

# **STUDENT HANDBOOK 2016-2017**



**CHELMSFORD VALLEY DISTRICT COMPOSITE SCHOOL  
3594 Hwy 144  
Chelmsford, Ontario P0M 1L0  
705-675-0225**

**Mrs. Pamela Potvin, Principal**

**Mr. David Bertrim, Vice-Principal**

**DATES TO REMEMBER**

	<b>Semester 1</b>	<b>Semester 2</b>
Semester Start	September 7, 2016	February 6, 2017
Picture Day	September 19, 2016	
Picture Retakes	TBA	
Secondary Grad Photos	November 14, 15, 16	
Practice OSSLT	September 20, 2016	
Online OSSLT	October 20, 2016	
Grade 8 Grad Photos	TBA	
Thanksgiving	October 10, 2016	
Student/Parent/Teacher Conferences (Secondary)	October 6, 2016 (6pm-8pm)	March 9, 2017 (6pm-8pm)
Student/Parent/Teacher Conferences (Elementary)	November 2, 2016 (6pm-8pm)	
Junior Awards	October 27, 2016	
Winter Feast	December 21, 2016	
Mid-Semester Report	November 18, 2016	April 27, 2017
Christmas Break	December 24 to January 8	
Examinations	January 26 to February 2	June 23 to June 30
Open House	January 19, 2017	
Family Day		February 13, 2017
March Break		March 13 to 17, 2017
Good Friday		April 14, 2017
Easter Monday		April 17, 2017
OSSLT (Gr. 10)		March 30, 2017
EQAO (Gr. 9)	January ?-?, 2016	
Victoria Day		May 22, 2017
Athletic Celebration		June 8, 2017
Commencement Grade 12		June 14, 2017
Grade 8 Graduation		June 28, 2017
Semester Ends	February 3, 2017	June 30, 2017
Progress Reports 9-12	October 3, October 31, December 16	March 3, May 26
Report Cards Grades 7-8	Interim November 3, 2016	February 22, 2017 and June 30, 2017
School Council Meetings	September 19, November 21	February 8, April 10, June 12
P.A. Days (no classes)	September 6, September 30, October 28, November 28	February 3, April 28, June 16
Staff Meetings	September 7, October 3, November 7, December 5, January 9	February 6, March 6, April 3, May 1, June 5

## THE SCHOOL DAY

The school is open from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. daily. The main office is open from 8:00 – 3:30. ***Classes begin with homeroom starting at 8:20 a.m.***

### Homeroom

Students are placed in homerooms according to their period 1 class. Homerooms are reassigned in second semester. The homeroom period is essential for the distribution of information to students. Guidance and Student Success appointment slips are distributed at that time.

### SECONDARY GRADES 9-12 BELL SCHEDULE

Warning Bell	8:15
Announcements	8:20
Period 1	8:25-9:40
Period 2	9:45-11:00
Lunch	11:00-11:45
Period 3	11:50-1:05
Period 4	1:10-2:25

***Five minutes of travel time between classes allows time for students to prepare for their next period. Students will NOT be permitted to leave the school building between classes unless they have a scheduled spare.***

### Elementary Grade 7 & 8 Schedule

The elementary timetable will be given out on the first day of school.

### Lunchtime

Lunches are to be eaten in the cafeteria. A hot lunch food service is available. Please help to keep our school clean and place garbage in the containers provided and recycle whenever possible. All food and beverages must be in closed containers when transporting in the hallway. The cafeteria is a supervised area for students. Students may wish to participate in our intramural program in the gymnasium or continue their studies in the library. We strongly recommend that students remain in the school during this time. If they choose to leave the school, they do so at their own risk. We urge them to act safely. Students leaving the building must return on time for classes.

**Elementary students (Gr. 7 & 8) are not permitted to leave the school grounds without a parent/guardian. The exception to this is students who walk and have signed permission forms to go home for lunch. If students have permission to go home for lunch they must do so for the duration of the school year.**

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

**Attendance is critical to student success.** *Ministry of Education* regulations require students to attend classes on a regular basis. ***It is the responsibility of the student and parent/guardian to communicate reasons for absences with their teachers and the main office.***

**Attendance and co-curricular participation** - Students who are not in attendance during the school day will not be eligible to participate in after school sports for that day, including game days. Students whose absence is excused are required to present a note to the office, as well as the coach to be eligible to participate. (SDSSAA regulation)

**Excused Absences** – Excused Absences are for the following two reasons: bereavement (a death in the family); illness (serious enough to require treatment from a physician). A doctor's slip must be submitted within 10 days of returning to school. **Regular doctor and dentist appointments should be made outside of school hours as much as possible.** Family holidays, hunting and fishing events cannot be excused by the school and students are indeed responsible for missed work. It is not always possible to make up a missed assessment and a grade of '0' may apply. Students are encouraged to talk to their teachers prior to any such trips or engagements.

