain plenty of the distractions in the world (e.g. computer, social media, music, TV, stereo, great posters, fantastic views out the window) and they convince themselves that by simply being there, they are putting in a big effort.

Now might be a good time to check your attitude.

This book will help you explore the many pathways to success and will provide you with invaluable skills that will help you along the way; however, you will not move any closer to success until you truly desire it.
**HOW TO SUCCEED IN SENIOR**

1. Set academic goals.
2. Have a strong/positive self-belief/attitude towards what you want to achieve.
3. Realise failure is often the first step to success.
4. See the benefits of working consistently each week.
5. Work collaboratively to reach your goals.
6. Form study groups both at school and online.
7. Be efficient – this includes time management and effective learning skills.
8. Understand the importance of the QCS Tests and how they can impact your OP score.
9. Develop your problem-solving abilities so that higher academic performance can be achieved.
10. Construct a detailed plan for success – whether for an assignment, essay, examination, presentation or job interview.

**MOTIVATION**

At the heart of all success, is motivation – the desire to achieve what you want. Motivation enables us to set out on the path to success and shows us the way forward. It is often far more important than talent, skill or ability.

**Goals**

Goals suggest what is possible. Interestingly, at the same time, they also guide our actions in our pursuit of these possibilities.

**Activity 1**

What is your goal? What do you want to be doing in ten years, five years, at the end of this year? Consider this in terms of work, and also in terms of personal goals. Do you want to be in a relationship? Where do you want to be living? What career would you like to have? How strong is your motivation to achieve your goals? How much would you be willing to sacrifice to achieve them?

Decide what you want from your senior school years. Start with a list of everything that is important to you. They do not have to be in any particular order – just write them down as you think of them.

**SAMPLE**

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</table>
Activity 2
Now, look at your list carefully and rewrite it by ranking each item in order of importance.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Once you have started to identify what you are striving for your goals, you will be more motivated to pursue them and achieve them.

When setting your goals, always aim high - as David Lloyd George said, “Don’t be afraid to take a big step. You can’t cross a chasm in two small jumps.” Sometimes, to achieve your goals you might have to make some confronting decisions. You might have to move to another state to study or to work in the field you want. You might have to make some decisions you don’t like, such as giving up activities you enjoy, like playing computer games, so that you have the time and energy to focus on what will ensure your success.

Activity 3
For your goals to be achievable, you must take time to consider the best pathway for that success. Now might be a good time to write an appraisal of your strengths and weaknesses. Be honest! If you have good IT skills include this; if you do not like performing in front of others, say so. Include personal characteristics as well as your academic attributes.

What will help you to achieve your goals? E.g. strong self-motivation, support of family/friends

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

What will hinder your progress towards your goals? E.g. procrastination, lack of money

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
The Wheel of Success

A good way to help you look objectively at your situation is to chart it. The following diagram *The Wheel of Success* when completed honestly will give you a realistic appraisal of your current situation.

**Activity 4**

Consider the centre of the circle (0) as representing a low skill level in that ability and the outer edge (10) as representing a high skill level. Use a pencil to determine where you are placed on each “spoke” of the wheel for each skill set mentioned. Join these points (dot-to-dot style) to form your “wheel”.

- **Time management**: Do you have a study timetable – a weekly, monthly or term planner that you change/review regularly? Most computers and/or phones will have some type of calendar that you can use to help.

- **Active learning methods**: Do you underline, make notes and engage your brain by constantly asking yourself: What is going on here?; Would I take that step?; Would I solve the problem that way?; What is the meaning of that word or expression?; What could I do to improve that answer?; Is the technique I am using the best/most efficient?; How could I make this activity more challenging?

- **Clear vision of goals**: Do you set goals before you study? Do you have a reason for investing in your future? What are your goals for today? Tomorrow? Next month? This term? This year? Five years’ time? Ten years’ time? For your life?

- **Personal responsibility for learning**: Do you believe your success or lack of success is due to your teachers? Your parents? Your friends? Your attitude? Your effort? Your economic situation? The hardships in your life? Or are you honest enough to admit that you are responsible for your own success or lack of success?

