



# Improve Your Study Skills

## DODEA Virtual High School (DVHS): Vision

To provide interactive and engaging digital instruction that prepares students to learn, work, and serve a global society.



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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE EDUCATION ACTIVITY

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## PURPOSE

Read this booklet and refer to it often to help you acquire the reading and critical thinking skills that are necessary for understanding challenging new material, analyzing that material to deduce meaning, and applying what you learn. Learn how to use critical terms and vocabulary as tools for learning, understanding, and communication.

### BECOMING A SUCCESSFUL LEARNER

Successful learners possess certain qualities and habits that help them thrive in an online environment. Often they are self-aware, self-disciplined, independent, self-starters that do not rely on the presence of a traditional teacher in a classroom. Ultimately, it is up to the learner to make certain that they are learning the required course material, whether in the traditional classroom or in an online course.

This guide presents a number of study and planning methods to help you with your studies. Dedicate some time now to learn how you can succeed in your online course. Regardless of where or what you are learning, success takes effort and determination. What are some attributes and skills that are needed for your success? Besides effort and determination, you must also possess:

- ⇒ **A positive attitude**—This means that you believe in yourself and you have the belief that you are capable of learning.
- ⇒ **Self-motivation**—This means that you are willing to discipline yourself to do your schoolwork in an efficient and satisfactory manner rather than relying on somebody else to motivate you or offer you incentives (treats) in order for you to complete your lessons.
- ⇒ **Awareness to know when to get help**— Your teachers are available to help you no matter the question. They are a great source of information, not only in your courses but in other areas too. Always remember that there is no such thing as a “dumb” question.
- ⇒ **Discipline**—Learning takes time and concentration. Of course, there are going to be times when you would rather be doing something “fun” instead of doing your schoolwork. However, if you are going to succeed, you need to devote the time to your education that it needs and deserves. Pro athletes do not become overnight phenomena. It takes years of practice and attention to every detail of their lives to sculpt their bodies and hone their talents so they can attain the aspirations of their hopes and dreams, that of being a professional athlete.



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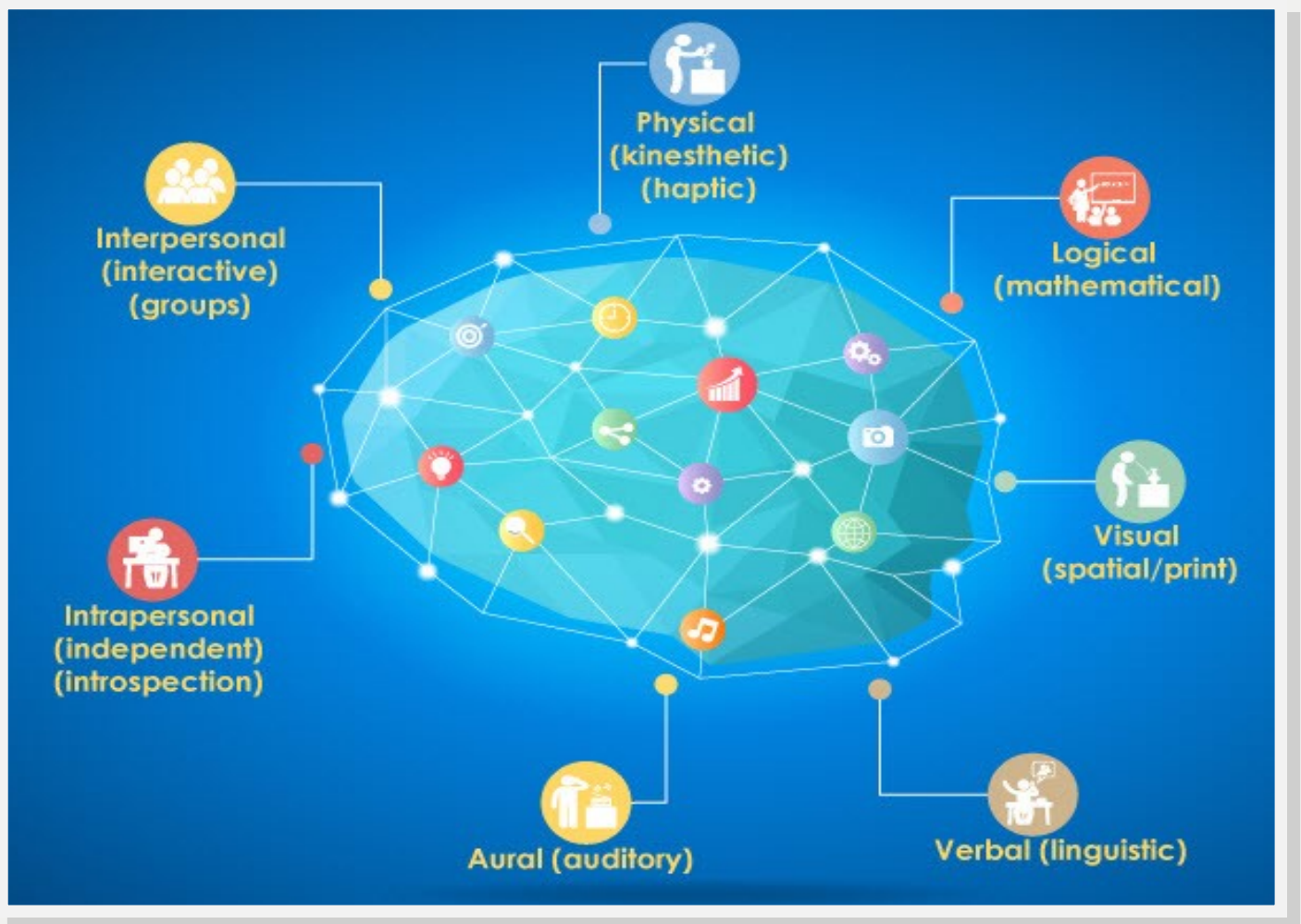
## LEARNING PREFERENCES

Research theories have identified the different ways in which people learn. Some learners preference is through listening, while others may feel they learn best by reading or looking at pictures. This is called **Learning Styles** or **Learning Modalities**.

There have been questions raised as to the validity or value of identifying one's **Learning Styles**. However, what has been shown as helpful is the "process of thinking about one's thinking" what is called **metacognition**. Having the learner use the process of metacognition to think about how they learn best and what learning preferences or strategies are most beneficial to them can help them improve their learning success (Chick, 2016).

Knowing your learning preference may help you decide on which study methods might work best for you to maximize your learning goals.

- One popular model is [VARK Modalities](#) (**V**isual, **A**ural, **R**ead/Write, **K**inesthetic) by Neil Fleming.
- Visit [Learning Styles and the Online Environment](#) to learn about a variety of models.
- The Institute for Learning Styles Research has an [Overview of the Seven Perceptual Styles](#).



King, L. after Howard Gardner's Model of Multiple Intelligences and the Seven Perceptual Styles

# TIME MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

Despite what many people may think, it is impossible to get any more hours out of one day than 24. That is it. That is all we have, 24 hours in one day. One thing is for sure, the sun rises, and the sun sets. "Tempus Fugit" – that is Latin for "time flies".

Managing your time, or making the time you have allotted for your studies work for you, is very important. Have you ever heard the expression "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy"? What this expression is telling us is this, that you do not have to do your schoolwork round the clock. It is okay to have fun and free time. Free time and fun are actually healthy for you. Your success in your education can many times be measured by how well you balance your learning time with some 'down' time. Learning how to successfully manage your time now will not only help you while you are in school, but it will also help you later in your personal and professional life.



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## Let us look at a few time management techniques.