### **Procedures for absent students**

**Students returning from an absence are required to submit a note signed by a parent or guardian (telephone calls are acceptable).** These notes must be submitted to the main office before 8:15 a.m. on the day of their return to school. Students absent for the morning only are to bring their note to the main office before afternoon classes.

### **Procedures for late students**

Being punctual is an expectation in school and by employers. Arriving to class late is a disruption to learning and disrespectful of those trying to learn and teach. Students are expected to arrive to class on time and be prepared to participate. Teachers will contact parents/guardians if tardiness becomes a concern.

### **Detentions**

Teachers may assign and supervise detentions as a form of classroom management. Students are expected to comply with teacher discipline and school expectations..

### **Excuse/Leave Slips**

A student who has parent/guardian permission to leave school during school hours proceeds as follows:

1. Bring a signed, dated note from the parent/guardian requesting leave, stating the reason and time for the leave.
2. Present this note at the office before classes to obtain an 'excuse slip'.
3. Present this slip to the classroom teacher at the beginning of the appropriate period.
4. Students who are ill may be excused by administration.

## Growing Success at CVDCS

### 1. Truancy: ***We believe that regular attendance is essential to academic success***

- Initial truancy will be handled by your teacher
- Continued truancy will be managed by the VP
- The level of student success (pass rates) has increased at CVDCS significantly in the last few years BUT, we can't do much if you're not in school.

### 2. Missed tests: ***We believe assessment is a central component of learning and provides students with invaluable feedback on their progress***

- Students must communicate with their teacher when they know they will be absent for a test
- Students will write a missed test on their FIRST day back to school. A note from a parent/guardian explaining the absence will be submitted to the teacher prior to the mark being recorded.
- A second missed test will require you to provide a Dr's note.
- If you SKIP a test you will receive a 0

### 3. Timely submission of work: ***We believe that organization, time management and adherence to timelines will enhance the level of student success.***

- It is a teacher's responsibility to track and monitor your progress on any given assignment and to provide feedback.
- It is a student's responsibility to comply with timelines for the submission of work.
- Context is for major assignments, projects and or student presentations
- As an incentive, if work is handed in prior to the deadline, the teacher may provide feedback and suggestions for improvement

#### ***For work that is late***

- a) a completion contract that includes a negotiated and reasonable date for submission may be signed by the teacher and students. No subsequent extension will be granted but the student can submit work without penalty
- b) where no completion contract is signed, the student may lose up to 10% p/day for a period of 5 school days.

*Note: Credit Rescue is restricted to students in grade 9 and 10*

### 4. Academic Honesty: ***We believe that your character counts!***

- For grade 9 & 10 students: students, teachers and parents will work together to clarify expectations relating to academic honesty
- For students in grade 11 & 12: On the first offence of cheating or plagiarism the student will receive a mark of 0 for that evaluation. On subsequent occasions of cheating and plagiarism, the student will receive a mark of 0 and may be ineligible for in school bursaries, awards and letters of reference.

## **Late and Missed Assignments**

*Growing Success* establishes fundamental principles which enable all students to reach their potential and promotes student responsibility for submitting assignments within agreed upon timelines.

Teachers will consider the following:

- take into account individual students, their learning styles and needs;
- implement accommodations and modifications that assist students to complete assignments;
- consider the impact of their decisions on student learning.

For late and missed assignments, teachers will implement effective assessment and evaluation strategies and interventions that are purposeful and systematic in nature that may include:

- asking students to clarify the reason for not completing the assignment;
- collaborating with other staff to prepare a calendar of major assignments for every class;
- planning for major assignments to be completed in stages;
- holding teacher-student conferences;
- taking into consideration legitimate reasons for missed deadlines;
- maintaining communication with students and/or parents/guardians;
- scheduling conferences with parents/guardians;
- helping the students develop better time management skills;
- setting up a student contract;
- referring students to the Student Success team or teacher;
- involving Aboriginal counselors when engaging with students who are First Nation, Métis, or Inuit;
- taking into account the history and context of students, parents/guardians;
- using counseling or peer tutoring to try to deal positively with the problem;
- assessing whether the need exists for extra support for English language learners;
- assessing whether the student requires special education services;
- requiring the student to work with a school team to complete the assignment;
- providing alternative assignments or tests/exams, where in the teacher's professional judgment, it is reasonable to do so;
- deducting marks for late assignments, up to and including the full value of the assignment after giving the student every opportunity to succeed

## **Academic Honesty**

Strategies that prevent cheating and plagiarism are fundamental to student success. Cheating is defined as the use of assistance that is not permitted in an assignment or test. (RDSB, *Growing Success Guide Grades 1-12, 2010*) Plagiarism is defined as representing the work of others as one's own.