- **Question when uncertain**: How often do you ask questions to your teachers, friends and parents? Do you disengage when you don’t understand, or do you seek clarification?

- **Friends with goals**: Are your friends focused? Do they have high ambitions? Do they work hard? Do they support you when you focus on learning? Do their actions support or hinder you?

- **Self-investment**: What have you done to ensure your future? Do you work hard? Do you work smartly? Do you think about what you are doing? Do you work with your friends so that the pathway to your success becomes more enjoyable and achievable?

- **Knowing yourself**: Have you reflected on your strengths and weaknesses? Have you done anything to enhance your strengths or to improve your weaknesses? What is your level of self-belief? How much determination do you possess? Do your actions
Now, take a close look at your wheel. How close to the outer edge is your wheel? The closer to the outer edge your wheel is, the more work you are required to do to improve this skill.

Activity 5

The areas I am achieving well in are:

SAMPLE
Activity 6

The areas that I need to work on are:


Having thought carefully about your desires, motivations and your strengths and weaknesses, you are now in a position to set some realistic and achievable goals.

Before you commit your thoughts to paper, remember these helpful hints:

- Make your goals specific rather than general. It is much easier to judge whether you have achieved your goals if they are expressed specifically; and, if you have not met them, it is much easier to see what you have to do to get back on track.
- If your goals are long term, try to break them down into a series of shorter term goals that will ultimately help you reach your target.
- Make your goals personal and make sure that it is you who can determine the outcome. If you have to rely on others to achieve your goals, you might be let down.
- Do not be afraid to aim high.

Activity 7

My goals for this year are:


FOLLOW ME FOR AN INTERESTING ARTICLE...

I can be found at:
KNOW YOURSELF

Before you start to consider how to improve your educational outcomes, it is logical to examine your current routine. Let us start with a simple exercise of self-discovery by looking at how you spend your time in a typical week.

A WEEK IN MY LIFE

Activity 8

Complete the A Week in My Life table on the next page by following the example below.

Note what you do each week, including socialising, watching TV, playing sport, paid work, computer usage (social media, emailing etc.), travelling (car, bus etc. to and from school/sport), studying, reading, exercising, etc. Note also the approximate time of day these activities occur and the time you devote to each activity. For example, consider that, although you might start school at 8.40am and finish at 3pm each day, in reality you might start getting ready for school around 7am and arrive home around 4.30pm – so your schooling is really occupying all of this time and should be recorded as such. Another example is that you might have a paid job on a Thursday night from 5pm to 9pm; however, once you add the time it takes to get ready and the travelling time, it could actually occupy your time from 4pm to 10pm.

Example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>MONDAY</th>
<th>TUESDAY</th>
<th>WEDNESDAY</th>
<th>THURSDAY</th>
<th>FRIDAY</th>
<th>SATURDAY</th>
<th>SUNDAY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6-7</td>
<td>Walk</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Walk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-8</td>
<td>Eat, dress</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Eat, dress</td>
<td>Eat, dress</td>
<td>Eat, dress</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-9</td>
<td>School</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>School</td>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>Study</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
After completing *A Week in My Life*, calculate the total number of hours per week spent on each activity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Total Hours Spent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paid work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology/entertainment (mobile phone, social media, TV etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialising</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercising</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective learning (outside normal school hours, study etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In order to improve any aspect of our lives, we need to spend time and effort working on it. Athletes, for example, invest time in training and improving their diets to improve their performance. Likewise, to improve your educational outcomes, you need enough time to your study.

A senior school student should be allocating a minimum of 10 hours per week for study (this includes reading, assignments etc.).

If you have a look at your table of weekly activities, this amount takes up about 10% of your waking hours!

It is your task to slot these study hours in where they are most likely to be useful to you.

