

Resourceful

<http://www.trinity.wa.edu.au/plduffyrc/>



10 May 2006
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STUDY SKILLS SPOT: Homework vs Study

Did you know that study is not just completing assignments or homework?

Sometimes students think study is just doing assignments, but study is done to supplement homework. Even if you have no specific homework, you always have study!

We forget what we learn very quickly. A day after a lesson if we have done nothing with the information we learned then and didn't think about it again or read it again we will have lost 50%-80% of what we learned. Seven days later, we remember even less, and by day 30, we retain about 2%-3% of the original! After each lesson we need to revise and practise new material so that we can remember it and so do projects, tests and exams easily with the knowledge we already have.

We remember things much better if we go over concepts very soon after we first learnt them. On the same day we receive the information, if we spend ten minutes reviewing, we will remember almost all we learnt. A week later, if we take 5 minutes to "reactivate" the same material, we can still retain almost 100%. By day 30, our brains will only need 2-4 minutes to give us the feedback, "Yup, I know that. Got it."

However, a better approach than rehearsal (just going over things or re-reading them) is to:

- Add detail to the information to be remembered. Draw pictures or diagrams, read around the topic.
- Re-organise the information.
 - draw mindmaps
 - make flash or palm cards
 - re-write notes with coloured pens
 - use mnemonics (memory tricks)
 - set ideas in a song,
 - use initial letters to make a word (remember the rainbow colours ROYGBIV?)
 - restate formulas or laws in rhyme
 - draw pictures or models for main concepts
- Actively think about the material. Ask yourself questions. Does it make sense? Do I agree? Can I think of a better way?
- Make it meaningful. How does/How can/How might what I learn apply to me, my parents and my neighbours?
- Relate it to other things you already know or have experienced. How does this fit in with what I already know? Make connections.

Read more: Developing Memory and Memory Skills.

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

NEWS

BOOK CLUB TM (MERCEDES AND TRINITY)

All Year 8 and 9 students still welcome, assisted by Mrs Horton (Trinity), Mrs Daniel (Mercedes) & Ms Crawford (Dymocks). Meetings are on Tuesdays 3:30 - 4:45 twice a term, alternating between Trinity/Mercedes Resource Centres. Next meeting will be on 23 May at Trinity. We have afternoon tea; we 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

NEW BOOKS

Have you read *Forensics : true stories from Australian police files* 363.250994 PET? 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

Examine the website which has contemporary articles about the Irish Famine: Views of the Famine <http://vassun.vassar.edu/%7Esttaylor/FAMINE/>

Added to website: Irish History

<http://www.trinity.wa.edu.au/plduffyrc/subjects/re/bible/irish.htm>

REMEMBER 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 Myinternet site.

SUCCESSFUL LECTURE

Dr Ronald Jobe, Professor, Department of Language & Literacy Education at the University of British Columbia, Canada presented at lecture in the library on *Boys & Reading: Linking Facts & Story for Successful Reading* on Tuesday, 9th May 4.30pm - 6.30pm

It was a highly successful event with well over sixty people attending. Professor Jobe spoke on linking facts with fiction and keeping reading active and involved.

Boys like Facts

Professor Jobe from British Columbia spoke to the gathered group of listeners mostly teachers and teacher librarians. He maintained that contrary to common belief many boys do read. What they read may not be the material we expect them to read, like the novels set in class. However, many read much about their current computer game, about their favourite sports star and their current abiding interest whether it be sharks or warlocks.

Some boys do have trouble reading at all, but much difficulty is not functional but emotional. Some find the process so difficult they give up, pretending they don't care. They develop many coping and avoiding strategies to evade extended reading. However, we can take advantage of some natural tendencies that boys exhibit.

Most boys are attracted by facts. They like to be **active**: involved in discovering the interesting reality of the world around them. They need material that attracts their **interest**. The information should also be presented in a highly **visual** manner, which appeals to the learning styles of most boys. We can encourage this interest by sharing the fascination of optical illusions or the spectacular horrific beauty of books on spiders or snakes. We can provide them with bright visual books and magazines packed with facts, especially those that echo their interests, maybe football or music. We can share the newspaper with them discussing the misery and glory of the world around them.