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### Budget your time:

No one expects you to work all the time! As you schedule your time answer the following questions: When are you the most productive? How much sleep do you need? When are your surroundings the quietest? When are your friends around? When do you participate in other activities like sports, scouts, religious activities, etc.?

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### Use a calendar or day planner:

A calendar or day planner can help you organize your courses and the assignments within those courses. You can list what hour (s) you will be studying which course and important dates for those courses, for example, when written assignments or tests are due or to be taken.

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### Take study breaks:

If you know that you begin to lose interest in what you are doing after say, 20 minutes, take a short break. Stand up, move around, pet the dog, get a drink, and then come back to the subject you just put down. Review what you have read, think about the main points of the reading, and move on.

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### Set goals for completing your schoolwork:

Setting goals for completing your schoolwork goes hand in hand with time management. You need a daily plan and while also looking at the "big picture." This involves actually deciding when you will complete your assignments in each course. Your teacher will provide you with a list of assignment due dates, use that list to plan your work schedule.

# ONLINE STUDENT EXAMPLES

## SCENARIO #1 SETTING GOALS

Noah is completing a course during the summer. He has decided he wants to be finished in five weeks so that he can visit his grandparents and spend time with them before the regular school year begins.



Noah. eLearning Brothers

Noah reviews the assignments he needs to complete. He sits down with his calendar and carefully plots out the time he will spend on each lesson and decides when he will begin work on his exams. Noah makes a note of them in his calendar.

## SCENARIO #2 USING A SCHEDULE

Lily is a tenth grade student enrolled in an online summer school class. While her mother is home during the day, her father works outside of the house. She knows that the best time of the day to complete her schoolwork is during the day, when the house is quieter and she can use the computer without interruption from other family members. She also likes to get her work done earlier because she seems more focused and able to concentrate better in the morning and early afternoon.

Lily gets up, goes through her usual morning routine including eating a healthy breakfast, and she then gets on the computer and begins her work by 9:00 a.m. She takes a five-minute break at 10:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. and then stops at noon for lunch and a brief walk outside with the dog. She then finishes up by 2:00 p.m.

- ✓ 9:00 a.m. Begin Schoolwork
- ✓ 10:00 a.m. 5-min. Break
- ✓ 11:00 a.m. 5-min. Break
- ✓ 12:00 Lunch & Walk
- ✓ 1:00 p. m. Continue Schoolwork



Lily. eLearning Brothers

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# ORGANIZE YOUR WORK SPACE: SCHOOL & HOME

## Have a place to do your homework:

Finding a **quiet place** free from distraction for you to do your homework is important. Nothing fancy is needed! Your work area should be free from a lot of noise, traffic and other interruptions where you can concentrate on your work. **Ask a parent** to help you with this if you find this dif-

## Notebook or Paper:

Having someplace to write what you are trying to remember is necessary.

## Have Appropriate Storage:

Be it bookshelves, desk drawers or plastic milk crates, it is important that you have an area to keep your school materials organized. Make sure you have an area where you can keep your notebooks and other important coursework safe from destruction.





**Ensure Good Lighting:**

Be sure there is plenty of light in your work area. A well-lit area is essential to reduce eyestrain, which can lead to headaches, nausea, and other unhealthy side effects that may keep you from completing your work.

**Obtain the Essential Equipment:**

- ✓ Computer
- ✓ Keyboard, Mouse
- ✓ Mousepad (optional)
- ✓ Headset/Microphone

**Have pens/pencils ready for notetaking!!**

Even though your coursework is online, taking notes is important to help you remember key concepts.

**Adjust your chair height** to a comfortable position.

**Desk/Workspace:**

You will need a place to work. Having a consistent place to work forces us to study. It's as if our mind and body remembers studying here before we quickly go into "study" mode.

## STRATEGY: NOTE-TAKING

## GOAL

**Purpose:** Improve Study Skills

There are three stages to taking notes: **before**, **during**, and **after** a lesson.

**Before** each lesson, you should do the following:

1. Make sure that you **review** the notes from the previous lesson. This will help you prepare for the new information that you are about to learn.
2. You should **complete all assigned readings** and activities before moving on to the next lesson. This is the only way to build on the information as it is being taught.
3. You should **be prepared** with the materials that you need - pens, pencils, paper/notebook.

**During** each lesson, you need to do the following:

1. Focus on your lessons without distraction. This means that there should be nothing competing with your class work (dog, sister, TV, phone, music, video games, etc.).
2. Write important information down in your notebook. Each time you write something, you are more likely to remember the point.
3. Place a question mark (?) next to anything in your notebook that does not seem to make sense. You can then ask someone for help, most likely your teacher!

**After** each lesson, you need to do the following:

1. Rewrite your notes to make them more complete and clear. This will help you remember what you are learning and provides you time to complete any missing material that you forgot to jot down. It may also jog your memory for outstanding questions that you might have for you to go back into your lesson to find the answer.
2. Remove the question marks (?s) you had by writing down the answers that you got from your teacher.

## GOAL

**Purpose:** Improve Study Skills

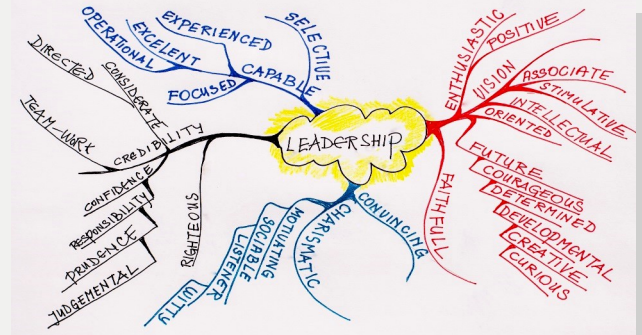
## STRATEGY: NOTE-TAKING

### Outlining

Outlining is a method that allows you to organize material in a way that groups concepts, people, or events together. You can use the structure of your lessons to help you produce the structure of your outline. You can use letters, roman numerals, numbers, or bullets with this method.

