



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

MASTERING MIDDLE SCHOOL



The middle years of school are when you focus on honing the skills you have developed so far in order to ensure you achieve your personal academic best and to ensure you are prepared for the rigour of senior studies.

- 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. IT'S ALL ABOUT ATTITUDE

For many students a change occurs in middle school that can impact dramatically on their future. When students start secondary school, they are usually very positive and optimistic about school. Then things can start to get harder, a bit more challenging, maybe they get a bad mark and become discouraged, or maybe their friends start to influence their attitude. Some middle school students are able to overcome these challenges, while others let it affect their attitude and application to school.

Take the time to determine reasons to put in effort into your schoolwork.

Tick which of the following reasons might be motivating for you:

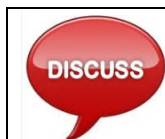
- To achieve the best mark you are capable of at school.
- To give you lots of options for what subjects you can choose in the senior years.
- To give you lots of options of what you can choose to do when you leave school.
- To have a personal sense of satisfaction about doing your best.
- To show your gratitude to your parents for giving you an education.
- To avoid getting in trouble from your teachers.
- To avoid getting in trouble from your parents.
- To avoid getting a detention or other negative consequences from not working.
- To avoid disappointing your parents.
- So you don't feel bad about wasting your parent's time and money giving you an education.



We often talk about 'carrot' and 'stick' people. If you want a donkey to move forward, you can either lead it forward with a carrot (a reward) or whack it with a stick (punishment).

Some students are motivated by working towards rewards, positive consequences of doing the right thing, while others are motivated to avoid negative consequences. Which do you think you are?

Understanding what motivates you and what affects your attitude can make it easier for you to make positive changes.



a. What things could you do or try to cultivate a more positive attitude towards school and your schoolwork?

2. CREATE POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

The relationships you have with the people in your life can have a big impact on how successful you are at school and how well you cope with the stress and pressures of school. There are things you can do to foster more positive relationships with the adults around you. You may like to tick which of the following you already do.

TEACHERS:

Techniques to foster positive relationships with teachers include:

- Keeping your tone and language respectful at all times.
- Not raising your voice in anger.
- If you have a problem with a teacher, raising it with them before or after class instead of in front of all of your classmates.
- Trying your best and showing you are prepared to have a go in their subject.
- Asking questions (it shows your teacher you are interested).
- Behaving appropriately during lessons and following instructions.

You may not like every teacher or every subject. You may find some teachers harder to work with than others. But one of the life skills you want to work on developing is learning how to look past personal differences or personal preferences and say 'I have to work with this person, so what is the best way I can do this so I get positive outcomes' – and the more you do it the better you will get at it!



PARENTS:

Techniques to foster positive relationships with parents include:

- Communicating regularly with your parents about all aspects of school life.
- Tell your parents when you are feeling stressed or anxious about school.
- Let your parents know what you would like them to do (or not do) to help you cope better with school. Maybe write it down if you feel that is a clearer way to explain your thinking.
- Understand and accept that your parents want what is best for you, and that you doing well at school is important to them. It is their job to encourage, support and motivate you to put your best efforts into your schoolwork so you have options in life when you finish school.

DISCUSS

b. What could you do to improve your relationships with your teachers? Are there any teachers in particular? What about your relationship with your parents?

3. DEVELOP THE HABITS OF AN EFFECTIVE LEARNER AT SCHOOL

Have you ever tried to break a bad habit? It can be really hard to do and take a long time. Middle school is a good time to focus on creating habits that help you to be successful at school and become a life-long learner.

Consider which of the following habits you have under control and which you need to work on:

AT SCHOOL:

- | | |
|---|---------------------|
| You arrive on time for classes. | Yes /Sometimes /No |
| You come to school with the correct equipment and materials. | Yes /Sometimes /No |
| You ask questions in class if you don't understand something. | Yes /Sometimes / No |
| You sit next to people that you work well with. | Yes /Sometimes /No |
| You do your best to stay on task during lessons. | Yes /Sometimes /No |
| You participate in your lessons. | Yes /Sometimes /No |
| You keep quiet and listen when the teacher is talking. | Yes /Sometimes /No |
| You show respect to the other people in your class. | Yes /Sometimes /No |
| You help others in your class who need help. | Yes /Sometimes /No |
| You contribute your thoughts and ideas to the lesson. | Yes /Sometimes /No |
| You are polite at all times when dealing with teachers. | Yes /Sometimes /No |
| You arrange to see your teacher if you are struggling with the subject. | Yes /Sometimes /No |
| You make the effort to get on with all of your teachers. | Yes /Sometimes /No |
| You try and get as much work done in your lessons as you can. | Yes /Sometimes /No |
| You involve yourself where you can in the life of your school. | Yes /Sometimes /No |
| You have a sense of pride about your school and what it does for you. | Yes /Sometimes /No |
| You are grateful for the opportunity you have to get an education. | Yes /Sometimes /No |
| You record your homework from the lesson into a diary/online planner. | Yes /Sometimes /No |
| You keep your locker clean and tidy (if you have one). | Yes /Sometimes /No |
| If you are absent you find out what you have missed in a lesson. | Yes /Sometimes /No |



c. What are the main changes you need to make to be a more effective learner at school?



4. DEVELOP THE HABITS OF AN EFFECTIVE LEARNER AT HOME

Consider which of the following habits you have under control and which you need to work on:

AT HOME:

- | | |
|---|---------------------------|
| You do a plan each afternoon of the work you want to get done that night. | <i>Yes /Sometimes /No</i> |
| You work in a space where you minimise the distractions. | <i>Yes /Sometimes /No</i> |
| You keep your schoolwork and personal life separate. | <i>Yes /Sometimes /No</i> |
| You turn off your phone or put it out of sight when doing schoolwork. | <i>Yes /Sometimes /No</i> |
| You focus on getting your homework done as first priority. | <i>Yes /Sometimes /No</i> |
| You also briefly review the work you did at school that day. | <i>Yes /Sometimes /No</i> |
| You then work on any assignments or tests that are coming up. | <i>Yes /Sometimes /No</i> |
| You do things like go over difficult work if you have no homework. | <i>Yes /Sometimes /No</i> |
| You put a decent amount of effort into completing your schoolwork. | <i>Yes /Sometimes /No</i> |
| You try to spend around an hour per day on doing work for school at home. | <i>Yes /Sometimes /No</i> |
| You have tried having a study timetable to see if it works for you. | <i>Yes /Sometimes /No</i> |
| You have a good balance between your schoolwork and personal life. | <i>Yes /Sometimes /No</i> |
| You have an organised space at home to do your schoolwork. | <i>Yes /Sometimes /No</i> |
| You have a good system for managing all of the paper for school. | <i>Yes /Sometimes /No</i> |
| You file away any work for school that you have finished with. | <i>Yes /Sometimes /No</i> |
| You organise all the files and folders on your computer. | <i>Yes /Sometimes /No</i> |
| You back-up (take a copy) of your computer files regularly. | <i>Yes /Sometimes /No</i> |