**REVIEW OF STUDENT SURVEYS**

Recent surveys show that a large number of senior school students share similar characteristics. Students:

- Realise that they will more than likely be involved in further education (such as apprenticeships, TAFE courses, university etc.) after Year 12.
- Understand that having an educational qualification would give them access to a greater number of future pathways.
- Lack the motivation and/or drive to study on a regular basis, unless an assignment or examination is imminent.
- Generally find study boring and/ or non-engaging.
- Primarily study by themselves and in their bedrooms (where they have access to an incredible number of distractions such as the internet, TV, and music).
- Have a paid job that occupies at least eight hours of their time each week (remember, also, that they might be paid for only six of those hours due to work-related preparation or travelling time).
- Do very little reading (only about 20% of Year 12 students read for more than five hours per week and approximately 40% read for less than one hour per week).
- Spend at least 10 hours per week on technological distractions – this includes computers, emailing, texting, listening to music, watching TV and social media.
- Spend an average of 4.5 hours per week on education-related activities outside normal school hours.
- Spend a considerable amount of time socialising with their friends and very little quality time with their family.
- Spend very little time each week on regular physical activity (only about 20% of Year 12 students spent five hours per week on physical activity, which included such activities as going to the gym, team sports, etc. while approximately 40% of students spent less than one hour per week on physical activity).
- Have results that often reflect a lack of drive to achieve above-average results.
- Often stay up past 10pm.
- Often have goals but lack a detailed plan to achieve these goals.
**Characteristics of Successful People**

They:
1. Listen
2. Reflect on what they are doing
3. Have a willingness to change
4. Study often
5. Work together

You will need to know the following:
1. Your academic goal for the year in terms of your OP/career choice.
2. Your current level of achievement for each of your subjects, for example: SA7 or VHA3.
3. The criteria that you are weakest in, for each of your subjects, ask your teacher. You should also ask your teacher which students are strong in the criteria you are weak in.
4. Your willingness to help each other to improve in these areas of concern.
5. Your learning style. Be willing to change so you can improve your plans to ensure your success.

You need to do the following:
1. Treat QCS as a subject – that is, spend at least two hours a week on improving your abilities for these tests.
2. Form or join after school or online classes for most, if not all, of your subjects. Once you have joined you should contribute by providing difficult problems or better techniques to learn or address problems.
3. Ask your teachers for appropriate websites, books or other materials to assist with your learning, especially in your areas of weakness.
4. Find out from your teachers the format, criteria, test structure and topics for your next assessment, in each of your subjects.
5. Construct your own assessment piece which you can then swap and complete with other students. You should aim to do this at least twice for every assessment. You should aim to make your test as difficult as possible for the other students.
6. If your subject is a problem/questions based subject like mathematics you should aim to complete 200 difficult problems prior to the actual assessment.
7. Think carefully about the challenges ahead of you. When you know what is coming, you can make explicit plans to be successful.

Activity 10

Write down the name and contact numbers of six people with whom you would be willing to study on a regular basis.

---

SAMPLE
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE

The question we often ask students during our workshops is, “When should you start investing in yourself and your future?” The answer is very simple... NOW!

💡 Use the information here and the information you have provided about the way you currently spend your time to think about how you can maximise the time available to you and how you can use it most effectively.

PLANNING FOR SUCCESS

THE RIGHT APPROACH - A MATTER OF BALANCE

As a senior student, your life is filled with many demands upon your time. You need to learn how to effectively manage the time you allocate to these demands to avoid feeling overwhelmed.

Everyone has responsibilities to their family, school, sport and/or cultural commitments and, often, part-time paid employment. You need to think about yourself and for social interaction with your friends – how you will fit everything in!

It is only through an organised, systematic approach to your life that you can avoid the stresses that such demands can place on you and be confident that you are performing to the best of your ability on the various commitments that your life places on you.

Such organisation needs a plan!

By producing a plan that suits your life and circumstances, you will help achieve the balance that allows you to proceed in a stress-free way, safe in the knowledge that you control your life rather than the other way around.

CHANGE YOUR POINT OF ENTRY

What is a point of entry?

A point of entry refers to the level at which a student enters a unit of work. This can be measured by standard methods. The higher the student's point of entry, the higher the quality of finished work. For example, if a student enters their assessment at a high entry point (as shown by Jill in the diagram on the following page) it will take less work for them to reach VHA level.

