



Enhanced Learning
Educational Services
"the study skills specialist"

Time Management Techniques

Level 2

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Enhanced Learning Educational Services

“the study skills specialist”

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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.

Our Staff:

The majority of our resources are created by Prue Salter (B.A., B.Math., Dip.Ed., M.Acc., M.Ed.), founder and director of ELES. Prue has over 20 years' experience in the Education Industry in Australia. With a strong background in teaching and pastoral care, Prue was frustrated by the absence of high quality resources available to help students develop and maintain effective study skills. A committed scholar, passionate about learning, Prue combined her natural organisational and time management abilities with her research in how students learn to develop a series of resource kits designed to address the gaps and to present them in a format that is entertaining, as well as simple and effective.

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

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*"Until we can
manage time,
we can manage
nothing else."*

Peter F. Drucker

SAMPLE

Introduction to Time Management

Let's consider what 'time management' actually means.

How can we really 'manage' time? Many people would argue that time manages us. Some periods of time do seem out of our control. For example:

Realistically, you have to:

Time taken is at least:

SLEEP	7 hours
EAT	1.5 hours
SHOWER	0.5 hours
BE AT SCHOOL	6.5 hours
TRAVEL TO SCHOOL	0.5 hours
	<i>16 hours</i>

But there are still another 8 hours left every day (not to mention all the hours on the weekend) that you still have the possibility of managing. There is no mystery about managing your time. Everyone gets the same 24 hours each day, 168 hours each week or 8760 hours each year. We just all make different choices and different decisions about what to do with this time.

So what actually is time management? It is simply improving your ability to recognise and solve the problems you face in managing your time. To do this, you need to learn time management skills and techniques. The great thing is that all time management skills are learnable. It takes some time to break poor habits and develop new ones but everyone has the potential to improve the use they make of their time.

In the space below, see if you can match up some of the elements of time management with their definitions. Draw a line from each word to what you think is the meaning of the word.

Time Management Skills

Definitions

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| • goal setting | - putting things in order of importance |
| • planning | - giving jobs to other people to do |
| • prioritising | - setting a target of what you want to achieve |
| • decision-making | - working out when to do things |
| • delegating | - thinking about things to be done |
| • scheduling | - making a decision about what to do |

Can you think of any other time management skills that could be useful?

Before you start your analysis of yourself, you might like to take a short break and read through the following.

THINKING ABOUT TIME

What were the earliest clocks like?

Way, way, back in time, people didn't really care much about what time of the day it was. Eventually a need was felt for knowing the time of the day. The best guess is that about 5000 years ago people in the Middle East and North Africa began to construct clocks. As their religions, social lives and societies developed, they found it important to organise their time more efficiently.

Some of the first types of clocks were SUN CLOCKS. The Egyptians built Obelisks, long, slender, tapering four sided monuments where the moving shadows from the sun formed a kind of a sundial. The merkhet, the oldest known astronomical tool, was an Egyptian development of around 600 BC. A pair of merkhets was used to establish a north-south line (or meridian) by aligning them with the Pole Star. They could then be used to mark off nighttime hours by determining when certain other stars crossed the meridian.



The quest for accuracy became more and more important and sundials started appearing in many different forms. Vertical, horizontal, and even hemispherical.

Water clocks were also popular with the Egyptians and later the Greeks. These were stone vessels with sloping sides that allowed water to drip out at a nearly constant rate from a small hole near the bottom. Others were cylindrical or bowl shaped where water dripped in at a constant rate. Markings were made on the inside and were used to mark off passages of time. Another more unusual water clock that was still being used in North Africa in the 20th Century was where a hole was pierced in a metal bowl. The bowl was placed in a container of water and the time it would take to sink would be marked out as a unit of time. Imagine you and your brother both had something you wanted to take turns with but no way to keep track of how much time had passed. This method would be something you could use!

Mechanised water clocks were the next development by the Greeks and Romans. They aimed to use mechanical means to ensure that there was a perfectly constant flow of water and to make the announcement of the passage of time more interesting. Some clocks rang bells or tolled or gonged loudly, others opened doors or windows like a cuckoo clock or had figures of people dancing around. But it was hard to get an exact pressure water flow. The search for a more accurate timepiece went on.

Ok, enough procrastinating! Let's now look at how you use time.

Time Self-Analysis

Where does your time go?

