

It's About Time!

Jason W. Womack, MEd, MA, is a former high school & mentor teacher who now creates learning programs for teens and adults. Please visit the websites: www.SchoolGuides.org and www.JasonWomack.com for more information on academic success through effective time management.

Have you ever...

- stayed up late at night studying for a test, only to walk into class the next day and realize you forgot everything?
- sat down to study, but realized that you kept losing your focus every 10 or 15 minutes?"

- Repeat study habits that work and practice new learning strategies to make the most of your learning time.
- Give yourself the edge you need - plan for and execute a strategy built to win!
- Enhance your *ACHIEVEMENT*, by studying your memory and concentration techniques.

You are asked to “remember” (or *memorize*) more and more...how do you win?

Concentration and **Memory** go hand in hand. Oftentimes, people claim they “have a bad memory,” “can’t remember anything” or even “I always forget things!” Improving your memory is a 3 step process of entering the information, storing it, and retrieving it when you want it. Here are some tips to maximize each of these steps.

Tips to maximize your **MEMORY**:

- ★ **Write more things down.** Keep an extra piece of paper nearby while you’re in class, or at home (or the library!) studying. Occasionally make a note of “what you just learned.” By summarizing it in your own words, it will have more meaning to you.
- ★ **Review regularly.** Just think about how much information you look at or listen to in a typical school-day. Build in some time (10-15 minutes) each night to simply review your class notes and handouts from the day.
- ★ One of the best ways to improve your memory is to **increase the flow of oxygen** to your brain. Shake off that sleepy haze before you begin studying. Do some physical activity before cracking open your books and have some water at your desk to help stay alert and engaged with your studies.

Tips to maximize your **FOCUS** and **CONCENTRATION**:

- ★ Keep a sheet of paper near you to write down thoughts that don’t have anything to do with what you’re working on right now. It might end up looking like a random to do list with items like stuff you need to tell your Mom, what you want to bring to school, something funny to text your friend. Resist the urge to get up and do those things while you’re studying. They’re just distractions to pull your focus away. Write them down, and get back to the task you’re working on.

- ★ Experiment with **NOT** multitasking. Turn off everything else but what you’re studying first. Set a timer for 15 minutes and only do that one thing for the whole time. Checking email, texts, voicemail, listening to music, watching TV and surfing websites, updating Facebook pulls at your attention. Put your focus on the one thing you are studying, and complete it in a shorter amount of time with longer lasting results.

Here are a few easy techniques to help with memorizing:

- **Combine** or associate the new idea with something you already know.
- **“Chunk”** info into smaller pieces to make them more memorable.
- Use **mnemonic** devices which are short phrases or poems to help memorize long lists or facts.

Practice them and see which work best for you. These tips can make it easier to learn, and even easier to remember the facts later during an exam.