

Subject Area: Study Skills/ Learning Strategies

Grade Level(s): K-12

Title of Instructional Method: The Use of Study Guides in Student Studying Strategies

Description of Instructional Method:

This journal researched the effectiveness of using study guides with students with disabilities, remedial, and general education students enrolled in social studies and science classes at the secondary school level. The efficiency of two different types of study guides was compared to self-study, in order to increase textbook comprehension. There were no changes in the actual classroom setting to be sure the findings would reflect real data. Results indicated study guides, whether teacher or student directed, produced significantly higher performances than self-study across all three subject groups.

References in APA format:

- Horton, S.V. & Lovitt, T.C. (2001). Using study guides with three classifications of secondary students. *The Journal of Special Education*, 22(4). Retrieved January 16, 2007, from <http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/search?vid=2&hid=106&sid=c70c9ae5-acb0-40e3-8618-fa1b19a701eb%40sessionmgr109>
- Acrey, C., Johnstone, C., & Mulligan, C. (2005). Using universal design to unlock the potential for academic achievement of at-risk learners. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 38(2). Retrieved January 16, 2007, from <http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdf?vid=10&hid=120&sid=46c5e19a-2e2d-4aa4-aae0-6b7c1b92e174%40sessionmgr107>
- Brians, P. (2006). *Questions and answers about study guides*. Retrieved January 16, 2007, from http://www.wsu.edu:8080/~brians/about_guides.html

“How To” Information:

Using study guides in the classroom can benefit students in many ways. The main advantage of a study guide is to allow needed information to appear out of the text and in a worksheet format to help students learn content information. Studies that have been

performed with this information show that students are able to perform better on test after having the aid of study guides. Teachers are able to create study guides that will be beneficial to all students in the classroom. A teacher will be able to have a study guide that will meet most academic diversities throughout the classroom.

When using a study guide it allows the students to get a new picture of the main ideas of the material needed for the test. Academic subjects combine so much information in one area, which many times students are not able to discriminate the information they need to know and the information that is not so important by the time of the test. Teachers are able to break the information down and use only the needed information on the study guides.

Study guides should be designed to create a summary of the new information or the information a student needs to know. Studies have shown that study guides work best when made of up few questions, which cover the main idea of the material needed. Study guides do not have to cover all the information on the test, but should allow students to understand what they expected to know for the test or the information gained from the class.

A great example of using a study guide in order to break down information would be in a language class, where the lesson is designed around the novel the class is reading. To begin the lesson the teacher would introduce the book and start by reading the first chapter to the students. Then to ensure the students have started off on the right foot and have gained from information from the novel thus far, the teacher could design a study guide that would show the most important aspects of the novel. The teacher would want to show how knowing the characters, the setting, and the main idea of the novel would be

key points thus far into the novel. Then the teacher could have study guides throughout the novel to ensure the students understand the information of the novel.

This is just a general example of using study guides in the classroom. However, studies guides can be altered to fit almost any subject area or curriculum in the classroom. Knowing the abilities of your students will let you create study guides that will fit your students, in your classroom. Also knowing the information you want to test the students on will allow you a wide spread area to create a study guide for your subject and for your students.

Implications for Practice/Other Considerations:

The various results from the first study explained that teacher directed study guides created better performances for all three groups of subject students compared to self study. Teacher directed study guides can assist with low, average, and high achieving students. The second study showed that student directed study guides were more effective than self-study within all subject groups of students. Students with learning disabilities need more direct instruction from the teacher and other students benefit from this as well. The significance of these findings show that the students do benefit from study guides as opposed to just self study. Study guide questions can be adapted for all students no matter what their level of performance is. These study guides also benefit teachers to assess students in order to recognize where they are functioning.

Additional Links:

<http://distance.deanza.edu/Strategies.shtml>

<http://www.as.wvu.edu/~scidis/learning.html#sect0>

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