Let's have a look at how you currently distribute your time. In the table below, you can see a sample of how one student spends their time in a normal weekday. They get about eight and a half hours sleep (which is pretty good!) and spend 7 hours at school. Think about what a normal weekday is like for you. If some days are really different (ie you have lots of sport on one day but not on others), divide the total amount of time you spend on sport from Monday to Friday by 5, and write that number down. There are a few extra lines for you to add in anything else that you would normally spend time on during a weekday.

SAMPLE STUDENT			YOU!	
Hours	Minutes	<i>In a normal weekday, how much time do you spend:</i>	Hours	Minutes
8	30	Sleeping		
	45	Breakfast & getting ready for school		
	45	Travelling to school		
7		At school		
1	30	Sport or activities after school		
3		Watching TV / computer games		
	30	Talking on the phone		
		Other activities		
	30	Eating dinner		
	30	Showering		
23 hours		<i>Total Time Spent</i>		

Did it add up to 24 hours? Do you have any spare time? Do you spend more time than you have?

What about the weekends? In the space below, fill in what you might do on a typical Saturday and Sunday. Depending on how good your memory is, you might need to wait for the next weekend and fill it as you go. Of course every weekend will be different, so try and choose the most 'typical' weekend you can.

<i>SATURDAY</i>	<i>Time Spent</i>
Eg. Activity	3.5 h (example only)
Sleeping	
Breakfast	
Lunch	
Dinner	
Showering	
Sport / Activities	
Talking on the phone	
Watching TV / computer games	
Spending time with friends	
Spending time with families	
<i>TOTAL TIME:</i>	

<i>SUNDAY</i>	<i>Time Spent</i>
Eg. Activity	2 h (example only)
Sleeping	
Breakfast	
Lunch	
Dinner	
Showering	
Sport / Activities	
Talking on the phone	
Watching TV / computer games	
Spending time with friends	
Spending time with families	
<i>TOTAL TIME:</i>	

Now using the tables above, answer the following questions about how you spend your time:

1. Do you spend enough time with your family and friends? This is one of the most valuable uses of your time. Don't let unimportant things get in the way of what is really important.

.....

.....

2. Although it is recommended that students have somewhere between 8 and 10 hours sleep a night, everyone has different needs. The test is how you feel the next day. You should feel fresh and mentally alert. Do you think you get enough sleep? If not, why not?

.....

.....

Time Management Outcome Checklist

What areas do you need to work on?

Although ELES produces 'Time Management Techniques' for each year group, the checklist below is included in every Time Management resource regardless of the year level. It is a fact that students across all levels share common problems in managing their time but that these problems may change from year to year. Indeed, you could ask your parents to fill this checklist out with respect to work instead of school and you would find that they too are often facing similar challenges. In completing the list, don't feel discouraged if you are ticking lots of 'NONE's. Instead, pat yourself on the back for the things you are doing well. Everyone will have areas they can improve on, and that is what working through these worksheets is all about.