Most students start a unit of work with standard or sub-standard levels of knowledge. Even if they do manage to improve their work to higher levels by the end of the unit (i.e. the completed assignment or actual test), this improvement is often achieved by “cramming”. This assessment-focused learning involves low-level work at the commencement of the assessment period, followed by a fast increase in quality throughout the majority of this time, and then a fast decline towards the end of the assessment period (a few days before the assignment is due or the test is taken). This is an ineffective habit and results in students achieving less than their best.
When you start an assessment period (that is, the time leading up to the due date of an assignment or test) you enter at a certain level of thinking. This level of thinking has an enormous effect on the quality of your final work. For example, if you start at a low level (like Jack on the graph below) then it will take you a much higher level of achievement – if you ever reach it at all. If you begin assessment at a level like Jill's, however, you will be able to reach higher standards in a shorter space of time.

There are many ways for you to improve your point of entry. Ideally, you should be attempting to raise this point of entry to the highest possible level.

Here are some ideas for you to consider:

- Don't leave everything until the last minute! Plan your assessment time so that you know in advance when you will complete every stage of an assignment, or when you will study for a test. This will eliminate those all-night cramming sessions.

- Develop your skills. If you already know how to write an essay that will impress your teacher, completing excellent assignments will be so much easier. Make sure you know the correct structures of essays and assignments. Knowing such structures will also save you time in exams.

- Use the internet to develop editing checklists, learn problem-solving strategies and find great examples of what you are doing or harder problems to practise.

This graph shows the points of entry of two students: Jack and Jill. They are in the same English class and have been given an assignment to complete in the space of three weeks. Jack only goes to class and lets the teacher decide what he learns, whereas Jill takes the initiative and decides to find relevant reading material to assist her studies before the unit begins.

Who will achieve higher results in this time?

With this time constraint, Jill will always perform higher than Jack because she has started at a higher point of entry. Jack's assignment will be at a LA level, Jill will achieve a VHA mark. Also, because she started the assessment earlier, she will have more time for other study or for leisure.

**What is a point of entry?**

**How can I improve my point of entry?**

**SAMPLE**
PREPARING FOR SUCCESS

The pathway to success for senior students is study. Understanding the concepts covered in your courses is fundamental to your success.

No-one is born with the ability to study effectively. Studying efficiently and, as with any other skill, it can be improved through practice. Students who can improve their ability to study – it is not a gift given only to some.

If you master the skill of learning, and you are persistent in your schoolwork, you are well along the pathway to success.

Again, as with all skill development, you should aim to make studying part of your routine and, to do this, you need a plan. In the section, A Week in My Life, we discussed making a plan that allowed you to schedule all of the various facets of your life, control of your time and find a balance. In this section, we will concentrate on planning your study time.

BEING ORGANISED

One of the most basic steps to achieving success is being organised. Many people, however, find that becoming (and staying) organised is much easier said than done.

Have you ever made a timetable and found difficulty in sticking to it? You are not alone! Being organised is a talent that even the most intellectual and successful people have had to master. The benefit about creating a habit of organisation is that once you have started to work at it, eventually, it will come naturally.

If you are someone who needs help becoming organised, this chapter is especially important. By learning how to create an organisational strategy for yourself, you will not only save your own time, but day-to-day tasks will begin to become easier.

Organisation in learning is especially important. Without a clear, focused mind, it is almost impossible to have clear, focused thoughts. Think about it like this: imagine you are looking for your favourite T-shirt in your bedroom and your room is a mess (there are clothes, towels and books everywhere); chances are it will take you quite some time to find your T-shirt amongst this. Now, imagine your room is tidy; everything is put away in a place and is well organised. You will immediately know exactly where the T-shirt is. This is similar to what happens when you are learning. If your mind is full of different plans and distractions, the content is added to the mess and it is almost impossible to have clear, focused thoughts. However, if your life is organised, your mind is clear and focused.

