



STUDY SKILLS SPOT: Making Concentration a Habit

Why are you having trouble concentrating? How can you deal with the problem?

Are external factors affecting you? Are TV, stereos, computers, music or food nearby? Do pets, friends & family interrupt? You need to leave or re-arrange your environment. Go to a library or an empty room when you seriously intend to study. Make sure you have books, pens, and all the paper that you need. Train yourself to study away from others and in silence (or with Baroque music eg Mozart to match your brainwaves). If this is not possible, wear (silent) earphones and “block out” everything.

Maybe it’s internal factors that are causing your lack of concentration?

Are you hungry? Have a high protein or fruit snack. Eat well.

Are you tired? Make sure you have regular sleep; study when you’re most alert; do five minutes of light exercise to wake yourself up.

Are you bored or dislike a particular subject? Read more about the subject and find reasons to interest you. Ask teachers about the relevance of the course or the material in their class. Join a group of students who do find it interesting.

Does a certain subject worry you? Talk with other students and teachers. Make sure you are studying effectively. Make sure it’s not something else worrying you.

Does an assignment frighten you? Break up large assignments into smaller pieces and do a little each day. Do the most intimidating part first. Give yourself rewards for progress. Work with one or more other students.

What if you daydream? When your mind wanders, write down the interrupting thought and go back to studying. Focus on spotting main ideas and details in textbooks and lecture notes. Make questions from main ideas using the details as answers. Deliberately stop trying to study and intentionally daydream. When you’re ready to read again, do so. Don’t try to read and daydream at the same time.

What if something is worrying you? Identify and define the problem and develop a concrete, specific plan to resolve it. Talk with someone who can help: a friend, relative, a counsellor

You can make concentration a habit. Even if you lapse into old habits of distraction and daydreaming; keep expecting yourself to practice concentrating for fifty minutes.

Read more:

<http://www.trinity.wa.edu.au/plduffyrc/library/study/concen.htm>

NEWS

BOOK CLUB TM (TRINITY AND MERCEDES)

All Year 8 and 9 students are welcome to attend meetings assisted by Mrs HORTON (Trinity), Mrs DANIEL (Mercedes) & Ms CRAWFORD (Dymocks). Meetings are on Tuesdays at 3:30- 4:45 twice a term, alternating between Trinity/Mercedes Resource Centres. Next meeting **23 May** at Trinity. We have afternoon tea; talk, play games and enjoy other activities about books and reading. And we have fun!

Interested students can still join, please pick up a permission slip from the P.L. Duffy Resource Centre and return it ASAP signed by your parent.

STUDY SKILLS WORKSHOPS

Do you need help with study skills? In setting up timetables? Working out how to study? Come to the P. L. Duffy Resource Centre. Drop in at any or all sessions, although you will gain the most benefit if you come to most sessions.

Year 10, 11, 12 3:10 - 3:45 Wednesday

Year 8 & 9 3:10 - 3:45 Thursday

PARENTS KEEP A SPOT IN YOUR DIARY

Boys & Reading: Linking Facts & Story for Successful Reading with Dr Ronald JOBE, Professor, Department of Language & Literacy Education at the University of British Columbia, Canada **Tuesday, 9 May** 4.30pm - 6.30pm

What do we know about boys and reading? Recent research sheds light on boys being information-focused readers, a perennial challenge to teachers and parents. When we link information with novels, we entice boys, some of whom are reluctant readers, to read beyond the plot. How can we enhance the appeal of novels with the facts? The cost of this workshop is \$5.00. RSVP 9223 8134

NEW BOOKS

Seen *Popular Mechanics Complete Car Care Manual* 629.2872 POP? Check out <http://www.trinity.wa.edu.au/plduffyrc/library/news.htm>. Check out library catalogue <http://students.trinity.wa.edu.au/webopac> at school or home.

WEBSITE NOTES

Investigate the interactive website depicting the change in water cycle with Global warming from US Environmental Protection Agency Global Warming Kids http://www.epa.gov/globalwarming/kids/water_cycle_version2.html

Added to website: Water Cycle: The Hydrologic Cycle and Human Impact <http://www.trinity.wa.edu.au/plduffyrc/subjects/sose/geography/respop/watcycle.htm>

ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA NOW AVAILABLE

The Catholic Education Office recently signed a license agreement with Encyclopaedia Britannica on behalf of all WA Catholic Schools. Staff and students can access this exciting resource from school or home when access is made through the My internet site.