There are many books that naturally attract boys. Most love to peruse the Guinness Book of Records (please don't discard the old ones until they fall apart as they love to compare older records with current ones). They enjoy the attractive fact-filled and highly visual books like the DK books published by Dorley Kingsley or Kingfisher. They enjoy books that have acetate overlays, open out pages or maps, explosion diagrams. They enjoy books that have a humorous take on the world like the *Horrible Histories* series. They delight in books that tell about the gross or yucky. However, factual books should be good: with great visuals, appropriate language for the age group, up to date and accurate information, useful headings, sub headings and indexes. The most useful enticement for boys to read is to provide a wide variety of good quality factual books, and maybe even read them together, enjoying the wild delight of all those interesting facts.

Many boys do enjoy fantasy as these books create very real worlds with concrete descriptions of the imagined worlds. Other types of fiction books can be interesting if we link novels to their factual backgrounds. So, we can encourage them to read Iain Lawrence's book *The Lord of the Nutcracker Men* and find factual books about the First World War, Kenneth Oppel's book *Airborn* and obtain books about early flight and dirigibles or Gary Paulsen's perennial *Hatchet* and buy factual books about survival in the outdoors. These links between fact and fiction may lure the student into the delights of fiction! You can enjoy an ever expanding cycle of fiction and fact. Any worthwhile fiction book is based on facts and reality. You can find them for your boys, and draw the parallels. Explore the world together.

BOOK REVIEWS

Fusillo, Archimede. (2004) *Bruises*, Penguin

School camps are meant to be fun. However, Falco is full of trepidation to be on this camp with the bullies, Ape and friends. Falco is also facing trouble at home. His sick brother, Val, takes all his parents' attention, and he is overwhelmed by guilt and resentment. The opposing pressures of peers and teachers are the final straw. He is rightly full of dread he has to share rooms with the terrifying bullies...and ostensibly meant to be in charge!

This book explores many seemingly insurmountable problems of adolescence, especially bullying. The blindness and utter incomprehension of adults who are meant to protect the victims only makes it worse. Fusillo graphically portrays the helplessness and frustration of those victimised by bullying. Bullies or victims are not mere examples. Falco, Brad and Anthony are very real ...and suffering. You could not read this book and say that bullying is the victim's fault. Even small signs of assertiveness are punished severely. The miasma of powerlessness and despair is very compelling. The violence expressed and withheld permeates the novel, against the backdrop of bewildering bush and raging sea.

The perception that men can't cry or express any emotion except rage is also challenged. As all the boys flounder in their overwhelming ocean of adolescence, contradictory messages of what it is to be a man from parents, teachers and peers, confuse, frustrate and ultimately betray them. This taut exciting book will find an eager readership with teenage boys.

Sedgewick, Marcus *Cowards: The True Story of the Men Who Refused to Fight*, Hodder

This book is a fictionalised version of events surrounding the trials of those who chose to be conscientious objectors in England in the First World War. It shows that the propaganda of war did not ensnare all the courageous young men. Young readers will be interested to find that these men **were** brave, standing up for their principles in very difficult and trying circumstances. The punishments for not going along with mainstream were cruel, degrading and in some cases fatal.

The events of the book, though true, often read like a spy novel, as luck, bravery, steadfastness and a clandestine and successful support group help our heroes survive. Even though most boys are attracted to stories of action and violence, I think that some will appreciate these stories of quiet resoluteness. The men we meet are young and idealistic and struggle against very powerful forces: military authority, political power and social pressure.

Perhaps because it is a factual book, we do feel a little distanced from our heroes as it concentrates on the facts rather than emotions. The sense of history, of the debt the present owes to the past is also pervasive. For Australian readers, I think the reader might ask: How were conscientious objectors treated here? Certainly, it also raises religious and ethical questions that it would be interesting for young people to explore.