### Mind-Mapping

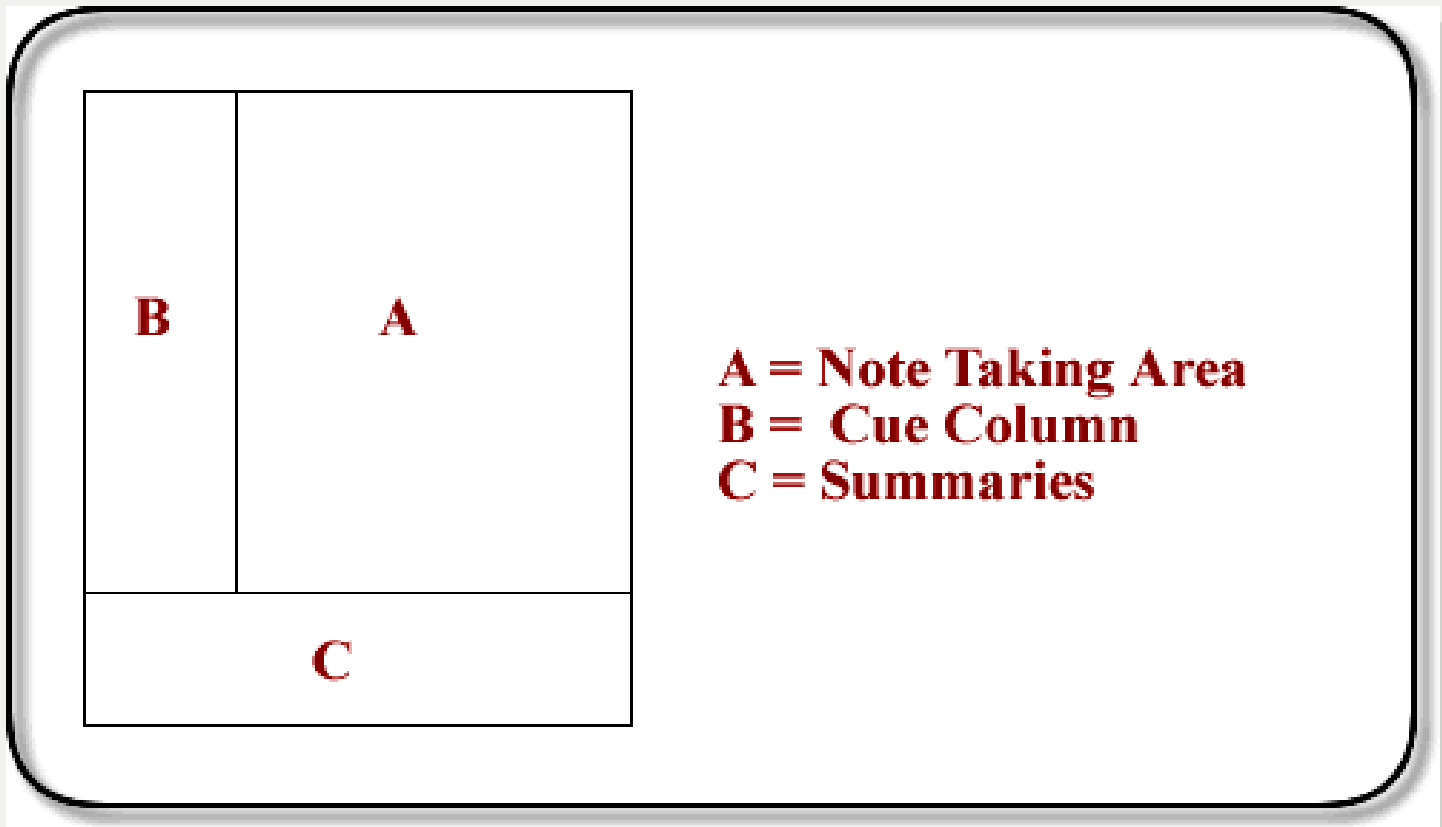
This method of note-taking is similar to the types of graphic organizers that some people use when creating a research paper or writing a story or essay. Mind-mapping allows you to group your ideas through diagrams and creating "branches". You can connect items by drawing lines.



### Cornell Note-Taking

The diagram below shows how you would separate each page of notes into three sections. You can draw the lines in your notebook, or you can download our plain template or graph template, both used by permission from American Digest.

- ✓ Section A is the **Note-taking Area** where you record what you are learning.
- ✓ Section B is the **Cue Column**. This area remains empty until you finish a lesson. When finished, reduce your notes to list clues for reviewing what you learned.
- ✓ Section C, is the **Summary** area where you "sum up" the notes in a sentence or two.



## GOAL

**Purpose:** Improve Study Skills

## STRATEGY: NOTE-TAKING

Aventa Learning, K12, High School Orientation

### Left Side of the Notebook

- Put things in your own words
- Illustrate the concept, ideas, or facts
- Ask questions about the information
- Form and share an opinion
- Predict next steps
- Formulate and record an opinion that contradicts what you are learning - then try to prove that the contradiction is wrong!
- Write a reflection on the information
- Make connections between the information/text and your own life, another text, and/or the world
- Create a mind map
- Create an acronym that will help you to remember the information covered
- Make connections to the other courses you are taking

### Right Side of the Notebook

Notes on:

- tutorials
- reading
- labs
- videos
- discussions
- a copied excerpt of a text
- activities

## Interactive Notebook

The interactive notebook began as a strategy in Addison Wesley's program, *History Alive!* Students each have a spiral notebook to record information for the class; each pair of pages is designated for different purposes. The right side of the notebook is used to record notes. The left side of the notebook is so the student can interact with the information on the right page. This interaction is not directed by the teacher in any way. Below is a partial list of some of those options. Can you think of any others as you use this strategy?

## Annotating Text

In this strategy, you can create a framework for your reading. This means that you think about what you know about the topic, place, event, or issue and to think about how you know that information. You ask questions. You write down the obvious or not so obvious. Can you make connections from what you read to another text or reading? Do you understand who the audience is? Ask these questions as you "annotate" your reading.

This may involve cutting and pasting text into a document and then typing your thoughts. This may involve printing the text first and hand writing your notes (yes, you can still hand write even in an online course!) Here is a sample of an [annotated text](#).

## Dense Questioning

Dense Questioning, a reading strategy created by Leila Christenbury (1998), will help you interpret and synthesize information. In this method, you develop a series of questions as you go through your lessons. The idea is to pose questions about what you are reading to help you better understand the text at a deeper and richer level. You can use a [graphic organizer](#) to help you take notes using this strategy. The questioning surrounds perspectives between the Text, the Reader, and the World.

Learners can develop questions during the reading process to get ready for a discussion, or to understand the reading, or to develop topics for a paper.



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## GOAL

**Purpose:** Improve Writing Skills

**STRATEGY: SUMMARY WRITING**

### SUMMARY WRITING—MARZANO INFORMATION

Effective summarizing leads to an increase in learning. Helping a learner recognize how information is structured will help them summarize what they read or hear. For example, summarizing of a reading assignment can be more effective when done within summary frames, which typically include a series of questions the teacher provides to focus attention to specific content (Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock, 2001). Students who can effectively summarize learn to synthesize information, a higher-order thinking skill (HOTS) which includes analyzing information, identifying key concepts, and defining extraneous information.

### KEY RESEARCH FINDINGS

- ⇒ Students have to analyze information at a deep level in order to decide what information to ignore, what to substitute, and what to keep when they are asked to give a summary (Anderson, V., & Hidi, 1988/1989; Hidi & Anderson, 1987).
- ⇒ Reading comprehension increases when students learn how to use "summary frames" as a tool for summarizing (Meyer & Freedle, 1984). Summary frames are a series of questions created by the teacher and designed to highlight critical passages of text. When students use this strategy, they are better able to understand what they are reading, identify key information, and provide a summary that helps them retain the information (Armbruster, Anderson, & Ostertag, 1987).

Visit [Graphic Organizers for Summarization](#) to locate useful links to Graphic Organizers and example **Summary Frames**.



totallyPic.com, iStock/thinkstock

(2005). RESEARCHED-BASED STRATEGIES, Summarizing and Note Taking. *Focus on Effectiveness*. Retrieved 03, 2011, from <http://www.netc.org/focus/strategies/summ.php> [No longer a viable link].

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### Steps to Writing a Competent Summary

- 1) Carefully read the selection.
- 2) Reread the text and mark information that is relevant to the reading purpose.
- 3) Pause to connect ideas within the text.
- 4) Make a list of the most important information in the paragraph or section. Leave out nonessential descriptions and other supporting details.
- 5) Try to write one sentence that includes all of the relevant information in the paragraph. If the paragraph is long, you may need to write two sentences.

### Consider the Following when Writing a Summary

- Use your own words, except for important content words.
- Do not include your own ideas or comments, such as “I think...”
- Do not repeat ideas or change the author’s meaning.

### When summarizing the whole text...

- 1) Copy your summary sentences into a paragraph and use transitional language in order to logically create relationships between ideas.
- 2) Read your paragraph. Check to be sure that you have included enough information so that someone who has not read the selection would understand the main points. Your summary should not be more than one-fourth to one-third the length of the original passage.