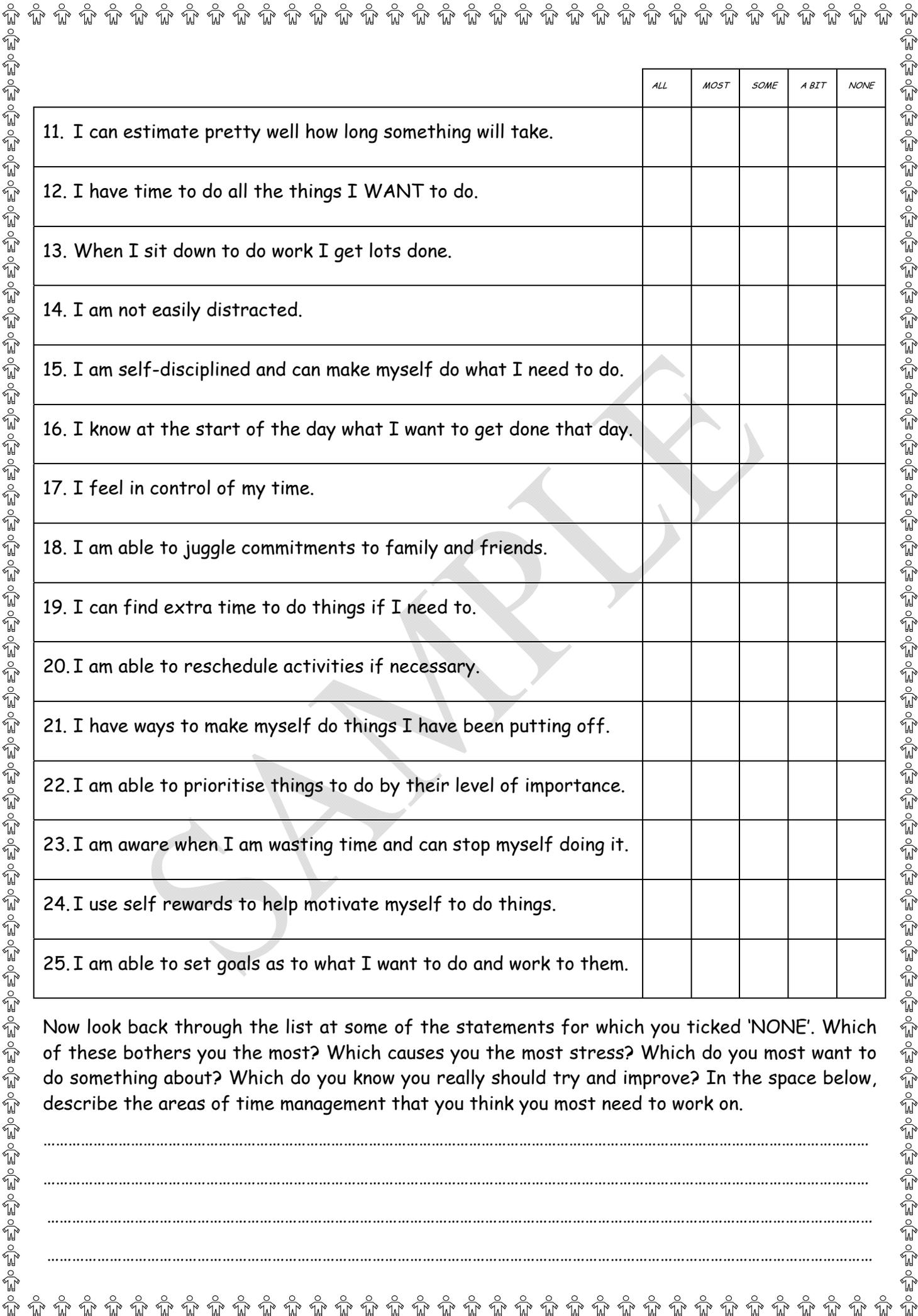
For each of the following statements tick either:

ALL of the time, MOST of the time, SOME of the time, A BIT of the time or NONE of the time.



For You To Do:

	ALL	MOST	SOME	A BIT	NONE
1. I keep up-to-date with my schoolwork without many problems.					
2. I start working on assignments well before they are due.					
3. I don't end up leaving work till the last minute.					
4. I finish assignments on time.					
5. I hand in all schoolwork on time.					
6. I don't ask for extensions.					
7. I don't feel stressed about the work I need to do for school.					
8. I plan when I am going to do work.					
9. I use my time in the classroom efficiently.					
10. I use my time at home efficiently.					



	<i>ALL</i>	<i>MOST</i>	<i>SOME</i>	<i>A BIT</i>	<i>NONE</i>
11. I can estimate pretty well how long something will take.					
12. I have time to do all the things I WANT to do.					
13. When I sit down to do work I get lots done.					
14. I am not easily distracted.					
15. I am self-disciplined and can make myself do what I need to do.					
16. I know at the start of the day what I want to get done that day.					
17. I feel in control of my time.					
18. I am able to juggle commitments to family and friends.					
19. I can find extra time to do things if I need to.					
20. I am able to reschedule activities if necessary.					
21. I have ways to make myself do things I have been putting off.					
22. I am able to prioritise things to do by their level of importance.					
23. I am aware when I am wasting time and can stop myself doing it.					
24. I use self rewards to help motivate myself to do things.					
25. I am able to set goals as to what I want to do and work to them.					

Now look back through the list at some of the statements for which you ticked 'NONE'. Which of these bothers you the most? Which causes you the most stress? Which do you most want to do something about? Which do you know you really should try and improve? In the space below, describe the areas of time management that you think you most need to work on.

.....

.....

.....

.....

Core Time Management Skills

Let's examine the essential time management techniques.

