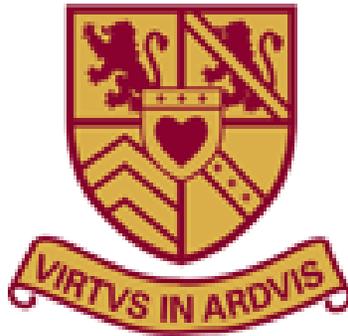


Bellshill Academy



Study Skills Pack

For Parents



Creating the Correct Environment



In the episode 'Bart gets an F', Bart asks Martin Prince to help him study for a test. The first thing Martin does is help Bart create a 'learning environment'... This is sound advice because **where** you study is just as important as **what** you study.

The following is a list of things that can help create a good environment for studying.

- A private space away from distractions such as brothers and sisters, television or friends
- Have a desk or table with enough space to write and place a number of text books when they are open
- Have a lamp on your desk/table
- Have a comfortable chair that supports your back
- Televisions and phones should be turned off
- Have a watch or clock so that you can keep track of how long you spend on a topic
- Open the window to clear your mind
- Some people like to chew gum or have water to drink
- Some people like to have some music playing in the background; others prefer silence.
- Have your revision timetable, textbooks, notes and pens close to hand
- Get up and walk about the room every twenty minutes- use this time to go over questions in your head.



Tasks

- a) Underline the points that you think you will be able to adopt to create your perfect study environment.
- b) Circle the ones you think would be helpful but are not sure you can achieve, e.g. a room without brothers/ sisters in it!
- c) With a parent, discuss the ones you have circled, and see if together you can come up with a solution which might provide the next best thing and jot these beside the circles points.





Your Learning Style Profile

Question 1	Most Like Me			Least Like Me
A. I take lots of notes and I like to doodle.	4	3	2	1
B. I don't like a lot of notes but I still remember what was said. If I take notes I can't pay attention to what the teacher is saying.	4	3	2	1
C. I take notes and doodle but I rarely go back to read them.	4	3	2	1

Question 2	Most Like Me			Least Like Me
A. I find it difficult to talk to people who don't make eye contact with me.	4	3	2	1
B. I find it difficult to talk to people who don't talk back to me.	4	3	2	1
C. I find it difficult to talk to people who don't show how they are feeling.	4	3	2	1

Question 3	Most Like Me			Least Like Me
A. I remember things better if I write them down so I tend to make lists and notes.	4	3	2	1
B. I remember things easier by repeating them again and again.	4	3	2	1
C. I feel trapped when seated at a desk so I like to move around.	4	3	2	1

Question 4	Most Like Me			Least Like Me
A. When reading a book I pay a lot of attention to the bits that describe clothing, scenery, places etc.	4	3	2	1
B. When reading a book I pay lots of attention to the bits with conversations etc.	4	3	2	1
C. When reading a book I pay lots of attention to the bits that show the characters' feelings, moods, actions etc.	4	3	2	1

Question 5	Most Like Me			Least Like Me
A. I will forget instructions if I do not write them down.	4	3	2	1
B. I like to talk to myself when solving a problem or writing.	4	3	2	1
C. I move my lips when I am reading.	4	3	2	1

Question 6	Most Like Me			Least Like Me
A. I prefer to get written instructions for a task.	4	3	2	1
B. I prefer spoken instructions for a task.	4	3	2	1
C. I am not good at reading or listening to directions. I would rather just start working on the task by myself and see how it goes.	4	3	2	1

Question 7	Most Like Me			Least Like Me
A. When meeting a person for the first time I notice the style of dress, the way they look and neatness first,	4	3	2	1
B. My friends think I am a good listener.	4	3	2	1
C. My desk is messy.	4	3	2	1

Question 8	Most Like Me			Least Like Me
A. When I am at a party, one of the things I love to do is stand back and watch the world go by.	4	3	2	1
B. When I am at a party, one of the things I love to do is talking to someone who likes to chat.	4	3	2	1
C. When I am at a party, one of the things I love to do is activities such as dancing and games etc.	4	3	2	1

Question 9	Most Like Me			Least Like Me
A. When I am recalling information I can see it in my mind and remember where I saw it.	4	3	2	1
B. I would prefer find information from the radio than the newspaper.	4	3	2	1
C. I tend to make gestures when I talk especially when I can't remember what I am trying to say.	4	3	2	1

Question 10	Most Like Me			Least Like Me
A. If I had to explain some homework to a friend I would prefer to write it out.	4	3	2	1
B. If I had to explain some homework to a friend I would prefer to talk about it.	4	3	2	1
C. If I had to explain some homework to a friend I would prefer to show them how to do it.	4	3	2	1

Question 11	Most Like Me			Least Like Me
A. In my free time I am most likely to watch T.V. or read.	4	3	2	1
B. In my free time I am most likely to listen to music.	4	3	2	1
C. In my free time I am most likely to do something physical.	4	3	2	1

Question 12	Most Like Me			Least Like Me
A. I prefer to talk to my friends on line.	4	3	2	1
B. I prefer to talk to my friends on the phone.	4	3	2	1
C. I prefer to talk to my friends face to face.	4	3	2	1



Your Learning Style Profile

Add your totals to see what kind of learner you are.

Section	A	B	C
Total			

- If your highest score is in section A you are a **VISUAL** learner
- If your highest is in section B you are an **AUDITORY** Learner
- If your highest is in section C you are a **KINESTHETIC** Learner

AUDITORY Learner

You like to discuss your learning with others. You enjoy working with a partner which you can bounce ideas off. You pick up new ideas and concepts better when you hear the information.

