

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: _____

'Monitoring Time'

Aim:

To develop a good understanding of where time is spent in order to focus on identifying and eliminating distractions.

STEPS:

1. Decide what period of time you are going to monitor – a week, a day, one afternoon after school.

2. Decide which of the activity log systems you are going to use:

- **SYSTEM 1- recording everything you spend time on.**
- **SYSTEM 2 – recording only when you waste time or use it unproductively.**

Special points of interest:

- Clever use of time is essential if you want to make sure you can do the things you enjoy as well as meet the demands put upon you by family, friends and of course, school.
- Activities only become a distraction if the time you spend on them increases to the point where it interferes with the rest of your life.
- The biggest activities that can turn into massive time-wasters:
 - television
 - computer games
 - internet/email
 - mobile phones
 - hanging out with friends
 - just doing nothing
 - skateboarding, outside activities



For You To Do:

What are your top 5 favourite ways to spend your time?

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

What are your 5 least favourite ways to spend your time?

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

Have you ever....

Have you ever had good plans to have a really productive day and get lots and lots of things done? Some days you might be very effective and manage to do everything on your mental list but other days you seem to not be able to settle to anything and everything distracts you. Before you know it the end of the day has arrived and you haven't achieved half the things you had planned. One way to deal with this is to become more aware of how you are actually spending your time. Many people don't realise how much time seemingly harmless things like email or the Internet can take out of their day.

Time Management Technique 4: 'MONITORING TIME'

"I was surprised to find just how many times in an afternoon I was opening the fridge! I hadn't realised how often I was doing this and how much time it was actually chewing up." Fiona.

Dealing with Difficulties

- If you don't feel one day really gives you an accurate picture of where your time goes, monitor yourself over a number of days instead and compare the results between days.
- Once you have monitored your time, the best way to eliminate an activity is to set definite goals for reduction. For example, if you are checking your email or sending text messages 8 times in an afternoon, set a goal to reduce it to 5 times in an afternoon over the next week then 3 times the following week. You might be the sort of person who is actually able to go cold turkey successfully – give it up totally or cut it out completely straight away.

Why this works:

By gaining a realistic picture of the time spent on unproductive activities, you can work out what time wasting activity you need to focus on eliminating.



For You To Do:

Try each of these systems over the next week and work out which helps you pinpoint your biggest time wasters. Then work on eliminating or reducing the distractions you have identified.

SYSTEM 1

Choose a day and in the space below record exactly where your time goes in a normal afternoon after school. Try and choose a 'typical' day.

3.00-3.20
3.20-3.40
3.40-4.00
4.00-4.20
4.20-4.40
4.40-5.00
5.00-5.20
5.20-5.40
5.40-6.00
6.00-6.20
6.20-6.40
6.40-7.00
7.00-7.20
7.20-7.40
7.40-8.00
8.00-8.20
8.20-8.40
8.40-9.00
9.00-9.20
9.20-9.40
9.40-10.00

SYSTEM 2

Allocate a period of time for schoolwork only. Write down your main time wasting activities in the space below. You may also need to add to this list during the allocated time if you haven't thought of all the ways you waste time.

-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

Put a mark next to each of these activities each time you get distracted and spend time on them (or you might like to also write down roughly how much time you spent on these activities).