There are some fundamental or core techniques for effective time management. Even if you have worked through the next four pages in a previous year, it is worthwhile reviewing them again before progressing to the section on new techniques in order to ensure you are still on track. If this is the first time you have used one of the ELES Time Management Techniques resources, you need to be comfortable with these techniques before progressing to the next section.

The true secret to Time Management is:

**YOU CAN'T ACTUALLY MANAGE TIME.
YOU MUST MANAGE YOURSELF.**

To improve the way you manage yourself, the following first 3 steps are essential:



For You To Do:

	STEP	Often	Sometimes	Rarely
How often do you currently do these steps? Put a tick in one of the boxes for each of the steps.	1	Set your goals.		
	2	Prioritise.		
	3	Schedule your time.		

STEP 1: SET YOUR GOALS

Why set goals? Unless you know what you are aiming for you can't hit it! Imagine a boat without any particular destination in mind. It would float aimlessly among the seas and if it made it to land it would be due to luck rather than any other factor. By creating a goal, you have created something you can work towards. Goal setting helps increase your efforts and motivate you by giving you a direction towards which you can work.

Many students are put off by the words 'goal setting'. They have read information before detailing setting long-term, medium-term and short-term goals and have found the whole process overwhelming and unworkable.

**"A GOAL IS JUST A LIST OF THINGS YOU
EITHER HAVE TO DO OR WANT TO DO."**

If you think of goals in this way, you'll find them much less daunting and more workable.

The most effective goals are WRITTEN DOWN and are 'SMART':

<i>Specific</i>	Make sure your goals explain exactly what you want to achieve.
<i>Measurable</i>	Make sure you are able to easily see when you have achieved your goals.
<i>Action oriented</i>	Put specific action steps into your goals rather than just 'airy-fairy' ideas. If you want to improve in a subject, decide on some specific steps you can do.
<i>Realistic</i>	Don't make unrealistic goals like 'I will read 28 chapters of my History textbook tonight'. All this will do is discourage you so make goals achievable.
<i>Timebound</i>	Put a timeframe on your goals - when do you want to achieve them by?

<i>Examples of Effective Goals</i>	<i>Examples of Less Effective Goals</i>
I will finish my History Assignment tonight.	I will keep up with my work.
I will do 15 minutes each day on French vocab.	I will improve in French.
I will beat my last exam result in Maths.	I will get better in Maths.

 **For You To Do:** A good way to start your goal setting is to take a piece of paper and think of absolutely EVERYTHING you need to do. Make it a complete and total list of everything to be done and everything you'd like to do. It can seem daunting, but once you have listed everything in black and white then you can start to deal with it. Try this now.

STEP 2: PRIORITISE

It is a fact of life that everything always takes longer than you think it will. And it is often an impossible task to achieve absolutely everything you want to achieve in the time available. Ideally you'd like to get everything done, but if you can't, look objectively at the things to do from your goal list and prioritise everything into the three categories below.

 **For You To Do:** On a piece of paper, draw up and fill in the table below for your current workload using your list of work from Step 1.

<i>Things I need to do urgently:</i>	<i>Other things to be done:</i>	<i>Things that can be postponed:</i>
Include here everything that is overdue, or very important or that will have serious consequences if you don't complete it urgently.	Include here other work that is currently due, due soon or should at least be started soon.	This would be work that you really should do but that you won't get in trouble or affect your marks if you leave it till later - like the next holidays.

You may not be able to get everything done but you can focus on what is really important. Many students prioritise in a way that is simply not efficient. Instead of doing the most important things first and the least important things next, they do the things they LIKE first - regardless of whether there are things that are more important that they should be doing. Remember:

MOST IMPORTANT tasks FIRST (not the things you like most first)
LEAST IMPORTANT tasks LAST (not things you like least last)

STEP 3: SCHEDULE YOUR TIME

"Timetables? They don't work for me. I can't make a study timetable, I just don't stick to it."

