

'Clever Diary Use'

Name:

Aim:

To improve the way the school diary is used so that it becomes a tool for time management.

QUICK THOUGHTS

"Time is just waiting for you to decide to use it properly."

1. If your parents or a teacher picked up your school diary, what would they think of it?
2. Who sang the song 'This Time'?

WHEN??

Use this technique all the time! Learning to use your diary efficiently is essential for managing your time in high school.

The Issue:

John was sitting in class when his teacher walked past and accidentally knocked his diary onto the ground. Photos spilled out as well as worksheets and past tests that he had just shoved in there. There was graffiti over all the pages and if there was homework written on any of the pages it was hard to see. Unfortunately John's school had a rule about not defacing the school diary so it was confiscated and he had to buy a new one. The problem now was, John wasn't really sure exactly what the best way was to use

his diary. He knew he should be writing in his homework but that was about it. He wasn't really sure what else he could do...



For You To Do:

Write down 2 suggestions about how to use a school diary well. (You might like to have a look at the front of your school diary. Sometimes information about your school is included as well as information about good use of your diary.)

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The 'Clever Diary Use' Technique:

- ➡ In your diary keep personal and school things separate (and maybe split the space for the day in half so you can write in friends' birthdays, sports commitments, outings with friends in a different section from where you write your homework).
- ➡ When you have completed the piece of work – HIGHLIGHT it. This way you can clearly see what is left to do.
- ➡ If there is work you did not complete that day, cross it out by drawing a neat line through it. Then write it in the next day (or whenever you are going to be able to complete it).



For You To Do:

Open your school diary and on a scale of 1 to 10 (1 being a little and 10 being a lot) rank your diary on the following:

NEATNESS _____

GRAFFITI _____

USEFULNESS _____

AMOUNT OF HOMEWORK WRITTEN IN _____

Why this technique works:

- By separating all your personal and school commitments, it is much easier to clearly see your homework.
- By highlighting the work that is completed, you feel satisfaction at what you have done and can see what you need to do.
- Moving work not completed to another day is a good idea as you don't have to keep looking back in your diary and you are less likely to forget about it.

If you had:

→ SCORES FROM 1-4

You haven't really yet taken a 'high school' approach to the use of your diary. It will make life at school much easier if you learn to use your diary for schoolwork as well as to scribble in.

→ SCORES FROM 5-6

Your diary is at least being used to some extent for schoolwork! You would benefit from improving the way you record your homework to make it as clear as possible.

→ SCORES FROM 7-10

Well done! You probably already have your own system for using your diary as a tool and it if works, stick with it! Maybe try the technique described here and adapt it to work for you.

TOP TIP:

Ask your friends if you can have a look at their diaries to see what sort of a recording system and style they use.



Pitfalls to avoid:

PITFALL # 1

Not even having a diary for school! It is impossible to remember everything. A diary is a way for you to record and organise all the information.

PITFALL # 2

Having a diary but not writing your homework into it! Again, you are relying on your memory which is not always perfect. Get into the habit of recording your homework as you are given it.

PITFALL # 3

Making your diary difficult to read and follow. Not being systematic about the way you record your homework so it is difficult to even see what you need to do.



For You To Do:

- Look at next week in your diary. For each day rule it so you split the day in two. You can split it either horizontally or vertically. The sections don't have to be equal in size.
- In one section, write in anything you are doing that week like sports training, meeting friends, family commitments.
- As you get homework, write it clearly into the other section.
- During this week, try this system out each day:
 - HIGHLIGHT the work you complete
 - at the end of the day, CROSS OUT (with a neat line) the work you did not complete and WRITE IT onto another day.

Monday 3 rd July	
Do French exercises	HOCKEY TRAINING
Finish exercise 2.3 in Maths	Susie's Birthday today!!!
Start work on Geography Assignment	Bring CD tomorrow
Start solar model for Science	

Answer from Page 1: Bryan Adams

'Handling Deadlines'

Name: _____

Aim:

To improve the way deadlines or work-related pressures are dealt with.

QUICK THOUGHTS

"A deadline is a target you either hit or miss."

1. Do you find deadlines have a positive or negative effect on you?
2. Who sang the song 'Time'?

WHEN??

Use this technique when you are facing a deadline.

The Issue:

The way Keith handled deadlines was by just not thinking about them. At times he would think to himself that he should get started and in a burst of enthusiasm he'd pull out his assignment topic, maybe even start doing a bit of it, but then the enthusiasm would die as there was just so much left to do and he'd end up not really doing any more work on it until the deadline was much closer. He knew it wasn't the best way to work as when the deadline approached often other homework had arisen that needed to be done and suddenly it seemed he had run totally out of time to meet the

deadline. He ended up continually asking for extensions, getting in trouble and feeling stressed...



For You To Do:

Draw a picture of how you usually are feeling the night before most deadlines. Calm? Relaxed? Stressed?

The 'Handling Deadlines' Technique:

- Make the decision to aim for completion a few days before the deadline so you will have some spare time up your sleeve.
- Work backwards from the due date. First think of everything you need to do to meet the deadline and how long you think each task will take. Write this down.
- Now decide what you need to get done a few days before your new deadline. What about a few days before that? The week before that? Schedule out what you will need to do in the time available to you to meet the deadline.
- Be flexible and prepared to adjust either your schedule or what you plan to do in order to meet the deadline. Sometimes you may have to make the sacrifice of an early morning or extra work at night in order to stay as close as possible to your plan.



For You To Do:

Quick Quiz (circle your answer)

How well do you handle deadline pressure?

- a) I get motivated and get the work done.
- b) I feel stressed but I still complete the work.
- c) I fall apart and get really snappy with my family and am so stressed about it all I get little done.

Why this technique works:

- *Moving the deadline forward a few days takes the pressure off as you know if all goes to plan you'll definitely complete it in time and if it doesn't you'll have some spare time available.*
- *By working backwards you are making use of all the time available. You are also breaking the task into specific steps to be done.*

If you answered:

- A) Well done! You are using the adrenaline that comes from this situation to your advantage.
- B) Although you are suffering from some symptoms of stress, you are still managing to complete the work which is the most important thing. Manage your stress by taking regular breaks, eating well, drinking lots of water and stretching regularly.
- C) Of course the best way to avoid this sort of thing happening is to use the Handling Deadlines technique to ensure that you finish up well before the deadline! Sometimes things do not work out this way and despite good intentions you get close to the deadline and can't see how you can possibly complete it in time. When this happens it is a good idea to take 5-10 minutes and sit down with your parents or a teacher to plan what would be the best use of your remaining time. This is when you have to make hard decisions and decide what could be cut out, reduced, or what the main sections are that you are going to spend the most time on.

TOP TIP: Always do your plan in pencil - it is guaranteed to need changes as you are really just guessing how long each task will take.



Pitfalls to avoid:

PITFALL # 1

Not thinking of all the steps that need to be done. A good idea is to discuss with a fellow student how they view the piece of work. What steps do they think will need to be taken to complete the work?

PITFALL # 2

Underestimating how much of the task you will be able to complete in a given time. This is a commonly made mistake. When you are planning your time out, try and err on the side of having spare time rather than being rushed for time. Double the time you think it will take!



For You To Do:

Try this technique now.

- a. Choose a piece of work that has a specific deadline.
- b. Write down all the tasks that would be necessary to complete this piece of work and meet the deadline.
- c. Next to each piece of work, estimate how long it will take to complete these tasks.
- d. In your diary, work backwards from the due date and in pencil write in when you will finish each task. Remember to leave a few days at the end just in case.

Answer from Page 1: Dulaa