

# INTRODUCTION TO STUDY SKILLS

## HOW DO YOU LEARN?

Not everyone learns in the same way. There are many different ways to learn. Some people like to read about something new before they try it. Other people like to learn when they can actually “do” whatever they are learning. Still others like to be told about a new thing. They like to discuss it before they try to do it. Can you think of any other ways that people learn to do new things?

The way you learn best is called your *learning style*

### EXERCISE I

*Directions:* What do you do well? Look at the list below, and pick *one* thing that you feel you have learned to do well. Or if you prefer, pick your own activity. Write your choice on the line below.

read	cook	debate
write	play a sport	use a word processor
sail	ride a bike	play a computer game
ski	manage money	knit
play an instrument	draw	care for an animal
sew	ice skate	solve math problems

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Do you remember when you were learning how to do the thing you chose? If not, cross it out and pick something you remember learning.

## EXERCISE II

*Directions:* Think about the thing you learned to do very well. How did you learn to do it?

Look at the words and phrases listed below. Circle the ones that describe how you learn best. You may also write other words and phrases that describe how you learn on the lines below.

*Remember:* There are no right or wrong answers! You can circle and write as many words and phrases as you need to describe how you learn.

watching

reading

experimenting

learning from my mistakes

being creative

by myself

looking things up

practice

listening

thinking about

writing

proving my point

talking it over with a friend

doing something I care about

doing

working when I have to

getting it right

“hands on”

with a group

asking questions

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### EXERCISE III

*Directions:* Look again at the list in EXERCISE I. This time pick out something that you've had *trouble* trying to learn well. Or if you prefer, pick your own activity. Write your choice on the line below.

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1. How did you try to learn the thing you said you had *trouble* learning? Look at the list in EXERCISE II again. Pick some ways that you tried to learn, and write these ways on the lines below.

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2. Have you chosen any different ways than you chose for EXERCISE II? \_\_\_\_\_  
If you answered "yes," write the different ways on the lines below.

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## **WHAT IS STUDY?**

Some students think that “study” means just to get ready for a test. You study your spelling words Thursday night for a test on Friday. Actually, that kind of studying is only a small part of what study means.

Study means *to learn*. Whenever you are learning, you are studying, both in school and anywhere else.

Sometimes you don’t think of learning as “studying” because some of the ways you learn seem to be easier than others. But whether you are trying to improve something you already do well or trying to learn something that is giving you trouble, you are studying.

Learning new words or a new kind of math problem are both studying. So are learning to sew a new stitch, play a new song, catch a high fly ball, bake a cake, or figure out a problem just by thinking about it carefully. Whenever you are trying to learn, you are studying.

## **WHAT ARE STUDY SKILLS?**

Study skills are ways or methods of learning. They are ways of doing what you are asked to do in school that can help you to learn better. When you use study skills, you can often get more done in a given period of time and learn more, too.

Some examples of study skills are these: active listening; tuning into directions; reading for meaning; taking notes; solving problems; and preparing for tests.

## **HOW DO YOU LEARN STUDY SKILLS?**

People learn study skills through practice. You don’t learn how to play basketball by talking about the game. You have to play it. The same is true with study skills.

You often learn study skills best through the mistakes you make. Everyone makes mistakes. What’s important is that you look at your mistakes carefully and find out what caused them. When you know what caused a particular mistake, you’ll know how not to make that mistake again.

## **WHY ARE STUDY SKILLS IMPORTANT?**

Learning won’t suddenly become simple just because you have learned to use study skills. But these skills will help you to become a better learner. You’ll probably find school more rewarding and enjoyable. You’ll also be more able to learn whatever you wish outside of school.