Sound familiar? So many students just switch off when they see the words STUDY TIME-TABLE. Some of the reasons why timetables may not have worked for you in the past:

- You made an unrealistic and unachievable timetable, so became discouraged when you couldn't achieve it.
- You tried to schedule too far ahead and so when you had to readjust things it was too big a task to adjust the whole timetable.
- You made a timetable of what you thought you SHOULD get done (even if you knew there was no way it would happen), not what you knew you could do.
- You didn't play to your strengths, you didn't think about when you work best, how long you can work for and what was the best way for you to work.
- You were not prepared to be flexible or experiment to find out what works best for you. For example, maybe you work best working on one thing solidly for a time, or maybe you work better if you break it up by working on a variety of things for shorter periods of time.
- You were too rigid with your timetable and expected to be able to stick to it exactly and gave up when you couldn't.



For You To Do: Put a tick next to any of the above reasons that have applied to you in the past.

So what can you do?

1. Look first at the big picture. What do you want to achieve over the next month?
2. Plan out the next week by first putting in all of your commitments and seeing how much time is available, then taking the things you want to get done that week and slotting them into the available time.

RULES FOR DOING THIS:

- Don't make it so tight there is no spare time at all - you will need extra time for rescheduling.
 - Be realistic about how long things will take. You'll get better at this with practice.
 - Ensure you schedule in the higher priorities first.
3. Once you have a plan for the week, take each day 'day-by-day' and really focus on what you need to do that day.
 4. If you don't get everything done, and you probably won't, then don't stress or give up or see it as failure. Instead, reschedule it to another time in the week and when you get to that day, deal with it then.

EXAMPLE: *Let's take an example. You wrote your list of things you wanted to get done, then put it into the priority table. This is something you could do every Friday night to look in general at the weeks ahead and to help you plan specifically for the coming week and what you need to do that weekend. It would only take a few minutes and would mean you have taken your first big step towards managing time by managing yourself. Try it!*

Thinking of the weeks ahead, you came up with this list:

Things I need to do urgently:	Other things to be done:	Things that can be postponed:
- Science homework overdue - French vocab quiz Tues	- History Assign. next week - Maths test week after	- Make summaries for Geography (leave till holidays)

Your first overall plan or schedule might look like this, drawn up by hand on a bit of paper:

- First put the major dates for big pieces of work that are due or things you want to focus on.
- Also put in any time commitments or extra-curricular or social activities so you can see how much time you actually have available to you.

Sat	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri
				BASKETBALL TRAINING		
BASKETBALL GAME				BASKETBALL TRAINING	History Assignment	
	MUM'S BIRTHDAY		Maths Test	BASKETBALL TRAINING		

Now think just about this week:

- Start with the things you need to do urgently and schedule time in for them.
- Look then at the other things to be done like the History Assignment and Maths Test and allocate some time in the week to doing something specific to start these tasks - many students just do immediate homework only. Scheduling time for these tasks is much better than just letting the time slip by and leaving the task till the last minute.

Sat	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri
get Science homework done study French vocab test find books at library for History		review French vocab	start research for History	BASKETBALL TRAINING	redo hard exercises in Maths chapter.	brainstorm ideas for History assignment



For You To Do: Follow the steps outlined above to schedule your prioritised work into the coming weeks.

SUMMARY

1. Write down absolutely EVERYTHING you need to get done.
2. Take everything on the list and put it in one of three columns:
 - a) Things I need to do urgently
 - b) Other things to be done
 - c) Things that can be postponed
3. Look 3 or 4 weeks ahead to see what you need to do and how much free time you have.
4. Focus on the coming week and schedule in your work from the Priority Table.

