

## **"The Art of Studying": Study Skills Lesson Plan**

I. Introduction. Have students introduce themselves. Provide overview of workshop topic and goals. Discuss some statistics on study habits.

In 1961, the average college student studied 40 hours/week

In 2003, the average student studied 27 hours/week

In 2011? Ask students to quantify their study time, but emphasize quality over quantity

II. Focused freewrite (5 minutes)

Ask students to reflect on their own study habits.

Write prompt questions on board: Where, when, and how do you usually study? What strategies have you found to be most/least effective?

(Alternate warm-up activity, in a larger class: Have students work in small groups to brainstorm a list of advice they'd give to other students about studying.)

III. Group discussion of freewrite (5-10 minutes)

Have students share their strategies, approaches, etc. List on board, without adjudicating.

Segue: There's a lot of confusion about what "good" study habits are, but some recent research is helping us separate the fact from the fiction...

IV. Quiz: "Studying: Separating Fact from Fiction" (5 minutes)

Students take quiz individually

V. Group discussion of quiz. Solicit answers from students; write correct answers on the board and discuss each one (20 minutes)

Introduce key terms from recent NYT article: "spacing," "desirable difficulty," "mixed practice." See "Forget What You Know about Good Study Habits":  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/07/health/views/07mind.html>

## VI. Introduce study strategies (15-20 minutes)

Reading strategies: text annotation, double-entry notebook, reverse outlines, summaries, etc.

Writing Strategies: Freewriting; WTL activities; Peter Elbow's "Direct Writing" technique for writing under time constraints

Time management strategies (Reverse calendars, Mytomatoes.com, Internet avoidance programs like macfreedom.com, etc)

## VII: Conclusion. Remind students of other best practices. Ask them for suggestions. Some possibilities:

Get assignments, syllabi, and books early when possible

Sit near the front of the classroom to avoid distractions

Review lecture notes soon after class

Make sure you have written assignments (rather than just verbal ones)

Break large assignments into smaller tasks

Create an organizational system that works for them (google calendar, date book, sticky notes, etc)