(RDSB, *Growing Success Guide Grades 1-12, 2010*)

**Teachers will:**

- inform and review, at the beginning of each year or semester, how students will be evaluated, the classroom expectations regarding work completion, and the consequences of cheating and plagiarism;
- use strategies that help prevent cheating and plagiarism;
- use knowledge of student work, performance and language patterns to detect cheating and plagiarism;
- use progressive measures and student accountability when cases of academic dishonesty are detected;
- take into account grade level, maturity of the student, number and frequency of incidents, individual student circumstances, and the extent of the cheating and/or plagiarism.

**Academic consequences of cheating and/or plagiarism** may include some or all of the following:

- conference with the student and/or parent/guardian;

- assign additional assignments that encourage personal reflection regarding the student’s choices;
- assign and grade an alternate assignment that demonstrates the defined curricular expectations;
- assign a grade of zero for the current assignment;
- forfeit eligibility for in-school bursaries, scholarships, awards, or letters of reference.

**Principals may:**

- consider suspending a student for repeated offenses

**Smoking**

**The Province of Ontario has deemed it unlawful to smoke anywhere at any time on school property.** People smoking on school property are subject to fines of up to \$305 and students may be suspended from school. The use of eCigarettes is not permitted on school property.

**Medical Concerns**

Students and Parents are asked to notify the school administration of any significant medical concerns or life threatening condition or allergy.

**Concussion Protocol**

Recent research has made it clear that a concussion can have a significant impact on a student’s cognitive and physical abilities. In fact, research shows that activities that require concentration can actually cause a student’s concussion symptoms to reappear or worsen. Without identification and proper management, a concussion can result in permanent brain damage and in rare occasions, even death. (OPHEA, 2013)

**Parents are responsible to inform the school regarding any diagnosed concussion.** The school will then follow the protocol set out in OPHEA guidelines. This protocol includes ‘return to learning’ permission from a physician as well as ‘return to physical activity’ permission from a physician.

**Concussion Diagnosis**

A concussion is a clinical diagnosis made by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner. It is critical that a student with a suspected concussion be examined by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner.

For more information go to: <http://safety.ophea.net/release-of-new-and-revised-concussion-protocols>

## Rights and Responsibilities of Students at CVDCS

Rights	Responsibilities
To be recognized and respected as a worthwhile individual	To conduct myself in a manner worthy of the respect of others and which shows respect for others
To learn in a safe and secure atmosphere of mutual respect and courtesy	To treat others in a respectful, considerate manner
To learn in a safe and clean environment where personal and school property is appreciated and respected	To secure my own property, avoid taking or damaging things which are not mine and place litter in appropriate receptacles
To learn in an orderly environment free from unnecessary interruptions	To come to school and classes regularly, on time, prepared with all appropriate learning tools, (books pens and pencils, notebooks, etc.) with a positive attitude and appropriate behaviour

## **REALIZE THAT OTHERS HAVE THE SAME RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES THAT YOU HAVE**

There are consequences for your actions. Unacceptable behaviour includes violence, intimidation, harassment, fighting, use of, or suspicion of use of drugs or alcohol, possession of drugs or alcohol, use or possession of a weapon, theft, vandalism, disrespect, non-compliance, disruption of instruction and learning, inappropriate language, truancy, refusal to complete assigned work, or any other behavior which undermines a positive school climate. Please refer to the RDSB **Code of Conduct** found in **A Guide for Students and Parents/Guardians**.

Follow-up may include contact with parents/guardians, referral to counseling services, alternate learning environments for a set period of time, formal warnings or suspension from school.

### **Behaviour**

A code of behaviour encourages responsible conduct and promotes a good learning environment. C.V.D.C.S. follows a code of conduct that is a direct correlation of the Rainbow District School Board's code. A copy of this code is included in the Rainbow School's publication 'A Guide for Students and Parents' sent home with students early in September. If students choose to deviate from the code they put not only themselves but also other students in jeopardy regarding the learning process. A certain structure must therefore be in place if we wish to retain a proper atmosphere of learning. It is the policy of the school to protect the students who want to learn from those who will not accept their responsibilities. Consequences for misbehaviour will normally follow a progressive pattern. Refer to RDSB website [www.rainbowschools.ca](http://www.rainbowschools.ca).

### **Harassment**

Harassment can be defined as verbal, visual, sexual or physical conduct that creates an intimidating, hostile or highly uncomfortable environment. It is offensive, insulting, humiliating or hurtful for the person on the receiving end of the behaviour. It does not belong in our school.

Some forms of harassment include using degrading words to describe an individual's appearance, clothing, disability, racial origin, sexual orientation etc... telling jokes or using language that causes embarrassment or awkwardness; displaying material that is racist, sexually offensive or derogatory; making written or verbal threats of abuse and/or carrying out those threats.