### WHAT IS AVID?

#### [AVID, Advancement Via Individual Determination](#), is a global

nonprofit organization that focuses on research, teaching practices, and methods to improve students college readiness and to increase schoolwide learning and performance from elementary through higher education. The **Summary Writing** method offered here was created by AVID.

### SUMMARY WRITING: AVID

**Goals:** Seek to understand your reading and writing tasks. Establish a purpose for reading to help narrow your focus as you make decisions about what you should include in a summary.

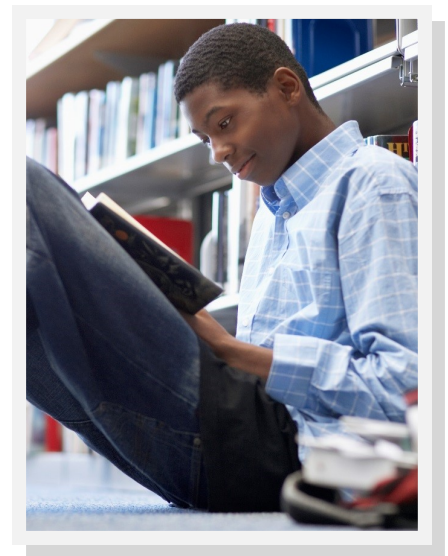
The steps below describe how a

reader should summarize an **expository text**. When we summarizing purely informational texts, we want to account for the main ideas. Because informational texts can be content heavy, we need to read them carefully to identify the most important content since some information is not important. Follow the steps below to summarize this type of reading and writing assignment.

**Step 1:** Seek to understand the reading and writing tasks. What are you expected to know and do? What are you summarizing?

**Step 2:** Carefully read the text. Read the text once to get a general idea of what the text is about.

**Step 3:** Reread and mark the text. Circle terms and underline information relevant to the reading and writing tasks.



## GOAL

**Purpose:** Improve Writing Skills

## STRATEGY: SUMMARY WRITING—AVID

**Step 4:** Pause to connect ideas within the text. Connect what is said to the visuals in the text. Ask questions such as “How does this section connect to the previous section?” or “What does this idea have to do with that idea?”

**Step 5:** Write summary statements in the margin. What is this paragraph (or section) about? What is the author saying? What is the author doing in this paragraph (or section)?

### *Consider the following when summarizing informational text:*

- Ideas are typically presented in the order that they appear in the text; however, you may need to present ideas in a different order if it makes sense to do so.
- Refer to your markings, summary statements, and any other comments you made as you craft your summary.
- Use accurate verbs such as defining, illustrating, or introducing to describe what an author is doing in a paragraph or section of text.
- Include important content and lesson-based vocabulary.
- Account for the main ideas in the text. Include enough

information so that someone who has not read the text would understand the main points.

- Use your own words and paraphrase when necessary. Ideas taken directly from the source should be properly quoted and cited.
- What we quote and how we quote it will depend on the actual discipline. For example, a science paper will have far fewer direct quotations than an English or social science paper. As a general rule, we should directly quote ideas that cannot be expressed accurately through paraphrasing or summarizing.
- Write objectively. Be sensitive to biases; avoid inaccurate interpretations or representations. We should express the ideas in the text fairly and accurately.
- Summaries should be read for clarity and accuracy.
- Summaries should not be more than one-fourth to one-third the length of the original text.

*Want to learn more about AVID's initiatives? Visit [AVID and the Common Core](#)*



## STRATEGY: SUMMARY WRITING RUBRIC CHECKLIST

## GOAL

**Purpose:** Improve Writing Skills

A rubric may be used for any assignment such as discussion boards, projects, papers, labs, or presentations. Rubrics set guidelines that your teacher can use to score your work. Rubrics show you where and how you will earn points and helps you understand the expectations of an assignment.

The rubrics shown here describe how your teacher may evaluate a **Summary Writing**. If you understand the “**Above Standard**” criteria, you will be well on your way to achieving the highest possible score on a summary assignment and in understanding of how to interpret and describe what you have read.

### **Summary is Above Standard = 5**

- ✓ Summary demonstrates a strong focus and concisely catches the main points
- ✓ The main idea is clear, sustained and there is use of supporting details
- ✓ Length of summary is appropriate
- ✓ Is in correct paragraph form
- ✓ Organization of summary is logical
- ✓ There is a well-linked beginning, middle and end
- ✓ Excellent use of transitions within summary
- ✓ Voice is objective and impartially presents an appropriate point of view.
- ✓ Vocabulary is appropriate for intended audience
- ✓ Exceptional use of sentence variety
- ✓ Writing is free of conventional spelling and mechanical errors

### **Summary is Developing = 3**

- ✓ Main idea presented in summary is evident but supporting details only minimally supportive
- ✓ Some paragraphing in summary
- ✓ Summary is too long OR too short to be effective
- ✓ Distinguishable beginning, middle and end
- ✓ Use of transitions is attempted within written summary
- ✓ Writer's voice is evident and summary reflects the writer's opinion
- ✓ Many errors in spelling and mechanics that distract the reader

### **Summary is At Standard = 4**

- ✓ Clear main idea & sufficient and relevant supporting details within summary gives reader adequate understanding
- ✓ Is written in sentence and paragraph form
- ✓ Overall organization of summary demonstrates a strong beginning, middle and ending.
- ✓ Clear use of transitions
- ✓ Voice is objective an personal opinion is appropriate
- ✓ Vocabulary is appropriate to the purpose of the writing
- ✓ Effective use of some sentence variety
- ✓ Writing has been well edited
- ✓ Occasional spelling & mechanical errors do not distract the reader

### **Summary is Below Standard = 1**

- ✓ Supporting details are weak and it is not clear what idea they are supporting
- ✓ Summary not completed in sentence and paragraph form
- ✓ No use of transitions within written summary
- ✓ No distinguishable voice
- ✓ Vocabulary is simple but sufficient to convey basic ideas
- ✓ Writing has not been edited & contains many spelling & mechanical errors

*One Mission, One Vision, One School*



# GOAL

**Purpose:** Improve Writing Skills

## STRATEGY: SUMMARY WRITING—RUBRIC

	<b>Below Standard</b> 1 point	<b>Developing</b> 3 points	<b>At Standard</b> 4 points	<b>Above Standard</b> 5 points
<b>Purpose &amp; Form</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No clear topic sentence to indicate main idea of summary.</li> <li>Supporting details are weak and it is not clear what idea they are supporting.</li> <li>Summary not completed in sentence and paragraph form.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Main idea presented in summary is evident but supporting details only minimally supportive; therefore, reader is vague about content of original article.</li> <li>Some paragraphing in summary.</li> <li>Summary is too long OR too short to be effective.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clear main idea &amp; sufficient and relevant supporting details within summary gives reader adequate understanding of content of original article.</li> <li>Is one third to a half the length of the original</li> <li>Is written in sentence and paragraph form.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Summary demonstrates a strong focus and concisely catches the main points of the original article.</li> <li>The main idea is clear, sustained and supporting details presenting in same order as original.</li> <li>Length of summary is appropriate</li> <li>Is in correct paragraph form.</li> </ul>
<b>Organization</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No clear beginning, middle or ending</li> <li>No use of transitions within written summary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Distinguishable beginning, middle and end</li> <li>Use of transitions is attempted within written summary.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overall organization of summary demonstrates a strong beginning, middle and ending.</li> <li>Clear use of transitions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organization of summary is logical &amp; coincides with the original.</li> <li>There is a well-linked beginning, middle and end</li> <li>Excellent use of transitions within summary.</li> </ul>
<b>Style</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No distinguishable voice.</li> <li>Vocabulary is simple but sufficient to convey basic ideas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Writer's voice is evident and summary reflects the writer's opinions.</li> <li>Attempting to use vocabulary from within original article.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Voice is objective and no personal opinion is evident.</li> <li>Vocabulary is appropriate to the purpose of the writing.</li> <li>Effective use of some sentence variety.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Voice is objective and impartially presents article's point of view.</li> <li>Vocabulary is appropriate for intended audience and reflects accurately the degree of complexity of the original.</li> <li>Exceptional use of sentence variety</li> </ul>
<b>Mechanics &amp; Spelling</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Writing has not been edited &amp; contains many spelling &amp; mechanical errors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many errors in spelling and mechanics that distract the reader.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Writing has been well edited.</li> <li>Occasional spelling &amp; mechanical errors do not distract the reader.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Writing is free of conventional spelling and mechanical errors.</li> </ul>

