

# Teach Your Children How To Learn



Want your kids to score As? Start with these easy strategies to get them on the road to study success *By LANCE KING*

**T**he biggest difference between students who pass all their exams well and those who fail is the use of good learning techniques. The best learners have a range of different thinking and learning processes. They engage a variety of strategies and techniques to study, understand and learn concepts and information. And these allow them to approach learning problems, process information effectively and arrive at correct answers. These processes are what I call "Learning Skills", the understanding and use of which can make a huge difference to any child's success in school-based learning.

Now you too can help your children learn more effectively and more efficiently, using these basic 10 tips.

## 1 Organise the home study environment

Make sure they have a place to do school work which suits them physically – desk or table and chair at the right height with good light.

## 2 Develop routines

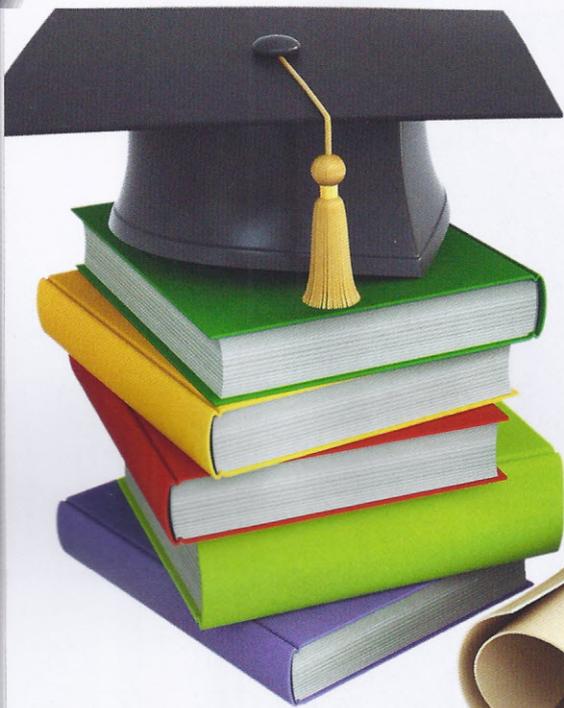
Try and get your children into a routine of study every night starting at the same time so that it builds into a habit. This needs to be a time preferably when the TV is off, the cell phone is put away, any other children or distractions are not allowed to interfere and they are totally supported in getting school work done.

## 3 Get them to build in their own rewards

Help them learn to use TV, video games, internet or phone time (and any other pleasure) as a reward for getting work done rather than a way to fill in time.

## 4 Encourage regular review

To remember what they learn at school, every night they need to read over what they did that day – let them teach you what they are learning and have picked up. Get them to review schoolwork while it is still fresh in the mind; this is vital to understanding and remembering.



not suit their own particular way of thinking and they may need to try a different approach, a different process.

When a child becomes aware that there are many different ways to learn the same information, they can then take on board that executive (metacognitive) function. They'll have the capacity to observe their own strategy use and make decisions as to what strategies to use in which situations.



### 7 Focus on the process

When your child is having difficulties with a subject or with study or

problem solving, the thing to focus on is "how" they are doing what they are doing.

When they have a difficulty, the important thing is to work with them and help them to tease out the process they are using to get the unsuccessful result. Get them to look at that process objectively and see if they can come up with a different process, a different way to approach that same problem and then to have another go.

### 8 Work with what they can control not with what they can't

If a child is having learning difficulties or failure and they (or you) attribute that failure to a lack of ability or a

lack of intelligence, then that way of thinking gives them no chance for change or improvement. Ability and intelligence are generally thought of as things we have little control over.

If, however, any difficulty or failure can be attributed to a lack of effort, or to the use of an ineffective process, then that is something over which the child has complete control. He can try something new and success becomes possible again. Similarly, if you wish to praise a child for any academic or learning success, focus your praise on the effort they put in, the strategies they are learning and the changes they are making in improving their performance rather than their natural talent or intelligence. By doing so, you will encourage more successful, process-focused learning behaviour in the future.

### 9 Help them learn through all their senses

Sometimes teachers deliver lessons in ways that do not suit the way your child prefers to learn. Your child ends up struggling with "just too much talking", "too much writing notes", "too much video" etc.

Luckily, there is a huge amount of information on every subject on the internet your child could be learning. And often it is presented in a manner which is more visual, more interactive, more self-paced than in the classroom. Parents can help by finding good websites for school-based subjects which their children can then use when they need to. Check out the links to many good free sites on <http://www.taolearn.com/students.php>

### 10 Model effective learning

Think about how you learn and teach your children your best strategies for reading text, summarising key points, making mind maps, writing reports, memorising, organising your time, making "to do" lists, meeting deadlines. Talk about the importance of perseverance, persistence and learning from mistakes. **W**

### 5 Allow them to form study groups

This can be formed with friends as long as they use time together to get work done. Children can often explain things to each other more easily than a teacher can.

### 6 Help them develop metacognitive awareness

All that means is raising their awareness that there are many different ways to approach any learning problem. If your child is having difficulty understanding something or applying knowledge in a new situation, it could just be that the way they are trying to learn it does

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Lance King has, in the last 17 years, worked with over 150,000 children at all levels of schooling around the world, helping them to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their own learning. He will be in Singapore to present his learning techniques for an exam-confidence seminar on May 26 and 27. Go to

[www.taolearn.com](http://www.taolearn.com) for details. We're giving away two tickets, worth \$200 each, for the May 27 seminar.

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