

# Make Your Brain Work for You!!!

1. SLOW DOWN. The more you *understand* the less you have to *memorize*.
  - a. Don't just read. Stop and think. The more deeply you FORCE your brain to think, the better chance you have of learning and remembering (no pain - no gain!)
2. DO EXERCISES and ANSWER QUESTIONS. WRITE YOUR OWN NOTES.
  - a. There is plenty of evidence that physical activity *while* learning can increase the amount you learn.
3. There are NO DUMB QUESTIONS - that is a fact!!
  - a. Don't wait to ask any question - often times the verbalization of a question causes your brain to answer the question!
4. Do NOT do all your reading/studying in ONE PLACE.
  - a. Stand up, stretch, move to another room. Don't allow your learning to be connected to a particular place.
5. Make the last thing you read before bed a CHALLENGING thing.
  - a. The transfer to long-term memory happens *after* you stop reading.
  - b. Your brain needs time to process. If you start doing something else (TV, computer, etc.) during that processing time, some of what you learned will be lost.
6. Drink water. LOTS OF IT.
  - a. Dehydration (which can happen before you feel thirsty) can decrease cognitive functions.
7. Talk about it. OUT LOUD.
  - a. Speaking activates a different part of the brain. Try to explain things out loud to someone else.
8. Listen to your brain.
  - a. Pay attention to whether your brain is getting overloaded. If you find yourself starting to skim the surface or forget what you just read, it's time for a break.
  - b. Once you go past a certain point, you won't learn faster by trying to shove more in, and you might even hurt the learning process.
9. PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE
  - a. No matter how well you understand something, you will not really learn until you do it yourself. *Each* additional practice exercise you do will increase the depth and strength of your understanding.
  - b. Watching someone else do something well is not a substitute for *you* doing it yourself.
  - c. The person who DOES the work is the ONLY one who learns!!