Improving Your Study Skills

- Do not procrastinate – start now.
- Get organised – start with a plan that suits your circumstances (remembering that your study time has to fit in with all other facets of your life, as shown on the plan set out in the section, A Week in My Life). Wherever possible, stick to your plan.
- Avoid interruptions. You should have built into your overall plan time for relaxation, watching TV, and communicating with friends, so there should be no reason for you to stray from what you have planned for each study session.
- Do all that you can do to follow your plan as a matter of routine.
• **Reward yourself** when you have achieved your stated times or completed a set assignment.

• **Be flexible.** Unforeseen events occur; things take longer than you expect. Don’t be hard on yourself if this is normal. Make the necessary changes but try to return to your plan at the next convenient time.

Let us look more closely at how you can implement your plan.

### The Time and Location

- Set aside a regular time and use the same place to study.
- Make your study area free from distractions – stay away from your TV, computer, and mobile phone.
- Have good lighting and ventilation.
- Try to avoid studying in your bedroom as there are too many distractions – try the kitchen table or set up a table in the garage or in a spare room. If this is not possible, then most schools (or local libraries) have numerous spaces available to learn effectively – ask your principal, as he/she will be more than happy to help.

### The Approach

- Be personally prepared – have all the materials (calculator, texts, task sheets etc.) that you need for that session; and be ready yourself.
- Break your study periods into 30-minute segments. Study for 25 minutes and then have a five-minute break. During these five minutes, take a complete break from work – go for a short walk, have something to eat, but avoid watching TV or communicating with your friends as you might not return to your work if interrupted.
- For each session, follow a checklist that clearly shows, in order of priority, what you have to do or plan to achieve.
- On your checklist, suggest a time frame for each task but do not become too rigid or fixated on this allotted time, because tasks might take longer than anticipated.
- As successful athletes do, focus on your technique while being aware of the time allocated to each task.
- Cross off tasks as you finish them.
- If you can’t think of a way to start a task within five to ten minutes, seek help from your friends, parents, or teachers.
- Focus on one task at a time and, if possible, finish this before moving to the next task on the list. Remember, a task can be done over several sessions, so try to work your way through to another task.
- Vary the parts of your brain you are using by changing the tasks and/or subject matter.
- Keep the work from different subjects separate – perhaps in separate folders.

### For Written Exams

- Prior to the exam, get together with a group of your subject peers and discuss what you believe will be on the exam. Particularly focus on the more difficult sections and work to improve your ability and technique with this section of work. This will build your confidence immensely.
- Our rule of thumb is to spend one third of your study time on content, another third of your time on technique and skills and the other third of your time on higher order problem-solving.
- During perusal, scan the format of the paper (if possible, ask your teacher what the format will be before the exam – number of questions, time allocation etc.).
- Determine the order in which you plan to complete the paper.
- Focus on a question or section that you are confident you can handle but is not too easy – aim for the middle of the road.
• Then try to work on a more difficult section while you are at your most effective.
• Then build your confidence again by selecting another middle-of-the-road task before embarking once again on a more difficult task. This process can be utilised in tests so that you are leaving the easier tasks, rather than the more difficult ones, until the end of the examination.
• Be careful of time bomb questions, such as graphing, drawing etc. of information and take an enormous amount of time to read. Generally, we suggest leaving these time bomb questions to near the end of the exam.
• Always plan to leave the last five or ten minutes of the test paper to check your answers. Look for key words, evidence, impressive literacy skills, conclusion in your written responses.

For Assignments

• The day you receive the assignment should be the day you start the assignment. You must learn what you need to do. This will make the task clear for you and can plan exactly what you need and how best to do it. You learn from each other.
• Assessment that needs to be completed over a long period of time should be broken down into small sections to allow you to complete each section within a manageable timeframe.
• Aim to complete the assignment well before the due date as the unexpected always seems to occur. This will leave you plenty of time to revise your work if necessary.
• You should feel comfortable peer editing and learning from each other.

Remember: Exactly copying someone else’s idea is called plagiarism, but to obtain many ideas from lots of people is called effective learning.

