



***Enhanced Learning
Educational Services***
“the study skills specialist”

USING CLASSTIME



To achieve your best academically you need to ensure you make the most of your classtime at school.

- You should read each point and **highlight the key phrases** in that point.
- Discuss with a friend or parent as you read through the handout.
- You may like to work through this over a number of sessions.



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Enhanced Learning Educational Services Profile

Our Organisation:

Enhanced Learning Educational Services (ELES) is the leading provider of study skills resources in Australia. Since 2001 over 500,000 students across Australia have benefited from our study skills worksheets and workbooks. An Australian business based in Sydney, our clients extend throughout Australia and to international schools overseas. We are committed to helping all students improve their ability to learn and study by providing study skills seminars and resources on the topics students need.

Our Mission:

To provide a worthwhile and effective service to teachers, students and parents, enhancing students' learning skills and abilities through dynamic programs, resources and strategies to unlock the power of the mind and enable greater success at school and in life.

Our Commitment:

As part of ELES' commitment to education, 5% of all gross income is donated to charities that help and assist children.

For further information about ELES or our products or contact details:

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1. STEPS TO MAKING THE MOST OF CLASSTIME

So what are the advantages of using classtime efficiently? Well, you will complete more work in class and have less to do at home, your teacher will be pleased with your application and so will your parents when they read your report, and of course, you will learn more!

And if you don't use classtime efficiently? Well you will have to do more work at home, you will find you don't always understand the work, your teachers will have to be continually disciplining you and you may even make it harder for other people in your class to learn.

So what does working effectively in class mean? It means you:

- **CHOOSE SEATS WISELY:** Sit next to someone who will help you stay on task.
- **ASK QUESTIONS:** Ask questions whenever you are unsure, unclear or do not understand something.
- **BE POLITE:** Be polite and respectful of your teacher and your classmates.
- **BE PREPARED:** Come to the lesson with all the books, technology and equipment you will need.
- **CONTRIBUTE:** Contribute your thoughts and ideas at the appropriate times.
- **ASK QUESTIONS:** Ask yourself questions about what is going on if you find yourself day-dreaming.
- **STAY ON TASK:** Try at all times to stay on task and be focused on the work you are doing.



a. Which of the points above do you already do? Which ones do you need to work on improving?

2. LISTENING SKILLS

What do we know about listening?

We tend to listen in spurts (ie. around 30 seconds, then our attention wanders for a few seconds and then returns).

We think much faster than people can talk which means we have spare processing power where we can get distracted.

We listen better when we are actively involved, taking notes and focused on one task.



To improve your listening skills:

- Sit up straight and look at the person speaking.
- Avoid distractions. Are there certain people it is better not to sit with?
- Try and guess or think about what the person speaking will say next.
- Think about the main points that are being made.

- Take notes, jot down the main things you want to remember.
- Concentrate on the discussion and think of what questions you could ask.
- Look for links or connections to earlier work.
- Ask yourself questions about what is being said.
- Tune in to what is being said, make a decision to think about it, not daydream.

When listening to other students in class:

- Do not be judgmental.
- Don't make them feel silly or stupid.
- Don't laugh at them, tease them.
- Don't talk while they are talking or be impolite.
- Don't be selfish! Even if you don't want to listen, there are probably other people in the class who do.
- Talking and disturbing the lesson is one of THE MOST SELFISH acts you can commit.
- Even if you don't agree, remember everyone is entitled to their view, we are all different and we all have different insights. You can actually learn quite a lot by listening to your peers in class.
- Don't react emotionally or let your value judgments or beliefs draw you into an argumentative approach.
- Respect others' opinions.




When listening to teachers in class:

The issue is that you may not like the voices (rhythm, pitch, tone) of some teachers. You may not be as interested in one subject or topic as you are in others. You may be bored at times or not in the mood to listen.

But you do need to find ways to get yourself engaged in every lesson in order to give yourself the best chance of academic success.

- To do this: ask yourself questions about what is going on: what is this related to, what will come next, do I need to ask any questions.
- Take notes. By writing things down it forces you to concentrate.
- Try and predict what will come next.
- Periodically summarise what the teacher is saying to yourself.

	<p><i>b. What are your listening skills like? What could you do to improve them?</i></p>
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3. PARTICIPATION SKILLS

A number of factors can influence your participation, or lack thereof, in the classroom. The following is a short guide that may assist you to improve your marks by improving your classroom participation.

PREPARATION

- Ensure all homework has been completed the night before.
- Always be on time for class.
- Sit where you can hear the teacher clearly and see the board clearly.
- Be ready to commence work as soon as you are seated, eg have textbook open, pens and pads ready to begin writing.
- Wear the appropriate uniform for what you are meant to be doing and have all the equipment you need eg. sporting equipment, designs for making things, kitchen equipment.

AWARENESS

- Be aware of what the lesson is going to cover. Maybe read a little about the section of work the night before so you have an understanding of what is to be taught.
- Listen carefully to what the teacher is saying.
- Good note taking during class is an efficient method of saving you time later on. Develop an effective system of note taking you are comfortable with. Listen long enough to the teacher to be sure you understand what has been said before writing notes.

INTERACTION/ACTIVE PARTICIPATION

- Be actively engaged during class. Ask questions when appropriate and really listen to answers given.
- Listen when other students are talking and think about how you would answer their questions to the teacher.
- During group work listen while other students speak, be supportive of their comments and do not interrupt when others are speaking.
- Avoid rude behaviour towards other students that may discourage them from contributing in class, eg acting bored or impatient when others are speaking.
- Remember that learning is an active process and students learn best when they actively engage in the learning process. Active classroom involvement also helps retention of work learnt.
- If you are unable to participate in a particular activity e.g. a PE lesson, quietly inform the teacher and ask them to let you know what you should do during the lesson time. You may be able to participate in other ways like score keeping or timing.



CONTRIBUTION

- During discussion periods ensure you contribute to the class by offering ideas and asking questions.
- Ensure you behave in class – disruptive behaviour means the whole class suffers because of your actions.
- When contributing in class try to keep your questions or comments concise, relevant, to the point, and don't digress from the subject.
- Avoid repetition when involved in classroom discussion. Try not to go over ground that has already been covered.
- Accept that during class discussion you may not always agree with others' opinions (and they may not always agree with yours!). First listen and try to understand others' opinions and always respect what others have to say even if you disagree with them.
- Do not monopolise discussions in class – remember that other students have opinions and comments to offer.
- Remember that equipment and resources are often to be shared by every student in the school. Be respectful of things loaned to you like sporting or musical equipment. Participate in the setting up and packing away process to show you are a part of the "team".

CONCENTRATION

- THINK about what the teacher is saying during class.
- Try to avoid distractions eg daydreaming in class, talking to the person sitting next to you, playing with pens and rulers.



c. What are your participation skills like? What could you do to improve them?

4. CONCENTRATION SKILLS

Unfortunately we don't always find every subject we do at high school interesting.

But that's life!

However, if a subject is compulsory or you cannot drop/change a subject for any particular reason, there are some strategies you can use to try to improve your concentration in the classroom.

Not every strategy will work for every person but you need to give them a go.