BOOK REVIEWS

CATRAN, Ken 2005 *Black Ships Ablaze*. Published by Lothian

Many of us have heard of Helen, Paris, Achilles, Odysseus and the other heroes of Greece and Troy and we meet them in this exciting book set in the ninth year of the siege of Troy. The exciting events of war and jealousy are here in stunning realism. However, the interest for the young reader will be with the two young protagonists, slaves of the opposing armies. Bren, slave to Achilles and Dana, slave to Helen are caught up in the events around them.

We see Homer's heroes through the two slaves' eyes. These mighty ones seem to be very real people: with the glamour of the great, contrasted with the weaknesses of human beings. Achilles is a tragic hero, overwhelmed by his power and pride. Helen is an aging beauty with conflicting loyalties and clacking sandals. Odysseus is a wily fox, and a survivor.

The cover graphics depict the burning ships, but it is the turmoil in the city where we focus most our attention. Ken CATRAN has vividly depicted Bren and Dana's sense of confusion in the overwhelming chaos of war. As slaves, of course, they are used to being at the mercy of the decisions of others, but the bewilderment and terror is common to anyone caught up in events beyond their control.

Ken CATRAN has written a lively exciting novel which will appeal to young people, both boys and girls. It will also give them a great insight into the realities of the ancient world. They will smell the smoke and hear the clamour of the world around, and be engrossed by the adventure.

COLBERT, David 2005 *The Magical Worlds of Narnia: A Treasury of Myths and Legends*. Published by Puffin

For students who enjoyed the book *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* or other Narnia books by C.S LEWIS or the recent movie *The Chronicles of Narnia*, this book provides a fascinating, readable reference. In it David COLBERT traces the rich tapestry of myths and legends Lewis used to people his entrancing books. He also outlines the writing process and order of the books and how Lewis conceived them and brought them into being.

COLBERT marks the parallels and differences between Aslan and Jesus; the biographical background to the imagery of the looming wardrobe, the ambiguity of two-faced Jadis and the Hans ANDERSEN'S Snow Queen in creating the White Witch, and many other images and archetypes. He explores the "Deep Magic" and its divergence from traditional Christianity. He discusses the influence of his friends the Inklings, especially TOLKEIN, on his writing, his theology and his mythological landscape.

While all of these issues are examined, COLBERT does not forget his audience; the style is informal, fun and easy to read. There are many illustrations, down the side of the text there are other comments and parallels. This is a highly approachable and fascinating book which will encourage the reader to tackle all the books!

Ways to Improve Literacy

Poor literacy skills are certainly not a reflection of a boy's intelligence. Nevertheless they do have an enormous social cost and are a major source of low self-esteem and lack of confidence. Boys with literacy problems unfortunately mature into men usually carrying the same set of problems.

What can you do to minimise this possibility?

Parents can provide a rich environment filled with all kinds of texts to enhance their opportunities. The home environment should be a rich treasure trove of print and multi-media resources. Boys should see both parents reading and using them! This is especially valuable if you share and discuss ideas, facts, experiences, imagination and understandings.

- Newspapers
- Magazines
- Non-fiction books on everything: cars, cooking, UFO's, animals and sport
- Fiction books. A list of some books your son may enjoy is available on the website: Books and Authors for Boys
<<http://www.trinity.wa.edu.au/plduffyrc/teaching/bksboys.htm>>
- Comics
- Graphic Novels
- Maps
- Graphs
- Reports
- Television
- Computer and Internet

You don't have to buy all of these. The public library allows you to borrow most of them. The school library also has many resources your boy can borrow. Encyclopaedias and computers are available in both kinds of libraries as well. These you can't borrow however they can be used on site.

Use opportunities for reading that are related to fun tasks. Reading a recipe; following directions for building a kite. Write fun messages to your son. Leave notes in his room or send him an email about an exciting surprise, or something you want to share.

If your son's literacy is very low, seek help from the school. Encourage him to read regularly. Read to him and with him. Push him to read a little faster every day, as a certain speed of reading is necessary for comprehension. Let him see that you value reading. Help him to choose material he enjoys. Persuade him to choose something a little different or a little more difficult from time to time. Don't insist he read aloud unless he wants to, nor ask questions about what he is reading unless he wishes to tell you.

Talk to him about what he does on the computer and the internet and sees on television. Help him to work out what expands his mind and what confines it. Help him to recognise the mind numbing time-sapping interactions and limit these to particular shows or times.

Above all show him **you** value reading and literacy.