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Strategies for producing a great assignment.

- Read the assignment carefully. Highlight key words and terms.
- Jot down the key tasks in the assignment. Estimate and allocate time for each activity. Time management is the key.
- Research information from multiple sources.
- Use the notes you collected when researching to develop a draft copy of your assignment.
- Preferably leave a day or so between creating and proofing.
- Proof edit your assignment and make any changes required.
- Submit the finished copy.

Strategies for learning a new computer program.

- When you are not sure how to use a specific application there are several strategies you can use to resolve your dilemma.
- Examine the interface to understand what is similar with other programs you use.
- Allow time to 'play' or experiment with the software.
- Read the inbuilt help files associated with the program.
- Visit the website of the developer of that application.
- Join a user group for that application.

Study Tips

- Follow the syllabus.
- Make sure you know what is in the syllabus.
- Create a study timetable. Give your parents a copy of the timetable. Even stick it on the fridge.
- Do not study the one subject for more than 1hr at a time as your concentration and memory diminishes after that time.
- For every 1 hr study period allocate 10 minutes for having a break.
- Allow 'cool down' time before going bed so that your mind/body is relaxed before sleep.
- Develop one page summaries on each topic.
- Visit quality HSC support sites such as HSC Online, Board of Studies, Bored of Studies and SMH.
- Resit past HSC and trial papers.
- Redo essay questions.
- Create study groups.
- Read your textbook and if necessary the study guides such as the ones made by Excel.
- Talk to your teacher.
- Study somewhere where there is no or minimal distractions.
- On line chat, TV and phones are major distractions.

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How to Summarize

- A summary is a shorter version of a longer piece of writing. The summary captures all the most important parts of the original, but expresses them in a (much) shorter space. A summary should be expressed - as far as possible - in your own words. It's not enough to merely copy out parts of the original.
- There are different methods for summarising documents. The simplest is Read it, Write about it, Reflect upon what you have written. A more in depth approach is as follows.
- Read the original quickly, and try to understand its main subject or purpose. Note the document structure (Headings and sub-headings) as this also helps to build up your understanding of the document's purpose.
- Re-read it again to understand it in more detail.
- Underline or make a marginal notes of the main issues. Use a highlighter if this helps.
- Look up any words or concepts you don't know, so that you understand the author's sentences and how they relate to each other.
- Work through the text to identify its main sections or arguments. These might be expressed as paragraphs or web pages.
- Remember that the purpose [and definition] of a paragraph is that it deals with one issue or topic.
- Draw up a list of the topics - or make a diagram. A simple picture of boxes or a spider diagram can often be helpful.
- Write a one or two-sentence account of each section you identify. Focus your attention on the main point. Leave out any illustrative examples.
- Write a sentence which states the central idea of the original text.
- Use this as the starting point for writing a paragraph which combines all the points you have made.
- The final summary should concisely and accurately capture the central meaning of the original.
- Remember that it must be in your own words. By writing in this way, you help to re-create the meaning of the original in a way which makes sense for you.

Extra Tips

- Even though notes are only for your own use, they will be more effective if they are recorded clearly and neatly. Good layout will help you to recall and assess material more readily. If in doubt use the following general guidelines.
- Before you even start, make a note of your source(s). If this is a book, an article, or a journal, write the following information at the head of your notes: Author, title, publisher, publication date, and edition of book.
- Use loose-leaf A4 paper. This is now the international standard for almost all educational printed matter. Don't use small notepads. You will find it easier to keep track of your notes if they fit easily alongside your other study materials.
- Write clearly and leave a space between each note. Don't try to cram as much as possible onto one page. Keeping the items separate will make them easier to recall. The act of laying out information in this way will cause you to assess the importance of each detail.
- Use a new page for each set of notes. This will help you to store and identify them later. Keep topics separate, and have them clearly titled and labelled to facilitate easy recall.
- Write on one side of the page only. Number these pages. Leave the blank sides free for possible future additions, and for any details which may be needed later.