
STUDY SKILLS AS MOMENTOUS WITHIN AND BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

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ABSTRACT

In the current scenario of education, teachers play different roles to make the process of learning a successful one. They work very hard and try to communicate information to their students in a very effective manner. Nevertheless, the results can not satisfy their expectations. Here the problem may not be in the teaching. But it may be with the poor study skills of students. Hence study skills should be given priority in the process of education. Study skills are strategies and techniques which help you to make the most efficient use of time, resources, and academic potential. If study skills are developed, study time can be used in a very efficient way. Learning will be easier and retaining of the learned matters will be longer. The students will develop a feeling that the work and effort involved is worthwhile. Study skills are lifetime skills. So teaching of study skills will be of immense help throughout life. Features of the most effective study skills programmes are described in this paper. Benefits of effective study skills are given in detail. There is need for emphasizing study skills. It is described in this paper. Then some study skills viz. consider priorities, utilize resources, SQ3R method, skimming, note-making, summarising are explained.

Key words: Study skills, SQ3R method, skimming, note-making, summarising.

Introduction

In the current scenario of education, teachers play different roles to make the process of learning a successful one. They work very hard and try to communicate information to their students in a very effective manner. Nevertheless, the results can not satisfy their expectations. Here the problem may not be in the teaching. But it may be with the poor study skills of students. Hence study skills should be given priority in the process of education.

Study Skills

Skill development is an indispensable part of education. So study skills are also to be well developed to make a student successful.

Study skills are strategies and techniques which help you to make the most efficient use of time, resources, and academic potential. "Study Skills are those abilities that enable students to systematically organize, plan, and encode information they need to learn". (Rafoth and De Fabo ,1990).If study skills are developed, study time can be used in a very efficient way. Learning will be easier and retaining of the learned matters will be longer. The students will develop a feeling that the work and effort involved is worthwhile.

"Students who receive good strategy training during their years in school can acquire a form of knowledge especially useful in coping with the wide variety of learning situations they will encounter throughout their lives. Given the amount of time that people spend in school, in job-related training, and in acquiring knowledge associated with their interests and hobbies, the ability to find good solutions to learning problems may be the most important thinking skill of all."(Sharon J. Derby ,1988). So it is evident that students acquiring study skills learn not just one particular subject, but they learn 'how to learn'.

Study skills are lifetime skills. "Students who have learned how to learn the essence of study skills will be the ones who can process this information and use it in school, the world of work, and personal life." (Anne Thomas, 1993). So teaching of study skills will be of immense help throughout life. Teachers can help to develop study skills of the students so that the students will get a picture on 'how to study'.

Features of the most effective study skills programmes

Features of the most effective study skills programmes are described below:

- The teacher has to identify the required study skills for success in their subject.
- The students can be given chances to conduct self-assessment on how effectively they use these study skills. Teachers can also assess the same. Then the study skills which are required by the students, are to be considered for including in the study skills programme.
- Active learning of the study skills should be promoted.
- When the students use study skills, they can also do self-monitoring and self-assessment.
- Students can be given chances to generalize what they have learned about study skills to other aspects of their study.

For instance, it is significant to remember key points when studying a topic. Reviewing is important and it is good to review for short periods than for long periods.

Benefits of Effective Study Skills

If the students are given exposure to study skills, they can draw many benefits from it. The students will be able to understand the need to develop study skills. An insight to the nature of their own learning styles will be gained. The need to develop motivation, reflection and independence will be understood and thereby they will be increased. Students will have a tendency to use an appropriate personalised approach to study and revision.

Students will become aware of the stresses related with study and revision and commence to self-manage more effectively. The ability to memorise and recall information can be enhanced. Students will be more responsible for their own approaches to learning and assessment situations. A critical analysis of the format of tests and examination papers/questions will be developed in the students. Students can enhance the level of confidence in their own abilities to cope with the emotional and practical aspects of the learning and assessment processes.

Need for emphasizing study skills

The thing is that most students are unaware of the role of study skills in their success. So first students should know the significance of study skills. If students develop study skills, they will take responsibility for the process of learning. They will become aware of performance and progress and set practical goals. Students will become conscious of time and use it wisely. They will try to understand and retain the content. "If two students have the same academic aptitude, the student with better study skills and attitudes is likely to have better grades."(Gall, 1990)

Frustration and failure from the part of students happen, not because of their inability, but because of their lack of adequate study skills. "Perhaps the best way to motivate students to use study skills is to show them that study skills can help them be successful."(Anne Thomas,1993). Study skills help to foster feelings of competence, develop positive attitude and enhance confidence to control their work both in school and in life. Study skills act as the foundation for lifelong learning.