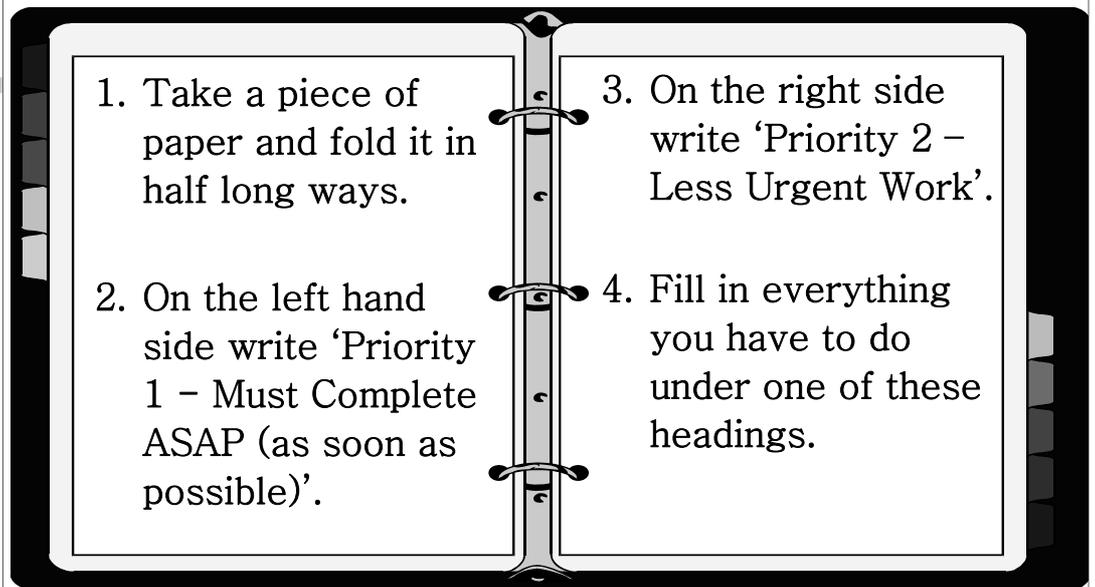
Name: _____

'Split Lists'

Aim:

To develop the ability to determine what work is most important to complete by prioritising into two categories.

STEPS:



Special points of interest:

- Use this technique when you have lots of work to do and are unsure as to what you should do first.
- Once you have split your work into these two lists, take the Priority 1 list and rank these in order by putting numbers next to each piece of work.
- Once you have ranked the Priority 1 work, start at the beginning and complete the tasks in the order of your ranking.
- Clearly cross work off your list as you complete it. Not only will it make you feel better, but it will also make it easier when you look at or redo the list again the next day.



For You To Do:

Think about your own list of personal priorities in your life. What comes first for you? Family? Friends? What other things are important in your life? Sport? Music? Movies? School? Personal Achievements? Food? In the space below, write down your top 5 personal priorities: what is most important to you?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Have you ever....

Have you ever not known where to start with your work? Not been sure what to work on first? Wasted time shuffling papers and moving back and forth between tasks?

Why do we do this? It is actually our fear holding us back. We are feeling worried or scared that we will not be able to complete the task because it is too large or too time-consuming or too difficult. Our minds start to look for ways to avoid the issue which is why you flit from one task to another. Using the split lists technique helps you focus your mind firmly on making a decision about the most important task to concentrate on.

Time Management Technique 1: 'SPLIT LISTS'

"Once I work out exactly what I need to do and what to do first, I feel much better." Julia.

Dealing with Difficulties

- It can be scary to actually list down every single piece of work you have to do. Not writing everything down though, and worrying about it instead, is much more stressful.
- If you feel overwhelmed by the amount of work to be done, this is where prioritising will help you. Decide what your top priorities are in your 'Must Complete' list and focus solely on these. Only when these are completed should you start looking at what you need to focus on next.

Why this works:

By actually writing down everything you need to do, you can then look objectively at the list and use this technique to prioritise what needs to be done most urgently.



For You To Do:

Look at each of your subjects one by one. In the space below, fill all the work you need to do into one of the two columns. Once you have done this, number each piece of work in the Priority 1 column in order of importance. Then start working your way through the list!

PRIORITY 1 - MUST COMPLETE ASAP

PRIORITY 2 - LESS URGENT WORK

Name: _____

'Chunking'

Aim:

To develop the skill of breaking down a large task into more manageable or bite-sized chunks.

STEPS:

1. Ensure you have a clear understanding of exactly what the task or assignment requires.
2. For a few minutes, brainstorm. This means write down everything you can think of that you might have to do as steps to complete this task.
3. Now put all the steps in order- what needs to be done first.
4. Finally, see if any of the steps can be broken down further into smaller chunks.

Special points of interest:

- If you are unclear about the requirements of the task, make sure you see your teacher straight away to clarify your understanding. Work out what you are unsure about and have specific questions to ask them. Although you can discuss this with friends, it is best to clarify with your teacher in case your friends are also not fully clear.
- When you are brainstorming, don't hold back. Write down everything that pops into your mind even if it doesn't seem to make much sense at first. Record all ideas before you evaluate them or try to rearrange them. Doing this task with a friend can work well too.



For You To Do:

The good thing is, you already know how to do this technique! Think of something you know how to do - play a certain sport, perhaps a particular skill like building a hobby model or baking a cake. Imagine you were explaining to someone who didn't know how to do this what the steps were that they needed to do to complete this activity. Write the steps in the space below:

Have you ever....