Study Tips:

- Play some low background music
- Tape your notes so you can play them back to yourself
- Talk aloud to yourself when going through a problem or piece of information
- Go over answers in your head
- Explain what you have learned to someone else, perhaps your parents.

VISUAL Learner

You like information that you can see as a picture in your head or that is written down. You prefer using images, pictures, colors, and maps to organize information and to communicate with others.

Study Tips:

- Keep your study environment clutter free
- Make your notes visual by using highlighters, diagrams, pictures, flow-charts etc
- When you test your knowledge, try to imagine the answer to the questioning your mind before
- Learn to Mind Map (See appendix 1)

KINESTHETIC Learner

You prefer to learn by getting your body into action and moving around. You are "hands-on" type who prefers doing to talking. You get fidgety and restless in a classroom if you are sitting listening for too long.

Study Tips:

- Play music in the background
- Try to practice answers to questions and find concrete examples of the answers
- Recite your notes
- Study little but often
- Use post-it notes stuck round the room with key-words and even a little drawing on them. Walk round the room, pausing in front of each sticky note and reading the key word





Some Basic Revision Techniques

- ✓ Re-reading class notes. Pretty basic method or revision but can come in handy when you need to remind yourself of the key facts. **Don't** spend all of your revision time reading though. There are some far more effective methods and techniques.
 - ✓ Revision guides. You don't need any more than one per subject.
 - ✓ Copying out **key points** from your notes onto small revision cards.
 - ✓ Make use of diagrams. Draw your own to help you remember them better.
 - ✓ Use mnemonic to help you remember certain patterns or sequences. Mnemonic is a way of helping you remember information using abbreviations, words or phrases. For example, to remember the colours of the rainbow, you could use the mnemonic: Richard of York gave battle in vain, using the first letters of each word to remember the colours red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet. Simple!
 - ✓ Make audio notes by reading your notes onto a cassette/Dictaphone. You can then play it back to yourself whenever you like.
 - ✓ Write important words and phrases on sticky notes that can be stuck where you'll see them everyday. On your walls or doors... anywhere will do. Your parents may start to think you have a fixation for sticky notes but at least you'll be making the most of your revision.
 - ✓ Get friends or family to test you on various facts vocabulary etc... this will help you keep your mind alert and it will give you an idea as to how much you really know.
 - ✓ As the exams get ever nearer, try doing some timed practice papers which you can either get off your teacher or off your examination boards website. This will really test how much you know, and in certain subjects such as English, you'll be able to practice your reading and writing skill
- Of course, not all the above techniques have to be used but they give you an idea to what you can do to make your revision more productive. Remember, it's all worth it in the end!



Study Skills

Attitudes to learning

Most people, when asked, can recount an experience that undermined their confidence in their own learning. Negative comments when we are young can have a very long-term effect upon our view of ourselves as bright, capable learners. However, self-confidence has a major impact upon our ability to perform well.

Optimum conditions for learning

We can improve the conditions for learning by being aware of some of the ways the brain works. Although we do not need to know a great deal about the brain, understanding some basics can help us to make the most of our minds. Some of the optimal conditions for learning are common sense and good for our general health. For example, the brain works well when:

- it is rested - sleep affects our performance
- it is hydrated - drinking water helps the electrical connections of the brain
- it is unstressed - when it is stressed, it can focus only on 'escape', not on such matters as reading journals and writing assignments
- it enjoys itself - it is important to look for any angle that can stimulate our interest in what we are learning. Sometimes this can take imagination if the subject itself seems boring
- it has seen something several times - little and often works better than trying to understand something in one sitting

General tips

Spending long hours studying is not necessarily productive. It is possible to gain better marks by studying more effectively rather than for longer. To study effectively, you can:

- **Identify what is really needed**
Study assignment titles carefully. Work out exactly what is required for assignments. This saves time in re-writing assignments later. Time spent in preparation is well spent.
- **Work strategically**
Set yourself clear goals and work towards these.

- **Make the material meaningful**
Looking for 'the meaning' or how things work, rather than focusing on remembering information. Work with the material, looking at how it fits together and applies to different circumstances. If you develop your understanding of the subject, it will help you to take in future material more easily. This makes reading easier. It also improves your memory for the subject.
- **Look for links**
Be active in searching out links between different aspects of the programme. Look also for links between what you are learning and the wider world. This helps to develop understanding and memory.
- **Work with others**
Work with other students so that you share ideas and gain mutual support. You may be able to share some research tasks and clarify your lecture notes. Studying with others makes study more interesting, as you gain a different set of perspectives.
- **Set yourself SMART-F targets**
Targets should be:
 - **strategic** : they assist you to achieve your goals
 - **measurable**: you can tell when you have completed them
 - **achievable**: you are likely to succeed in meeting them
 - **realistic**: they fit the circumstances
 - **time-bound**: you have a set time to meet
 - **flexible**: you can adapt them if the circumstances change
- **Look for short-cuts**
 - Look for reasonable short-cuts that do not compromise your studies. For example:
 - avoid unnecessary tasks such as writing notes out neatly
 - use abbreviations in your notes
 - write assignments onto a computer if possible rather than writing them out by hand and then typing them up
 - focus your notes around themes and questions rather than making long notes that you do not really need
- **Use the word limit to focus your energies**
Most assignments have a word limit. Use this as a guide to how much you need to read and how many examples you can include. Plan out in advance how you will divide up the words available to you. Often, you need to be very concise about each topic. This means you may not be able to include very much of what you have read if you have undertaken a great deal of reading or made very extensive notes.
- **Take care of yourself**
Take rests when you are tired. Study takes longer and the brain

is less effective when you are tired or stressed. · Plan your time so that you get breaks. A change of scene stimulates the brain and helps creative thinking. **Mind Map Examples:**