For General Study

• Do not just concentrate on assignments and homework.
• In your plan, allocate time to revision of work done in class (for each subject).
• Set up a systematic note-taking style that identifies the topic being addressed, the division of terms, concepts, formulae, processes and skills needed as well as any questions/issue raised that need addressing.
• Regularly review your notes, adding and deleting where necessary.
• In all instances, have a clear understanding of what is required in each task.
• If questions arise, make a note of them and seek help as soon as possible.
• Focus on applying an efficient technique to any given task.
• Finally, focus on what it is you are going to achieve before you do it more often. This is why group work is ideal.

For Study Online

We have had success with students who have taken on the responsibility of creating online forums with a specific subject focus. Those invited to the group are expected to contribute appropriate material (i.e. questions, examples) and review each other’s techniques and procedures. Your teachers are not available 24/7, but your peers tend to be around during the night and the early hours of the morning, so we recommend using online forums and social media to communicate with your peers about the exams, assignments and other classwork.
EFFECTIVE LEARNING

Bill Gates (founder of Microsoft), when asked to give advice to students, simply said, “Learn how to learn.” We will spend a lifetime trying to improve our abilities; the journey will be easier if we consider the key features of effective learning.

Key Features of Effective Learning

• Have a reason/purpose for learning – such as:
  - creating greater employment opportunities;
  - providing enjoyment;
  - increasing the number of future pathways.

• Establish an environment where learning can occur:
  - avoid the distractions of your bedroom by setting up a study area in a spare bedroom, garage or lounge room;
  - if studying at home is difficult or you simply can't motivate yourself, consider your local library, a friend's place or somewhere at your school – you might need to organise this with your school administration.

• Don't procrastinate – start tasks as soon as possible:
  - set reasonable, achievable goals to get you started and build your confidence.

• Keep an open mind – successful people learn from others.

• Change from passive learning to active learning (for more details, see the following page).

• Know your strengths and weaknesses – aim to improve both.

• Try to avoid people who hinder your learning:
  - it is possible to have friends with whom you study and others with whom you don't.

• Realise that learning can be enjoyable and competitive:
  - try to study with your friends when you normally wouldn't study by yourself, e.g. Fridays, after school, or over the weekend;
  - generally speaking, we recommend one hour of effective learning per year level, per week. That is, if you are in Year 12, we recommend 12 hours of effective learning per week. Naturally this includes homework, reading, assignments and revision. Sadly, nearly 30% of senior students read for less than one hour a week;
  - most students mistakenly consider their classmates as the competition, when, in reality, they can be the source of the most positive learning;
  - when you help someone to learn, you help yourself even more. When you act as the teacher, you must revise and crystallise your thoughts before you commence assisting someone and, as such, you achieve incredible benefits.

• Realise your limitations.

• Conquer adversity:
  - everybody faces difficulties in life; it is how, as individuals, we deal with these challenges that demonstrates our determination.

• Learn how to learn.

• Give yourself viable alternatives. For example, you may be asked to go to the movies on a Tuesday night, so organise an online study group for the same time.

• When studying in a group always have a set of activities/tasks that your work on together to contribute to the group by developing challenging problems/tasks to share.
CHANGING FROM A PASSIVE LEARNER TO AN ACTIVE LEARNER

The most important aspect of learning is ensuring that your brain is active. Most people passively learn by copying notes or worked examples from the board and understand these notes later when they have time to revise them by themselves. This method is very inefficient, boring and difficult – it takes a lot more time to explain the material to yourself.

Most students read passively. That is, they skim over words they don’t understand and don’t effectively consider the structure of the sentences, word usage, and punctuation etc. It is important to realise that most textbooks and novels are written by people who are highly proficient in the written language. By using a dictionary (this requires that you have one with you when in class or when studying), considering the language devices used and the choice of words selected in each passage, you begin to adopt the skills required to achieve a similar level of proficiency.

When reading a question, it is essential that you actively write notes so that you “kick-start” your brain, thus making the task/s clearer.