## STRATEGY: SUMMARY WRITING 6+1 TRAIT WRITING MODEL

### GOAL

**Purpose:** Improve Writing Skills

### WHAT IS 6 TRAITS?

“*Six Traits Writing* is a systematic approach for looking at writing one part at a time. Since writing is such a complicated activity, this approach helps many people break down the task and understand it better. By focusing on and scoring only one trait at a time, a writer/reader can break down a complex activity like writing and make it more manageable. With practice, writers can then learn to be more critical of their own work and can make improvements in the quality of their writing. Perhaps, more than anything else, the six traits give teachers and students a common vocabulary for talking and thinking about writing.”

**6+1 Trait Rubrics** <http://educationnorthwest.org/traits/traits-rubrics>

**5-Point Writer’s Rubric** <http://educationnorthwest.org/sites/default/files/5-pointwriters-rubric.pdf>

(2015). Long, V. and Gardiner, S. The Interactive Six Trait Writing Process. *Introduction*. Retrieved 02, 2015, from The Literate Learner at [http://literatelearner.com/6traits/page\\_template6t.php?f=main](http://literatelearner.com/6traits/page_template6t.php?f=main).

### 6+1 KEY QUALITIES

The 6+1 Trait® Writing analytical model for assessing and teaching writing is made up of 6+1 key qualities that define strong writing. These are

- **Ideas**, the main message;
- **Organization**, the internal structure of the piece;
- **Voice**, the personal tone and flavor of the author’s message;
- **Word Choice**, the vocabulary a writer chooses to convey meaning;
- **Sentence Fluency**, the rhythm and flow of the language;
- **Conventions**, the mechanical correctness; and
- **Presentation**, how the writing actually looks on the page.

(2015). Education Northwest. 6+1 Trait Writing. Retrieved 02, 2015, from <http://educationnorthwest.org/traits>.



(2015). L. King.  
Based on the 6+1 Trait Writing by Education Northwest.

[Refer to Photo Credits for details about the photographs used in the graphic.]

## GOAL

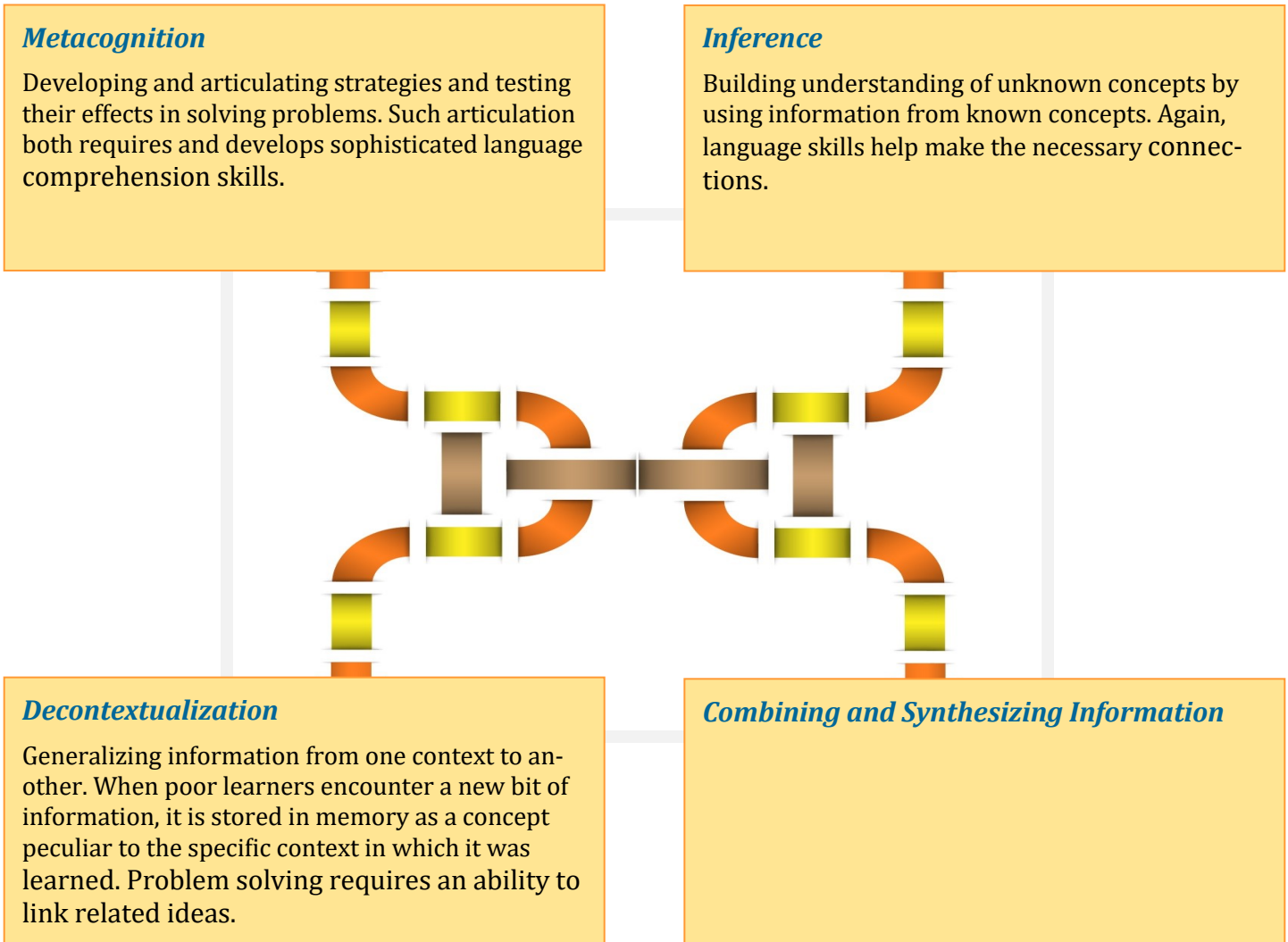
**Purpose:** Reading for Essential Understanding

## STRATEGY: HOTS HIGHER ORDER THINKING SKILLS

### *HOTS was developed by Stanley Pogrow*

Pogrow (1987) describes the HOTS curriculum:

"The HOTS program currently consists of daily lessons built around popular, commercially available software that develops the following thinking skills:



(2015). L. King. Based on the HOTS curriculum developed by Stanley Pogrow (1987). Central graphic, modified from chatchaisurakram. Multicolor presentation template. iStock/thinkstock.

The HOTS curriculum differs substantially from conventional approaches to using computers. Software is not used to teach the above or any other specific skills. Rather, software is used as an opportunity to create 'learning dramas': situations where students are highly motivated to complete a task and where questions are developed to stimulate students to engage in the key thinking skills. These questions are not necessarily related to the specific goal of the software, nor is the specific goal of the software important to the learning process. The programs simply involve and intrigue the students.

