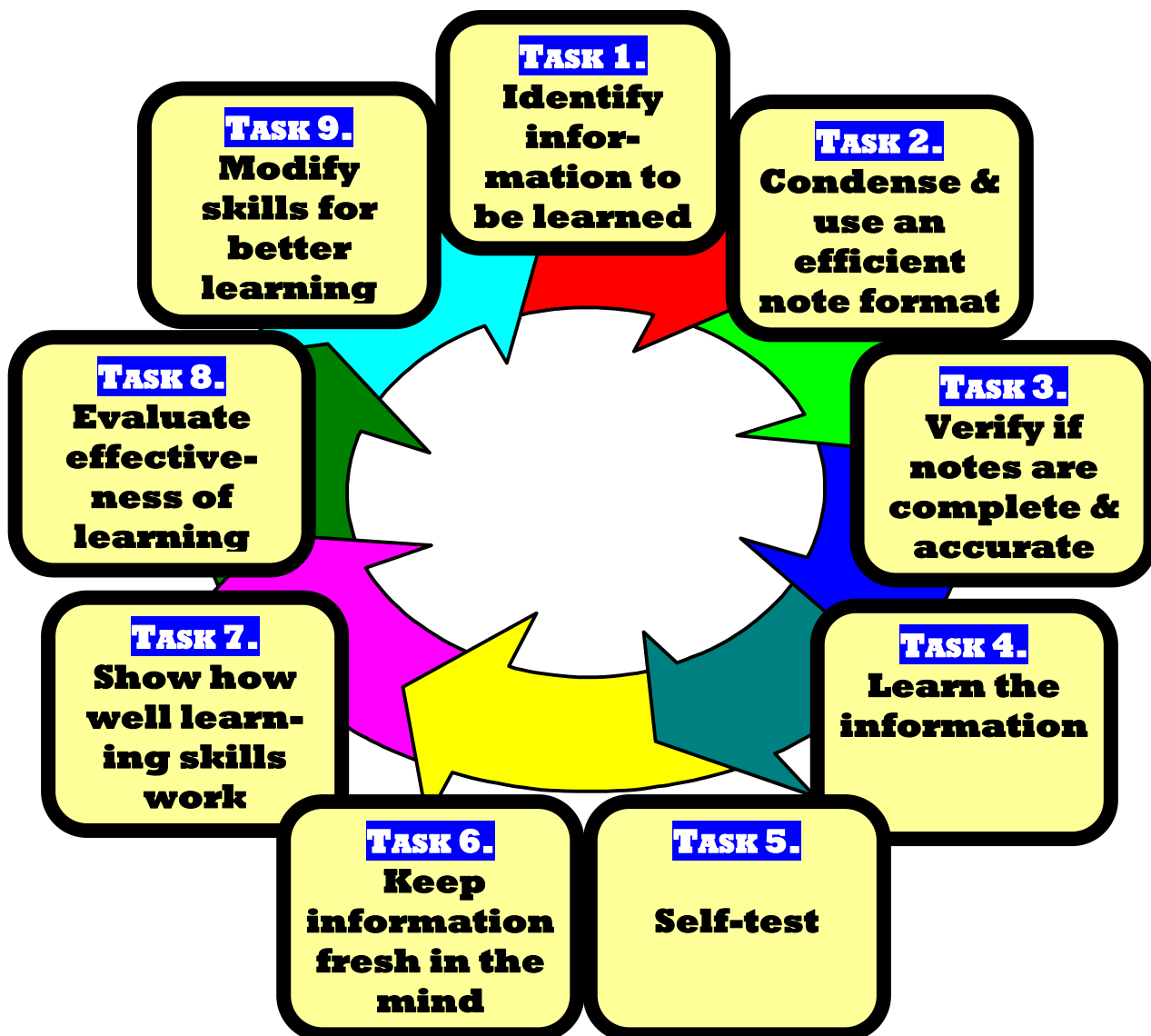


Radial of Learning: Study Skills Diagnosis

The way to earn better grades is to; **1. refine**, **2. master**, and **3. apply** the skills essential to learning. A first step in this 3-part process is awareness of the 9 essential tasks in learning. The *Radial of Learning* identifies the 9 essential tasks for earning excellent grades.