Study skill teaching is the need of the hour. There are many reasons for that. Students are always eager to perform maximum. In order to achieve this, the students should be equipped with study skills. Besides students, parents and teachers believe that study skills promote performance of students.

All students should be indulged in hard work in order to become successful learners. So those who are not interested to do hard work fail to produce their maximum output in the process of learning. Still there are some students who fail to make use of their maximum potential because they don't know 'how to learn'. So the need to impart study skills becomes crucial in the process of learning.

Some study skills are described below:

Consider priorities

Students have to confront with many things at a given time. So it is good to give priority and do the things according to the priority.

Utilise Resources

There will be resources around the students. The students should be ready to find out the resources which help them in their studies. Then they have to make use of these resources. Some resources are listed below: The library, teachers, media, magazine and newspapers.

SQ3R Method

Robinson, a psychologist at Ohio State University developed SQ3R method. SQ3R stands for survey, Question, Read, Recite and Review. When information is accessed from a book, this method can be used.

- Survey : Go through the title, subtitle, introductory paragraphs, concluding paragraphs and summary. The graphs, charts, pictures and the notes describing them have to be examined.
- Question : Prepare some questions based on what you have surveyed. If the book contains questions, try to find out answer for that. It will be helpful to know your status of learning.
- Read : Read the summaries, introductory and concluding paragraphs and the description of graphs, charts and pictures again. In order to get more information on the topic, read a chapter.
- Recite : The questions have to be answered orally. If possible examples may be given. Key phrases or words can be jotted down to make the points as memorable.
- Review : Go through the steps Question, Read and Recite again. Review each section of the book. Notes can be revised. Then try to answer questions without going through the notes or the book.

Skimming

Skimming means running through a text quickly to get an idea of what it's about. For this, different steps have to be followed.

Go through the title and the table of contents. In order to understand the purpose of the book, read the preface, foreword or introduction. The appendices have to be examined. Go through the index which will help you to find out a specific piece of information. Read the chapter headings.

Note-making

Students cannot retain all the information which they have received. So note-making is indispensable study skill in the process of learning. Making notes will be helpful for the students for their future reference. Note-making will be helpful to memorise and learn new material and create the summary of the material. The things to be in mind when the students are involved in the process of note-making are described below.

- Write notes in a legible way so that it will be well understood. Ideas can be written as separate.
- Be careful to write the source of the notes.
- Try to make use of your own words.
- Don't write elaborately. Write main points only and the notes should be very short.
- Use of symbols and abbreviations will be helpful to make the notes short.

Summarising

Summarising is an important study skill which students want to be developed to be successful learners. A summary is a brief passage on the original material and it consists of the very significant information. A summary cannot be considered as a critical work. So your opinions, ideas and criticisms cannot be included. Summary should be written in your own words and sentence structure. A summary can be written by going through the following steps.

- The careful reading of the original text is needed. Reading should be done to the extent that the complete and accurate understanding of the text should be got.
- Then condense the main idea in to one sentence. For this, the first and last paragraphs can be consulted.
- Divide the original text in to the related paragraphs or sections. Sometimes subheadings will be there in the original text.
- For each paragraph, write a summary of one or two sentences.
- Then make use of these written sentences to prepare an outline.
- Now the summary can be written, start with an introduction which may include the name of the article or book, the author, and if possible, the date and name of the journal, magazine, or newspaper in which the article appeared.
- After the introduction, body of the summary can be written. Utilise the prepared sentences to create the body of the summary. Major points of the summary should be given due importance.

- Go through the summary for a final check. Did you include all the significant points? Did you use your words? Check grammar, spelling and punctuation also.

Conclusion

Study skills have to be promoted among students in order to make them successful learners. Through this paper, different aspects of study skills are described viz, features of the most effective study skills programmes, benefits of effective study skills and need for emphasising study skills. Then different study skills are described in detail. So from this paper, it is evident that the teachers have to take more measures to channelise students to the path of study skills. The need for practising study skills should be inculcated in the students.

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