**STRATEGY: HOTS**  
**HIGHER ORDER THINKING SKILLS**

**GOAL**

**Purpose:** Reading for Essential Understanding

To promote key thinking skills, educators have used the *Socratic method* that uses **questioning** to promote critical thinking skills. Often questions are situated around a problem, situation, scenario, or drama. This is a common method used in the traditional classroom and in online courses where you might participate in a Discussion Board activity or where a written assignment provides you with a series of probing questions to answer. You may also have an opportunity to meet in an Adobe Connect session where your teacher may pose questions.

To explain this method of learning, let's look at a popular simulation called the Oregon Trail. Students are given information and are presented with vocabulary and situations that are not common today, but were common when the pioneers were making their way along the Oregon Trail. Students are tasked with a problem to reach Oregon via the old Oregon Trail. They must plan what they will take with them, their method of travel, and the route that they will take to arrive safely based on the information they are given.

- ◇ For *metacognition* skills, students answer a series of questions, For example,
  - ✓ 'What strategy did you choose to get to Oregon and why was that strategy successful?' or 'What strategy did you choose and why was it unsuccessful?'
  - ✓ To facilitate *decontextualization*, 'Describe where you have heard of the word *yoke* before?' or 'From what perspective are you viewing the wagon, and how did that differ from the perspective when you were flying the balloon in the Ride the Wind program?'
  - ✓ To emphasize *inference from context*, given these directions: 'Read the instructions and tell me if you think a yoke as used in this program is part of an egg [the yolk], why not, what do you think it might be, and why do you think it would be important?'
  - ✓ And finally, to encourage the combining of information they've learned, they were asked, 'Is anyone who traveled the Oregon Trail still alive today? How could you figure it out?' " (p. 11)



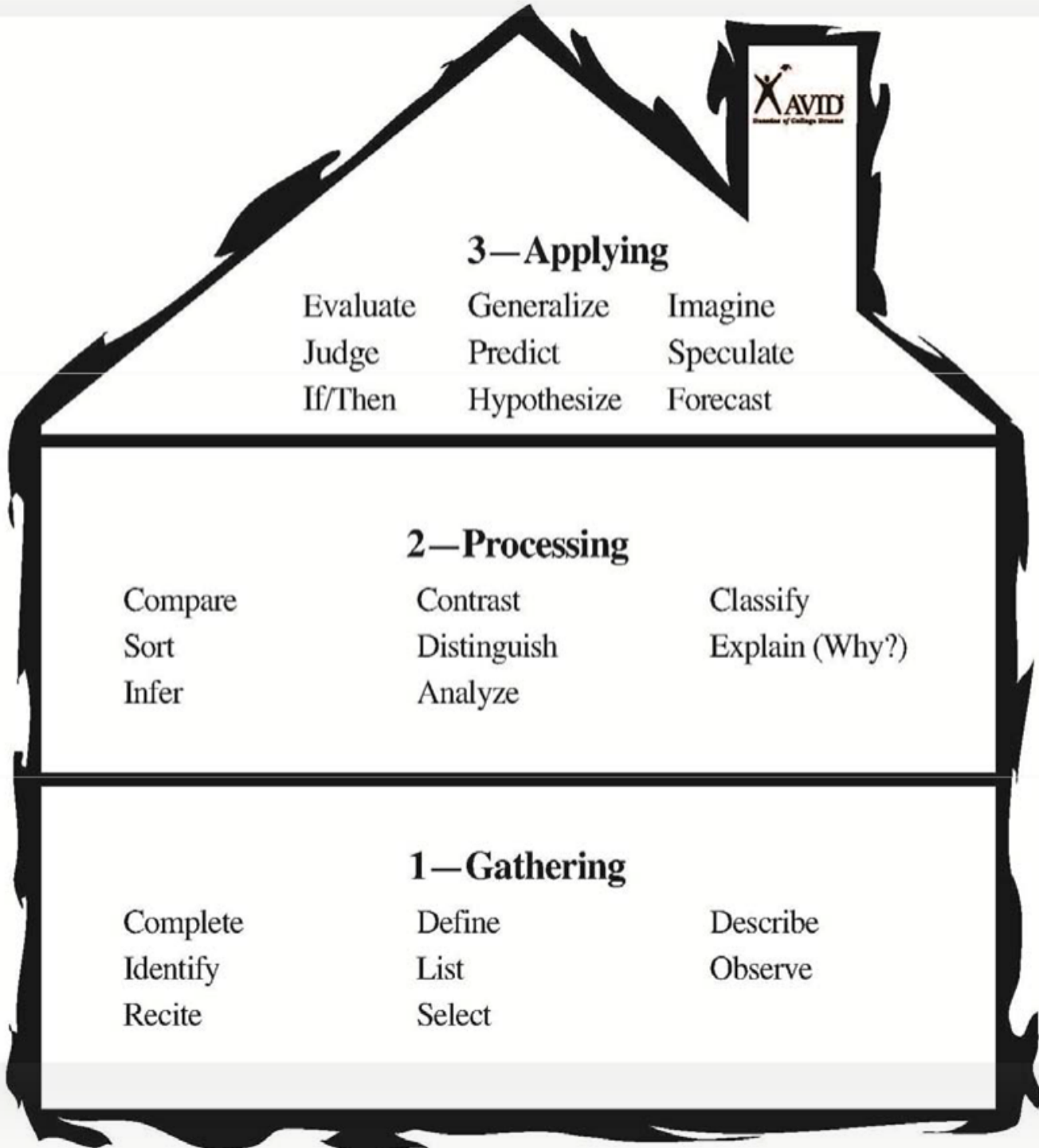
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## GOAL