As a diagnostic tool, students can compare what they do for each task to what needs to be done and quickly see where changes in study skills need to occur. Specific suggestions are made under each task based on the efficient and successful learning skills of "A" students.



How to Use the Radial of Learning to Analyze Study Skills

Learners may analyze their study skills by writing down what they do under each step in the *Radial of Learning*. Next, learners and/or instructors can compare that with what "A" learners do as listed in the *Radial of Learning*. This comparison will reveal those areas where there are differences between what each learner is doing and what "A" learners do. Learners can then seek the specific kind of study skills help they need or learning skills instructors/staff can immediately provide the precise kinds of information and practice that learners need. There is no waiting for time consuming scoring and interpretation of complex diagnostic tests.

How to Do Each Task

There are many ways to successfully perform each task in the *Radial of Learning*. Under each task are suggestions from "A" learners on how they do each task and earn A's.

Directions: In the left column under each task, list your responses each statement below. When finished with all 9 tasks, turn to the KEY on page 6 and compare what you listed with what many "A" students do. In the right column, write down the things that you think "A" students do that you did not have in your list.

Task 1: Identify information to be learned

Information to be learned is usually contained in more than one source. In the left column, list as many sources as you can think of where learners get information to be learned for their classes.

| Your List | "A" Students' List |
|-----------|--------------------|
| 1. | |
| 2. | |
| 3. | |
| 4. | |
| 5. | |

Task 2: Use an organized note format and condense information

Good organization speeds learning and makes recall of lectures and textbooks material easier. When notes are condensed, there is less to write, organize, and learn. Without taking clear organized notes, learning is difficult to impossible. In the left column, list as many different ways as you can think of that learners can organize and condense main ideas and relevant details to be learned for their classes.

| Your List | "A" Students' List |
|-----------|--------------------|
| 1. | |
| 2. | |
| 3. | |
| 4. | |
| 5. | |

Task 3: Verify the completeness and accuracy of notes

Without verifying, there is the greater risk that important material will be missing from notes or incorrect information will be learned. If material is incomplete in notes, it will be recalled incompletely on quizzes and exams. If material is missing in notes, it unlikely to be learned and recalled at all. Thinking, feeling or believing notes are complete and accurate doesn't make them so. In the left column, list as many different ways as you can think of where learners can verify the completeness and accuracy of their notes before they invest effort studying.

| Your List | "A" Students' List |
|-----------|--------------------|
| 1. | |
| 2. | |
| 3. | |
| 4. | |
| 5. | |

Task 4: Learn the information

This is where information is moved from short-term memory toward long-term memory. Unless information is reviewed enough times to become stored in long-term memory (learned), the results are poor recall, low exam scores, and lack of essential knowledge to earn a degree. In the left column, list as many different techniques as you can think of that learners can do to learn important information.

| Your List | "A" Students' List |
|-----------|--------------------|
| 1. | |
| 2. | |
| 3. | |
| 4. | |
| 5. | |

Task 5: Self-test

Reciting aloud what you believe you have learned is an easy way to discover what really has and has not been learned before a test when something can still be done about it. In the left column, list as many different ways as you can think of how learners can self-test.

| Your List | "A" Students' List |
|-----------|--------------------|
| 1. | |
| 2. | |
| 3. | |
| 4. | |
| 5. | |

Task 6: Keep information fresh to prevent forgetting

Unless information is kept fresh in the mind through regular and repeated reviews, it is normal for forgetting to begin and information recalled incompletely or inaccurately at test time. In the left column, list as many different ways as you can think of how learners can keep information fresh and prevent forgetting.

| Your List | "A" Students' List |
|-----------|--------------------|
| 1. | |
| 2. | |
| 3. | |
| 4. | |
| 5. | |

