



AVILA SCHOOL OF CLASSICAL HOMEOPATHY

Study Technique *by Kjetill Oftedal*

Actually, the study technique is quite simple in principle, but can be rather difficult to apply some times as it requires self-discipline, especially when one has become sleepy and feels uninspired.

The simple golden rule is as follows:

Stop reading when you run into a word you don't understand. Look it up. (This also applies to abbreviations and symbols.)

If you read on anyway, the rest of the material will become hard to remember, more difficult to understand and use, and you will lose interest as you continue reading.

There are several 'good reasons' for not using this rule, for example, 'the words explain themselves,' 'the context shows what the word means,' 'you don't have to understand everything,' 'speed reading is great,' etc. The purpose of words is actually to create pictures on your inner mental screen. If they don't do that, they are not registered by the understanding and you get onto the wrong track. It is even worse when you have a wrong understanding of a word. Then a false picture is registered by the understanding, which can lead to great confusion and problems.

A typical study sequence goes as follows:

1. You are interested in the book or the material and understand what you are reading.
2. Then you skip a word you don't quite understand (perhaps you are unaware of having done so).
3. The material becomes less interesting.
4. After a while you start losing your concentration, look around the room, become easily distracted by sounds and things happening about you.
5. You become restless. You get restless legs and hands, tap with a pencil and look around.
6. After a while the book or material has become uninteresting, you are yawning and sleepy, you close the book and take a break to do something else.

For the material to become interesting again, the skipped word (or words) must be looked up and understood correctly. In order to locate the misunderstood word(s), return to a point in the material where you were still interested. Locate the point you began losing interest. Just before this point you will find a word or symbol you did not understand well enough. Look it up. If your interest for the material does not return immediately, continue looking for misunderstood words until it does. Then you will suddenly feel awake again and recover high interest in the material. Continue reading from the point in the material where the first misunderstood word was found.



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Old subjects you have dropped may be revived by looking up all the words you did not understand then. Suddenly the subject becomes interesting again.

It requires discipline to clean up the past as regards this study rule. But you can succeed if you take on a little bit at a time. There are hundreds, even thousands of words you have skipped in the course of your life. This gives you a good deal of useless mental luggage to carry around with you, all of which may result in your being more easily confused on receiving information via words. This is especially true of grammatical words and expressions. They are important because you run into grammatical abbreviations when you look up words in a dictionary. You need to know what a verb, an adjective and an adverb, etc. is or you will pass by abbreviations you don't fully understand every time you look up a word. A lack of understanding of grammar is usually the greatest barrier to learning a foreign language.

Obviously one needs good dictionaries in order to be able to apply this main rule of study technique, namely *not skipping words that are improperly understood*. One should preferably use dictionaries in which words are defined using simple words, and where some examples of use and the origin of words are given. Special subjects such as math, physics and medicine, etc. require separate dictionaries and are of vital importance to obtain.

If you apply this simple rule, you will be able to study all day without losing your concentration or becoming tired. You will be able to keep your interest at a high level, remember, and be able to apply the material.

In classrooms, raise your hand when the teacher uses a word you don't understand. Get him/her to define it. Then you will not be bored or fall asleep on the course, you will understand what is being said, and will be doing the other students who did not raise their hand a favour.

It is actually a magical tool. There is no subject that is too difficult if you use it. Your ability to read and understand will increase the more you use this rule. Your IQ will rise and you will be able to read faster.

This rule is the golden key to the high heaven of knowledge.

Use it and you will obtain an increasing joy and interest in studying, and become incredibly more effective in your courses and studies, use less time and achieve much more, with high grades and a deep understanding as a result. You will be out playing pool when your fellow students are beating their brains out studying, and you will get higher grades.

Here follow some main points:



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TO LOOK UP A WORD

1. Look it up in a good dictionary (this is the very least you should do).
2. Use the word in a sentence that illustrates its meaning.
3. Continue until you are able to make sentences without any effort.
4. Then the word has become a concept and also your own **personal property**, a word you will be using in the future.
5. This is done for each different relevant meaning in the definition of the word.
6. You should feel good when you are finished with the word.
7. If you run into words in the definition you don't understand, do the same with them.

A SCALE OF HOW WELL A WORD IS UNDERSTOOD

1. Never heard of it.
2. Has heard of it but knows not what it means.
3. Can give a definition of the word, but is unable to use the word in a sentence.
4. Is able to use the word in a sentence, but the sentence does not illustrate the meaning of the word.
5. Is easily able to use the word in many illustrative sentences.
6. Can clearly explain the word to someone who doesn't know it.
7. Owns the word and holds it in the mind as a concept. Uses the word as part of his/her own vocabulary in speech and writing.

STUDY SEQUENCE AS A RESULT OF MISUNDERSTOOD WORDS

1. Studies with a high level of interest.
2. Goes by a misunderstood word.
3. Thought dispersal, reduced concentration, looks around the room.
4. Becomes restless, with restless legs and hands.
5. Is bored, begins to yawn, becomes sleepy.
6. The subject has become repulsive.
7. Throws the book away, drops the course.

WHAT TO DO WHEN THE MATERIAL BEGINS TO BECOME UNINTERESTING OR DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND

1. Return to a point just before you started losing interest in the material.
2. Find a word you can't immediately define.
3. Look it up.
4. Look up any words in the definition of the word that you don't understand (best to have a good dictionary that avoids difficult words in definitions (Longman)).
5. Continue in this manner until you feel good, are interested in continuing with reading and feel awake again.
6. Continue reading from the location of the first misunderstood word in the text.