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Homeschooling

ISSUE 7, 2021

LIVING & LEARNING – TOGETHER

+PLUS:

Attitude with gratitude
Homeschooling systems
Final round creative
writing competition
winners

Study
tips for
the New
Year

THE JOY
OF HOLISTIC
LEARNING

31

days of
fun family
activities,
adventures
& projects

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Ed's note

As we've gradually – and, hopefully, permanently – moved out of lockdown life, a new way of living has emerged: more parents work from home, more children are homeschooled and our values have shifted from 'we want more' to 'we want better'. And that's what this issue is all about and what we wish for you over the holidays: closer relationships, true sharing and gifts from the heart.

Shelagh
Editor

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As a professor at the Dept of Psychology at the UJ, Jena specialised in developmental psychology, authored several publications and read academic papers worldwide. As co-founder of StudySmart, she emphasises the development of inquisitive minds, a positive outlook and the value of developing unique talents.

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1 Self-explanation

Come up with explanations, in your own words, of to-be-learnt concepts or ideas. Rather than solely relying on exact provided definitions (eg from lectures or textbooks), create your own, while still making sure that they're accurate.

2 Use a timer

This is called the Pomodoro technique. Set a timer for 20-25 minutes and start studying. When the buzzer rings, take a five-minute break. After two to three repetitions, take a 30-minute break.

Repeat!

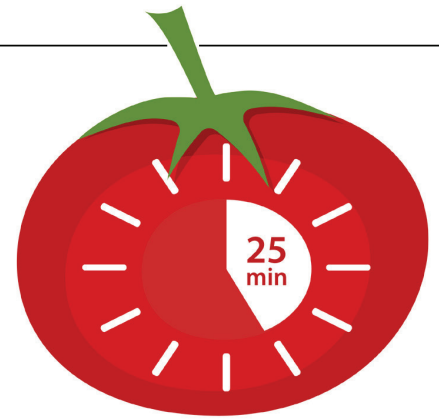
3 Interleaving

Instead of focusing exclusively on one concept or subject at a time, alternate between them. For example, if you're studying subject A and subject B, rather than practising only A on one day and only B on the next, you can practise both each day by switching between them.

Dig deeper

4 It's hard to remember a string of facts and figures if you don't push further. Ask questions like 'Why?' and 'How?' This is called elaboration. Elaboration helps you combine new information with other things you know and creates a bigger network in your brain of things that relate to one another. That larger network makes it easier to learn and remember things.

Top study tips for 2022



With a new academic year looming – and the first year of tertiary study for some – it's time to unlock possibilities with these 10 research-based tips. By **Dalena van der Westhuizen** of BrainAbility



5 Be the 'teacher'
Research shows students have better memory and recall abilities when they learn new information with the expectation of having to teach/explain it to someone else. Studies also suggest they're more engaged and instinctively seek out methods of recall and organisation when expected to take on a 'teacher' role.



6 Exercise helps learning
The benefits of exercise on the brain have been well established. Studies show that our brainpower gets a boost following even a short workout. According to Dr Douglas B McKeag, breaking a sweat shortly before cracking the books can make you more alert, open and able to learn new information during your post-workout study session.

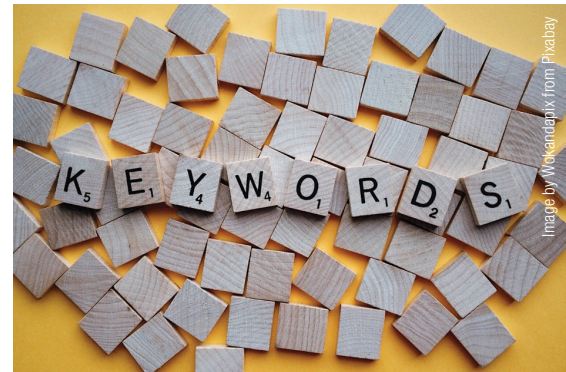
7 Reading and re-reading isn't studying
Reading and re-reading textbooks merely leads students to assuming they know the material better than they do, since it's right in front of them. Rather use active recall: closing the book and reciting (and explaining) in your own words

everything you can remember up to that point will help with long-term memorisation.

8 Test yourself
Take advantage of old exam and test papers. You'll get a sense of different testing styles and become familiar with how the information might be presented on the real test/exam day. A 2011 study found that students who did this after studying the material retained 50% more of the information a week later than their peers who hadn't done a practice test/exam.

9 Don't over-study
Once you've cycled through your work without making a mistake (or too many mistakes), you may feel a sense of satisfaction and call it a day, or you may feel a charge of adrenaline and be tempted to continue studying the same material. Research suggests it's better to take a break or move on to something else, instead of over-studying.

10 Stop multi-tasking
Multi-tasking is a myth. You may think you're killing two birds with one stone by texting or quickly checking your Facebook page while studying, for example, but you're actually forming poor study habits. It's also not useful having your cellphone on silent, yet frequently checking for new messages, or looking at it every time it vibrates to indicate a new message.



According to researchers, 'multi-tasking' extends study time and could ultimately damage your grades. Switch it off and put it somewhere out of sight.

Lastly, remember that **sleep is crucial for studying**. There's even a term for it: *sleep-learning*. As the memory-consolidation process does its best work during slow-wave sleep, your brain could be getting both the restoration and reactivation it needs during its time of rest. So don't even think about studying through the night instead of getting some much-needed sleep.

Here's to a new year, new possibilities and new, better ways to study!