**Purpose:** Reading for Essential Understanding

**STRATEGY: HOTS**  
**HIGHER ORDER THINKING SKILLS**

## AVID 3- STORY INTELLECT MODEL

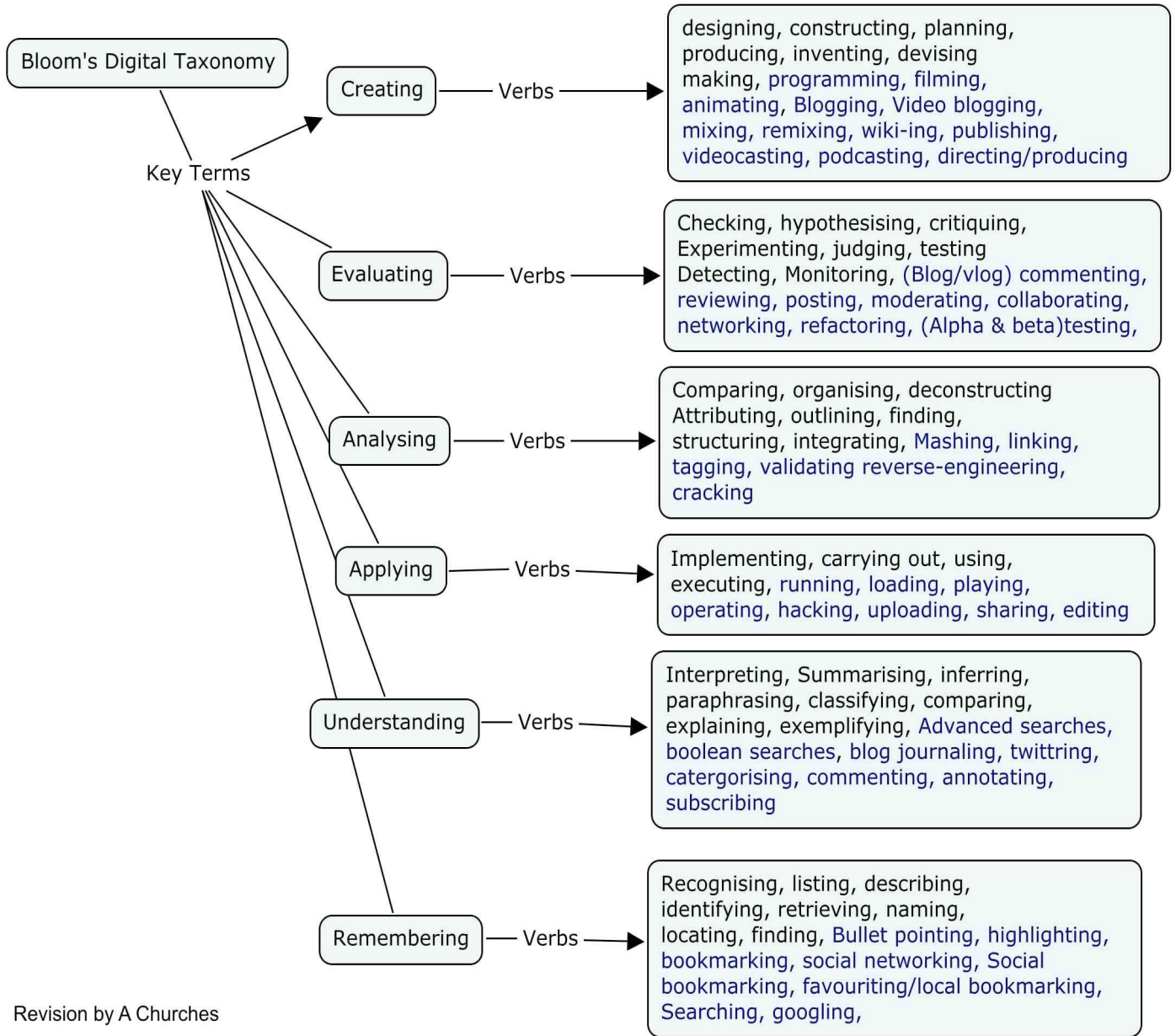


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Publisher: [AVID](#).

**BLOOM'S DIGITAL TAXONOMY MAP**



Revision by A Churches

**KEY:**

Elements colored in **black** are recognized and existing verbs,  
 Elements colored in **blue** are new digital verbs.

Bloom's Digital Taxonomy Map Retrieved from <http://edorigami.wikispaces.com/Bloom%27s+-+Introduction>  
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## GOAL

**Purpose:** Reading for Essential Understanding

## STRATEGY: HOTS BLOOM'S DIGITAL TAXONOMY

Review the digital learning tools and skills listed below to help you with ways to improve your online learning experience.

### REMEMBERING

Remembering relies on the ability to retrieve material. This is a key skill especially with the expansion of knowledge and information.

**Bullet pointing** – This is analogous to making a list but in a digital format.

- **Highlighting** – is a technique for recall. Most software programs/productivity suites provide methods to choose and highlight key words and phrases.
- **Bookmarking or favorite-ing** – this option allows you to bookmark and organize websites, resources and files for later use.
- **Social networking** – this is where people develop networks of friends and associates. Networking forges and creates links between different people. Like social bookmarks (see below) a social network can form a key element of collaborating and networking.
- **Social bookmarking** – this is an online version of local bookmarking or favorites. It is more advanced because you can draw on others' bookmarks and tags. While higher order thinking skills like *collaborating* and *sharing*, can and do make use of these skills, this is its simplest form - a simple list of sites saved to an online format rather than locally to the machine.
- **Searching or "Googling"** - Search engines are now key elements of students' research. It is as simple as just entering a key word or phrase into a the search engine. This skill does not refine the search beyond the key word or term.

### Key Terms - Remembering:

Recognizing, listing, describing, identifying, retrieving, naming, locating, finding, Bullet pointing, highlighting, bookmarking, social networking, Social bookmarking, favorite-ing/local bookmarking, Searching, Googling.

### UNDERSTANDING

- **Advanced and Boolean Searching** – This is a more advanced method of searching requiring a greater depth of understanding to be able to create, modify and refine searches to suit the search needs.
- **Blog Journaling** – This is the use of a blog, where a student simply "talks" "writes" or "types" in a daily- or task-specific journal. This level of use demonstrates a basic level of understanding . The blog can be used to develop higher level thinking when used for discussion and collaboration.
- **Twittering** – The Twitter site's question is "what are you doing?" This can be a one or two word answer, but when developed this is a tool can lend itself to developing understanding and potentially starting a collaboration.
- **Categorizing** – digital classification - organizing and classifying files, web sites and materials using folders etc.
- **Commenting and annotating** – a variety of tools exist that allow the user to comment and annotate on web pages, .pdf files and other documents. The user develops understanding by commenting. This is analogous with writing notes on hand outs, but is potentially more powerful as you can link and index these.

**STRATEGY: HOTS**  
**BLOOM'S DIGITAL TAXONOMY**

- **Subscribing** – Subscription takes bookmarking one level further. The act of subscription by itself does not show or develop understanding but often the process of reading and revisiting the subscribed-to feeds leads to greater understanding.

**Key Terms - Understanding:**

Interpreting, Summarizing, inferring, paraphrasing, classifying, comparing, explaining, exemplifying, Advanced searching, Boolean searching, blog journaling, twittering, categorizing and tagging, commenting, annotating, subscribing.

**APPLYING**

- **Running and operating** – This is the action of initiating a program or operating and manipulating hardware and applications to obtain a basic goal or objective.
- **Playing** – The increasing in games is another mode of education. Students who successfully play or operate a game are showing understanding of process and task and application of skills.
- **Uploading and Sharing** - uploading materials to websites and the sharing of materials via sites like Flickr etc. This is a simple form of collaboration, a higher order thinking skill.
- **Hacking** – hacking in its simpler forms is applying a simple set of rules to achieve a goal or objective.
- **Editing** – With most media, editing is a process or a procedure that the editor employs.

**Key Terms - Applying:**

Implementing, carrying out, using, executing, running, loading, playing, operating, hacking, uploading, sharing, editing.

**GOAL**

**Purpose:** Reading for Essential Understanding





## GOAL

**Purpose:** Reading for Essential Understanding

## STRATEGY: HOTS BLOOM'S DIGITAL TAXONOMY

### ANALYZING

- **Mashing** – mash ups are the integration of several data sources into a single resource. Mashing data is a complex process but as more options and sites evolve this will become an increasingly easy and accessible means of analysis.
- **Linking** – this is establishing and building links within and outside of documents and web pages.
- **Reverse-engineering** – this is analogous with *deconstruction*. It is also related to cracking often without the negative implications.
- **Cracking** – cracking requires the cracker to understand and operate the application or system being cracked, analyze its strengths and weaknesses and then exploit these.
- **Validating** – With the wealth of information available today along with the lack of authentication of data, you must be able to validate the accuracy of information sources. To do this you must be able to analyze the data sources and make judgments based on these.
- **Tagging** – This is organizing, structuring and attributing online data, meta-tagging web pages. You need to understand and analyze the content of the pages to be able to tag it.

#### Key Terms - Analyzing:

Comparing, organizing, deconstructing, Attributing, outlining, finding, structuring, integrating, Mashing, linking, reverse-engineering, cracking, mind- mapping, validating, tagging.