If you are watching someone complete a problem, you should be asking yourself a number of questions to keep your brain active, thus reducing the need for teaching yourself later. You should ask yourself questions such as, “Do I understand the task?”, “Would I be solving the task this way?” and “What is the next step in completing the task?”. Finally, prepare yourself for the more challenging questions you could expect to see in examinations by asking yourself, “How could this task be made more complex?”

DISCOVER WHAT KIND OF LEARNER YOU ARE AT:
www.mightyminds.com.au/content/learning-style

DESIGNING A STUDY TIMETABLE

By making a study timetable (we suggest a weekly timetable) you will reap many benefits, including:

• Improving your work efficiency.
• Boosting your sense of achievement.
• Reducing your stress.
• Allowing you to think and plan ahead.
• Allowing you to build into your life the relaxation you need, without feeling guilty when you take time out for yourself.
• Making learning enjoyable.
STUDY TIMETABLE SUGGESTIONS

- Use a computer to create a spreadsheet so you can easily change your timetable.
- Block in essential activities. These are your “have to do” activities that can’t be avoided or changed. These might include school, training/music or drama practice, work shifts or any other commitments. Be realistic about work hours and sports practice, which should include travelling time to and from home, not just the time you are there.
- Now look at the blocks that remain available for the rest of your commitments and needs.
- Block in homework, study and revision time.
- Remember to be very clear about your goals for each study session.
- Block in time for assignments, essays etc. by spreading them over the time still available.
- Seek help from your friends – if you can’t understand a topic, don’t waste time. Organise a few study sessions, or go on to a subject-relevant online forum with your friends. When you mix studying with socialising you start to enjoy learning more.
- Remember, be an active reader – have a dictionary with you or look up words online and read for at least five hours per week. Active reading should be a critical part of your learning schedule.
- Tell everyone in your family about your decisions so that they will respect your need for space and quiet time.
- The big time-wasters for most people are TV, video games, the internet and mobile phones. Be selective about what TV programmes you watch and make sure they fit into your schedule; use gaming time and internet time (other than study or work-related usage) sparingly and as a reward for doing more important things. Also turn your phone to silent when studying.
- Avoid distractions. Work well away from interruptions such as TV and people who are not engaged in productive work.
- Do not over-commit. Be careful not to commit yourself to more activities than you can reasonably handle.
- Aim to complete approximately the equivalent number of effective learning hours per week as your year level: Year 11 = 11 hours of effective learning per week, Year 10 = 10 hours, Year 9 = 9 hours.
Activity 11

Use the suggestions provided to complete the following study timetable. Try following the timetable for a week, then reflect upon your achievements and reward yourself if you feel you deserve it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>MONDAY</th>
<th>TUESDAY</th>
<th>WEDNESDAY</th>
<th>THURSDAY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**MY STUDY TIMETABLE**

My study timetable:

- The number of hours of study I completed this week: [ ]
- My reward: [ ]

Follow me for some interesting facts about effective studying...

FUNDAMENTAL LEARNING — LITERACY

Senior students often overlook (or do not fully understand) some of the basic techniques that should be applied to every piece of writing they produce. The object of this section is to revisit some of the skills you should already have and use in order to ensure that you always produce your best work; work that is fluent, error-free and well-presented. By mastering the key points presented in the following sections, you can be assured that your work will be of much higher quality.

The following sections are designed to help you use basic punctuation, grammar and spelling conventions more effectively to improve your communication skills. As it is beyond the scope of this book to cover all of the conventions, we will focus on some that should be part of your everyday usage. Mastering these will go a long way towards more effectively communicating your meaning to others.

The most important requirement is that you always carefully proofread any work you produce, paying attention to grammar, spelling, punctuation and the appropriateness of the words you have chosen to use.

PROOFREADING

One of the most useful skills to master is that of effectively proofreading your work. We all make mistakes, particularly when we are writing quickly or under pressure. We must develop the habit of carefully checking for errors in any piece of work that we produce.

Producing your best work should not just be a matter of personal pride. If you write with clarity and precision, producing error-free work, you help the reader to understand what you are saying. It also pays your audience a compliment as you have gone to the trouble of producing a good product for their attention.