Have you ever had a big assignment to do and not known where to start? Or tried to start and then just felt overwhelmed by how much had to be done?

If you have ever tried to memorise something you would find that memorising smaller groups of information is easier than trying to memorise one large group. It is the same when you are approaching a large task. Breaking the task into chunks creates clearly defined steps to follow.

Time Management Technique 2: 'CHUNKING'

"I used to just start my assignments with no plan at all. Since I have started using the chunking technique, I find it much easier as I work on pieces of it instead of trying to do it all at once." Sean.

Dealing with Difficulties

- If you are finding you don't actually feel like doing the assignment, pick one small, easy piece to start on. Starting creates momentum that then makes it easier to continue.
- If you seem to get bogged down on one particular step, it is worth stopping for a moment and breaking it down into smaller chunks – especially if you don't feel like you are getting anywhere. With smaller defined steps to focus on, you'll knock over that step much more quickly.

Why this works:

Completing one chunk at a time is much more achievable as it does not seem so huge and overwhelming. It also allows you to set goals along the way to complete certain steps by certain times.



For You To Do:

Choose an assignment or large piece of work you need to complete. This could also be preparing for a test or an examination. Brainstorm all the steps that need to be taken for this task on the left hand side of the page. Then on the right hand side put the steps in order so you have a plan to follow.

BRAINSTORM ALL STEPS HERE

PUT STEPS IN ORDER HERE

Name: _____

'Planning Ahead'

Aim:

To focus on the importance of looking ahead to future work to ensure that tasks are scheduled for timely completion.

STEPS:

1. Take your list of steps to complete the task that you completed in the previous technique.
2. Next to each step, estimate how long you think this step will take.
3. Looking back from the due date, next to each step put roughly when you would like to have it completed by.
4. Write the first few steps into your homework diary.
5. Once these are completed, reassess when you would like to complete the remaining steps by (are you currently ahead or behind?).
6. Now write the next steps into your homework diary and keep repeating this process.

Special points of interest:

- When estimating how long the task will take, be generous with your time lengths. Remember, everything always takes longer than you think it will!
- By writing the steps into your homework diary on particular days, you set specific milestones for yourself for your scheduled work.
- Of course some nights you might be given more homework than expected. If this occurs, you may need to reschedule this step of the assignment to another day in your diary. But make sure you do actually write it in on another day.



For You To Do:

Thinking about the future and planning for what is coming ahead is an important part of managing our time and managing our life. List 5 things in the future that you are looking forward to or planning ahead for:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Have you ever....

Have you ever left your homework right until the last minute? If you have, how did you feel at the time?
 Stressed? Motivated?
 Worried?

Different people react in different ways to deadline pressure. You might hear someone say (or say yourself) 'I can only do it when I have no time left and it is right at the last minute.' This is not at all true. It is simply a justification for leaving things until the last minute.

The truth is you could do it, but you choose not to because you do not want to do the task! Be honest about it!

Time Management Technique 3: 'PLANNING AHEAD'

"Planning when I will try and do the steps to complete my assignment has stopped me from just leaving it until the last minute." Joanne.

Dealing with Difficulties

- If you break the tasks up into steps, then find that the steps are taking longer than you think, don't start getting stressed about this – it is normal! Instead, adjust your plan so that you still have time to complete the steps before the due date. This may mean getting up early some mornings to get caught up or deciding what steps can be cut out or reduced.
- If you have written some of the steps into your diary and then you are given lots of homework that night, don't panic! Just reschedule the assignment step for another day (or get up early the next day in order to get caught up).

Why this works:

The key is not trying to write all steps into your diary at once. Students who do this find it too hard to stick to and then abandon the plan. Instead just schedule in the first few steps then when these are complete schedule in the next steps.



For You To Do:

Choose a large piece of work you need to complete and write the steps you need to follow to complete the task below. Next to each step estimate how long it will take to complete this step. Looking at the available time, schedule out when you'd like to complete each task by so you will be ready before the due date. Write the first few steps into your homework diary as homework for the allocated day.

STEPS FOR THE TASK

ESTIMATED TIME NEEDED

DATE OR DAY SCHEDULED
TO DO THE TASK

This resource continues for another 22 pages

SAMPLE