Task 7: Show how well learning skills work

This is where you demonstrate how effective your learning skills were in learning what is expected to be learned. List as many different ways as you can think of how learners show what they have learned.

| Your List | "A" Students' List |
|-----------|--------------------|
| 1. | |
| 2. | |
| 3. | |
| 4. | |
| 5. | |

Task 8: Evaluate the effectiveness of learning skills

Unless this is done, there is a great risk that grade-limiting learning skills will be repeated and grade-raising learning skills will remain unidentified and not repeated. Learning skills that need refinement will go unnoticed. List as many different ways as you can think of how learners can evaluate the effectiveness of their learning skills.

| Your List | "A" Students' List |
|-----------|--------------------|
| 1. | |
| 2. | |
| 3. | |
| 4. | |
| 5. | |

Task 9: Modify learning skills for better learning

Until less productive study skills are identified, modified or replaced, grades will not likely increase. In the left column, list as many different ways as you can think of where learners can find information for modifying the learning skills that need refinement.

| Your List | "A" Students' List |
|-----------|--------------------|
| 1. | |
| 2. | |
| 3. | |
| 4. | |
| 5. | |

KEY

Compare what you listed with what many "A" students do below. In the right column under each of the 9 tasks, list what "A" learners do that is different than your list. To optimize the value of this instrument, meet with a learning skills counselor to discuss modifications you can make in your learning skills to make college easier, more enjoyable, and earn higher grades.

Task 1. Locate information to be learned

Information to be learned is often available from more than one source. Below are *common sources* where you can locate main ideas and relevant details to be learned.

- a. In **textbooks** - bold print, italics, numbers items, marginal notes, etc.
- b. In **lectures** - written on the board, repeated ideas, instructor's questions, etc.
- c. In **handouts**.
- d. In **outside readings**.
- e. In assigned **supplemental materials**.
- f. In **visual aids** like films, overheads, slides, etc.
- g. Material written **on the board**.

Task 2. Condense and use an efficient note format

When notes are condensed, there is less to write and organize. Well-organized notes speed learning and make recall of lecture and textbook material easier at exam time. Poorly organized notes actually slow learning.

- a. Use **essential words and phrases only** in recording notes.
- b. Use **abbreviations and symbols** instead of whole words to condense.
- c. Use **notecards**, the Cornell System, or outlines to organize notes.
- d. **Number the details** that go with main ideas.
- e. Include **diagrams, sketches, charts, tables, and drawings**.

Task 3. Verify completeness and accuracy of notes

Without verifying, there is the greater risk that important material will be missing from notes or incorrect information will be learned. If material is incomplete in notes, it will be recalled incompletely on quizzes and exams. If material is missing in notes, it is unlikely to be learned and recalled at all. Thinking, feeling, or *believing* that notes are complete and accurate *doesn't make them so*.

- a. **Compare notes** with a good notetaker in class.

- b. **Join/form a study group** to compare notes and share information.
- c. **Attend help/problem sessions, get a tutor, attend Supplemental Instruction** sessions (if available).
- d. **See the course instructor** and ask for feedback and suggestions and then do what is suggested.
- e. **Use textbooks** as checks for completeness and accuracy of lecture notes.

Task 4. Learn the information

This is where information is moved from short-term memory toward long-term memory. Unless information is reviewed enough times to become stored in long-term memory (*learned*), the results are poor recall, low exam scores, and lack of essential knowledge to earn a degree.

- a. A fast way to learn is to **recite material aloud from memory**, as if lecturing a class. (*See Notecard Question & Answer Technique handout*)
- b. **Use a system for taking and learning notes** that promotes learning like the Notecard Question and Answer Technique (NQAT), outlines, or the Cornell System. Many other note organization formats impede learning.
- c. Set up a schedule and **make enough time to study** to get the desired chosen grades. Don't wait for enough time to study. You already have all the time you will ever get - 24 hours per day.
- d. **Replace negative or limiting attitudes** with positive attitudes that promote, not hinder learning.
- e. **Set a high grade** as a goal to encourage motivation to achieve that goal.
- f. **Go over material** to be learned enough times to move it into long term memory. The number of times for this to happen varies for each person.