Bloom's Digital Taxonomy Map Retrieved from <http://edorigami.wikispaces.com/Bloom%27s+-+Introduction> under Creative Commons 2.5 <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.5/>

### EVALUATING

- **Blog/vlog commenting and reflecting** – Constructive criticism and reflective practice are often facilitated by the use of blogs and video blogs. Students commenting and replying to postings evaluate material in context and reply.
- **Posting** – posting comments to blogs, discussion boards, threaded discussions. These are common elements of students' daily practice. Good postings are not simple one-line answers but rather are structured and constructed to evaluate the topic or concept.
- **Moderating** – This is high level evaluation; the moderator must be able to evaluate a posting or comment from a variety of perspectives, assessing its worth, value and appropriateness.
- **Collaborating and networking** – Communication and collaboration leading to collective intelligence is a key aspect. Effective collaboration involves evaluating the strengths and abilities of the participants and evaluating the contribution they make. Networking is a feature of collaboration, contacting and communicating with relevant person via a network of associates.
- **Testing (Alpha and Beta)** – Testing of applications, processes and procedures is a key in the development of any tool. To be an effective tester you must have the ability to analyze the purpose of the tool or process, what its correct function should be and what its current function is.

#### Key Terms - Evaluating:

Checking, hypothesizing, critiquing, experimenting, judging, testing, detecting, monitoring, (Blog/vlog) commenting, reviewing, posting, moderating, collaborating, networking, reflecting, (Alpha & beta) testing.

## STRATEGY : HOTS BLOOM'S DIGITAL TAXONOMY

## GOAL

**Purpose:** Reading for Essential Understanding

### CREATING

- **Programming** – Whether it is creating their own applications, programming macros or developing games or multimedia applications students are routinely creating their own programs to suit their needs and goals.
- **Filming, animating, videocasting, podcasting, mixing and remixing** – these relate to the increasing availability of multimedia and multimedia editing tools. Students frequently capture, create, mix and remix content to produce unique products.
- **Directing and producing** – to direct or produce a product, performance or production is a highly creative process. It requires the student to have vision, and understand the components to meld these into a coherent product.
- **Publishing** – whether via the web or from home computers, publishing in text, media or digital formats is increasing. Again this requires a huge overview of not only the content being published, but the process and product. Related to this concept are also Video blogging – the production of video blogs, blogging and also wiki-ing - creating, adding to and modify content in wikis. Creating or building Mash ups would also fit here.

#### Key Terms - Creating:

designing, constructing, planning, producing, inventing, devising, making, programming, filming, animating, Blogging, Video blogging, mixing, remixing, wiki-ing, publishing, videocasting, podcasting, directing/producing, creating or building mash ups



Wavebreakmedia, iStock/thinkstock

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Acknowledgements: For assistance, discussion and often punctuation: Miguel Guhlin, Sheryl Nussbaum- Beach, Alan Knightbridge, Sue Cattell, Raewyn Casey, Marg McLeod, Doug DeKock Email: [Andrew Churches](mailto:Andrew.Churches)

## GOAL

**Purpose:** Reading for Essential Understanding

**STRATEGY: LEARNING FROM FEEDBACK**

### FEEDBACK

The right kind of feedback can make a significant difference in your achievement. There are two key considerations:

- ✓ First, feedback that improves learning is responsive to specific aspects of your work, such as a test or your homework answers, and provides specific and related suggestions. A strong link between teacher comments and your answer(s) can be very instructive. This kind of feedback gives you the opportunity to learn by alleviating misunderstanding and reinforcing concepts.
- ✓ Second, feedback needs to be timely, usually within a couple of days after a test or homework assignment has been turned in. Feedback will increase your opportunity for learning. Feedback is a research-based strategy that teachers and students, can practice to improve their success.

### KEY RESEARCH FINDINGS

- When feedback is corrective and is used to explain where and why errors have been made. It can significantly increase learning (Lysakowski & Walberg, 1981, 1982; Walberg, 1999; Tennenbaum & Goldring, 1989).
- Feedback has been shown to be one of the most significant activities a teacher and learner can engage in to improve student achievement (Hattie, 1992).
- Asking students to continue working on a task until it is completed and accurate (until the standard is met) enhances student achievement (Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock, 2001).
- Effective feedback is timely. Delay in providing students feedback diminishes its value for learning (Banger-Drowns, Kulik, Kulik, & Morgan, 1991).
- Tests can be used to optimize learning. Tests given a day after a learning experience is better than testing immediately after a learning experience (Bangert-Downs, Kulik, Kulik, & Morgan, 1991).
- Rubrics provide helpful criteria for success, making desired learning outcomes clearer. Rubrics provide criterion-referenced feedback that is the right kind of guidance for improving understanding (Crooks, 1988; Wilburn & Felps, 1983).
- Effective learning results from students providing their own feedback, and monitoring their work against established criteria (Trammel, Schloss, & Alper, 1994; Wiggins, 1993).



## STRATEGY: LEARNING FROM FEEDBACK

## GOAL

**Purpose:** Reading for Essential Understanding

### IMPLEMENTATION

Fine-tune how you read feedback by focusing on the details of comments from your teacher.

Read these suggestions about feedback:

1. Increase the value of tests and homework. A grade or number on a test or homework assignment is not the most critical information that you receive. Take time to read comments, about any misunderstanding you might have had about a topic.
2. Feedback is best when it is corrective in nature. Learning how to correct your errors is important. Make feedback another part of your learning process.
3. Know that your teachers want to see you succeed. Take advantage of any opportunity your teacher provides for you to ask questions and/or redo work.
4. You may be asked to provide feedback to another student. You can monitor and provide feedback to other students, as well as compare your work to criteria. Engaging in review of your own work and others can enhance your learning.
5. To give you time to absorb new ideas, tests are often more effective as opportunities for learning if a day has gone by between learning experiences and the test.

6. Use rubrics. Rubrics improve your learning. You may be asked to help in developing rubrics. Rubrics help focus your effort.



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6-Trait Writing Process [http://www.literatelearner.com/6traits/page\\_template6t.php?f=main](http://www.literatelearner.com/6traits/page_template6t.php?f=main)

## WEB RESOURCES

"**AVID**, Advancement Via Individual Determination, is a global nonprofit organization dedicated to closing the achievement gap by preparing all students for college and other postsecondary opportunities." <http://www.avid.org/what-is-avid.ashx>

AVID College Readiness System <http://www.avid.org/avid-college-readiness-system.ashx>

AVID and the Common Core State Standards <http://www.avid.org/common-core.ashx>

AVID Research. <http://www.avid.org/research.ashx>.

**Education Northwest**, also known as Northwest Regional Education Laboratory, conducts Educational Research and provides professional development and consulting services to educational organizations. <http://educationnorthwest.org/>

6+1 Trait Rubrics <http://educationnorthwest.org/traits/traits-rubrics>

5-Point Writer's Rubric <http://educationnorthwest.org/sites/default/files/5-pointwriters-rubric.pdf>

**Educational Origami** is a blog and a wiki, about 21st Century Teaching and Learning. This wiki is not just about the integration of technology into the classroom, though this is certainly a critical area, it is about shifting our educational paradigm. Its really about PEDAGOGY. <http://edorigami.wikispaces.com/>

Bloom's Digital Taxonomy Map <http://edorigami.wikispaces.com/Bloom%27s+-+Introduction>

Bloom's and ICT tools <http://edorigami.wikispaces.com/Bloom%27s+and+ICT+tools>

**NCREL North Central Regional Educational Laboratory** provides resources on "Critical Issues" involving school improvement "Pathways". <http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/>

**The Literate Learner**, is a website creat-

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Appendices

## Last Page

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# APPENDIX A

Placeholder for Future  
Student Examples

# APPENDIX B

Placeholder for Future  
Student Examples

# APPENDIX C

Placeholder for Future  
Student Examples

# APPENDIX D

Placeholder for Future  
Student Examples

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## **DODEA Mission**

To Educate, Engage, and Empower each student to succeed in a dynamic world.

One Mission, One Vision, One School