To give you some idea of how effective your proofreading skills are, read the following information and then complete the task on the following page.

PUNCTUATION

Capital Letters

- Indicate proper nouns – the names of specific people, places, times and brands; e.g. Paris is the capital of France.
- Begin every new sentence and paragraph.

Full Stops

- Indicate that a sentence is complete.
- Indicate that an abbreviation is being used; e.g. The patrol was led into battle by Lt.
Question Marks

Question marks are used at:

• The conclusion of a question in direct speech; e.g. “Where are you?”
• The end of rhetorical questions; e.g. Will we ever learn?

Exclamation Marks

Exclamation marks are used at the conclusion of a statement that requires emphasis. When using an exclamation mark, remember that it replaces the full stop normally found at the end of the sentence; e.g. Abigail cried, “Look at me! I’m flying!”

Commas

Commas are used to:

• Create brief pauses in sentences in order to make reading more cohesive.
• Separate two or more ideas in complex sentences; e.g. After I had waited for hours, my brother finally arrived.
• Separate the elements of a list or series; e.g. On the table were apples, oranges, pears, peaches and some grapes.
• Introduce a proper noun in a sentence; e.g. Over there is my best friend, Allan.
• Separate conjunctions such as however, therefore and finally when they interrupt a complete thought in the sentence; e.g. She was, however, entirely unaware of the situation.
• Indicate a parenthetical phrase containing information that is not necessary to the rest of the sentence; e.g. The woman, whose name I didn't know, started coming closer.

Task 1 (CCE: 9)

Now, punctuate the following:

Jake and I could no longer be friends the events of that cold January day could never be forgotten. How had this come about?

Finally I could no longer resolve this and began to pack to return to Victoria. Into my backpack I stuffed all the underwear, shorts, shirts and shoes that I owned. I looked at it. Was this all I owned?

As I crossed the street I nodded to Bill the bloke from the pizza shop. Standing next to him was his wife Margaret. When I passed Bill he obviously realised what was happening with Margaret, however it did not seem to register.

I had come to Sydney to make my fortune. What a joke. I had been too trusting and, therefore, it had to be my fault.

As I turned into Hornsby station I wondered what awaited me. "Where to miss?" asked the face behind the grille.
PUNCTUATION – LESS FREQUENTLY USED

Semi-Colons
Semi-colons are used to:
• Separate parts of a sentence where there is a more distinct break than represented by a comma; e.g. The boat sank quickly; all on board.
• Link two unrelated or contrasting statements; e.g. I want to tell him the truth; Mary does not.
• Separate a long list of elements.

Colons
Colons are used to:
• Introduce lists; e.g. Boys: pants, shirt and tie. Girls: skirt, blouse and ribbon.
• Show that the phrase preceding the colon is explained by the words after it; e.g. Soon we were all aware of the bad news: our plan had failed.

Parentheses
Parentheses (brackets) are used to provide extra information about the preceding statement or noun; e.g. Everyone (with the exception of Josephine) came to the party.

Hyphens and Dashes
Hyphens are used in between two words (without any spaces) to:
• Form compound words. This includes: compound numbers, e.g. twenty-six; compound nouns, e.g. father-in-law; compound modifiers, e.g. well-mannered; and certain prefixes and suffixes, e.g. mid-century.

Dashes are used in between parts of a sentence (with spaces on either side):
• In place of parentheses for more emphasis; e.g. My three children (Sydney, Louise and Sam) mean the world to me.
• To provide an explanation of the preceding statement; e.g. You can't open that door – it's locked.

Task 2 (CCE: 9)
Use colons, semi-colons, parentheses and hyphens to correctly punctuate the following:

We were having a fabulous day out. Darcy was in charge of the kids Fiona and I were enjoying a relaxing lunch Robert was keeping my parents company and Maria was walking the dogs.

Everyone with the exception of Peter seemed to be enjoying themselves. Peter Darcy's friend was quiet and distracted and sat there bear like with his back up against a tree.

If only we had known, we could have helped him for amongst us we had all kinds of things to ease his condition warm clothes, hot drinks, aspirin and even cough syrup.