Classroom Performance

- If you're taking lots of class notes but not understanding, try taking fewer notes and thinking along with the teacher. If you're taking few notes and not understanding, try taking more notes to put the material in your own words.
- Look for opportunities to respond to questions--easy or hard. And don't be afraid to ask challenging questions. Always make eye contact with your teacher and classmates.
- If you find it hard to concentrate, visualize what you’re hearing, and ask yourself questions such as: What are the key points? How does this fit into what I know? How is this lecture organized? What is my opinion about this?

Reading Your Textbook

- Before reading, check for key terms, dates, and topics at the beginning and end of each chapter. If your textbook has a website, print the chapter outline.
- Read teacher or textbook questions and write key words for which you need information. Create a study tool by adding space between the items on your terms list to fill in definitions as you read. Pay special attention to guiding questions in your teacher's syllabus.
- Break long reading assignments into smaller parts, and take a brief break after each section to summarize or organize the information: make a terms list, group related terms together, or write a timeline.
- Paraphrasing and summarizing improves memory retention; copying verbatim out of textbook is not an effective way to take notes.

Studying for Tests and Exams

- Combine and consolidate material from your notes and textbook highlights to create quizzable study tools that address the 5Ws (who, what, when, where, and why important). Create your own unique chart, list, or map.
- Correct quiz answers, and retest yourself. Describe the key terms in your own words.
- Check to see if the textbook has a website - these are full of study tools.
- Above all, do not re-read as a study method. Self-test and be active with the information.