Task 5. Self-test

Reciting aloud what you **believe** you have learned is an easy way to discover what **really** has and has not been learned before a test when something can still be done about it.

Follow the 3 steps below properly self-test using recitation:

1. **Read aloud main ideas or questions** made from main ideas then **recite details or answers aloud without looking**.
 2. **Check** the details or answers to see how complete and accurate the recitation was. If it was correct, the material has been learned.
 3. **If your recitation wasn't complete or accurate**, you haven't learned the material. Read the details aloud to yourself and then repeat a and b as often as needed to recite details /answers correctly from memory. Then go to the next main idea or question.
- b. Looking only at main ideas, **reconstruct diagrams, sketches, charts, tables, drawings**, then check your notes for completeness and accuracy.
 - c. **Answer questions or volunteer to try and solve problems** in study groups or Supplemental Instruction sessions.
 - d. **Tutor others**.
 - e. **Give your notes or notecards to someone else and have them quiz you**.

Task 6. Keep Information fresh to prevent forgetting

Unless information is kept fresh in the mind through regular and repeated reviews, it is expected to begin forgetting and recall information incompletely or inaccurately when needed such as at test time or on the job.

- a. Two to 3 times weekly, **pretend you are teaching** someone else. Look only at main ideas or questions you've made and recite aloud all the related details or answers from memory as if lecturing a class. Then check the notes to see if you are right.
- b. **Write details or answers** out as if taking an essay test looking only at main ideas. Use the details in the notes to score your answers.
- c. **Help others** learn the material in a study group or as a tutor.
- d. **Rework problems and solutions** even if you believe that you know how.

Task 7. Show how well your learning skills work

This is where you *demonstrate* how effective your learning skills are in learning what you are expected to remember.

- a. Answer **questions** in class.
- b. Do **homework** accurately, completely, and on time.
- c. Show how much you have learned on **quizzes and exams**.
- d. Write **papers/reports**.
- e. Give **speeches/oral reports** in class.
- f. Participate in **discussion groups**.
- g. **Relate knowledge** to the work place and personal life.
- h. **Talk to friends and family** about what you have learned and explain the details if they are interested.

Task 8. Evaluate the effectiveness of your learning skills

Unless this is done, there is a *great risk that grade-limiting learning skills will be repeated and grade-raising learning skills will remain unidentified and not repeated*. Learning skills that need refinement will go unnoticed.

- a. Associate answers that were correct on quizzes and exams with learning skills that worked so that these skills **can be repeated**.
- b. Use answers that were partially or completely incorrect to identify learning skills that did not work so well. They can then be **modified or replaced** with more effective learning skills.
- c. **View any exam grade as feedback on the effectiveness of your learning skills**. Learning skills lead to knowledge that leads to grades. Constantly evaluate learning skills until earning desired grades.
- d. **Ask your instructor** how you can do a better job on the next exam or quiz.
- e. **Meet with a learning skills counselor** to analyze an exam on which your grade is lower than "A".

Task 9. Modify learning skills for better learning

Until less productive study skills are identified, modified, or replaced, grades are not likely to increase. Unless poorly productive learning skills are identified and replaced, they are likely to be repeated. You need information on effective study skills, here.

- a. Go to your campus **learning center** for learning skills and then use them.
- b. Meet with a **learning skills counselor** and do what is advised.
- c. **Investigate what those who get A's do** and do what they do.



Student Academic Resource Center



- d. Purchase a **learning skills book** and do what it suggests.
- e. **Take a learning skills class** and go to **workshops on learning skills**.
- f. **Ask instructors for suggestions** on learning skills and follow them.
- g. **Attend Supplemental Instruction** sessions (if available) and see **campus tutors**.