If you are uncomfortable with certain people's behaviour, make them aware of your feelings. Most matters will find a solution with good communication. If this does not work and the behaviour continues, report this to a staff member or school administration.

### **Dress Code**

Three issues determine what is allowable in the way of dress. The first is safety and health. The second is keeping the environment free of distraction. The third has to do with the image of our students projected through their appearance. A dress code based on modesty and civility sets the kind of tone best for learning. All tops/shirts must have sleeves. Avoid clothing such as muscle shirts, tube tops, halter tops, tank tops and tops with spaghetti straps. It is not appropriate for either sex to dress in a manner that reveals underwear, bare midriffs and backs, cleavage, and bare feet.

Also, avoid clothing or accessories which distract other students or calls inordinate attention to the wearer (e.g. vulgarity, sexual, racist or religious innuendos on t-shirts). When you get to school, leave your hat or other head gear, sunglasses, jacket, or coat in your locker. There is no reason to take these items to class. Walking shorts of acceptable length are OK in season.

For safety reasons, long pants and closed shoes must be worn in technical shops, science, and food labs. (Sandals are not permitted.) School administration may decide that certain accessories are not approved for reasons of health and safety.

Rollerblades and skateboards are not to be used on school property.



## **Dress Code for Healthy Active Living Education**

As per the Rainbow District School Board's safety regulations, for personal safety and/or the safety of others:

- No jewellery (rings, watches, necklaces, bracelets) will be worn during physical activities.
- No visible body piercing adornments (earrings, nose rings, tongue studs, etc.) will be worn during physical activity
- The removal of non-visible studs or rings is also compulsory but must remain the sole responsibility of the student
- In order to participate in class, students must wear a pair of athletic shorts or pants, a t-shirt, and a good clean pair of running shoes with non-marking soles. Hat, sunscreen and insect repellent are recommended for outdoor activities.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **Parking**

Student parking is at the east side of the school.

### **School Visitors**

**All visitors in the school must report to the main office** where they will receive assistance. Visitors are not allowed to attend classes without the prior approval of school administration.

### **Telephone Calls**

Office telephones are only available for emergencies. **Cell phones are not to be used in classrooms and should be turned off and stored in lockers during classes.** We would ask that parents/guardians and other students not call or text students at times when students are in class.

### **Signing Students out and Contacting the School**

In an effort to minimize disruption to classroom instruction we ask that parents arrive between periods to sign students out as much as possible. In like manner we ask that only urgent messages be left for students. Messages that are of a casual nature will not be delivered.

### **Important message about the use of the Internet and electronic devices**

The Internet and electronic devices have changed our world, offering unparalleled resources and associated challenges. As the technology has expanded, so have the implications related to the safety and privacy of students and staff. Rainbow Schools remind students and parents/guardians that cell phones, digital cameras, personal speakers, personal digital and other electronic devices can be disruptive and must not be activated in class or during examinations and/or assessments without the permission of school staff.

Electronic devices must not be used in a manner that violates the privacy or dignity of others This includes:

- the use of cell phones with cameras (and similar devices) in washrooms, change rooms and any other areas where privacy prevails
- taking photographs of a person or persons on school property and/or at school events without the permission of the person or persons being photographed
- posting photographs on the Internet and/or electronically transmitting photographs of a person or persons taken on school property and/or at school events without the permission of the person or persons in the photograph.

Using the Internet and electronic devices with care will ensure that the safety and privacy of students and staff remain first and foremost. Please see RDSB's Administrative Procedure - Acceptable Use of Information and Communication Technologies .

### **Bus Transportation**

Some students are entitled to bus transportation. This privilege may be withdrawn for unsafe, distracting or disrespectful behaviour. ***Students are required to wait for the bus to stop, engage their flashing red lights and determine it is safe to proceed before crossing roads and highways.***

### **Crossing Highway 144**

In accordance with Provincial Law ***pedestrians crossing highway 144 are required to do so at designated crossings.*** People failing to use the lights east and west of the school are putting themselves and others at risk and may be subject to fines.

### **Backpacks/Schoolbags/Purses**

For safety reasons, backpacks, schoolbags and purses are not allowed in the class and must be stored in lockers. Classroom supplies for morning classes are to be exchanged for afternoon classes during the lunch hour.

### **Evaluation Policy**

Final examinations and/or culminating activities are compulsory in all subjects and at all levels. Regular tests, assignments, independent assignments, mid-term tests etc., will also be used to calculate final marks. Each teacher will explain individual subject evaluation policies.

### **Textbooks**

The teachers will issue textbooks. If lost or damaged, students are required to pay the replacement cost for the textbooks.

### **Study Hall Period or Teacher Absences**

Supply teachers will be used whenever possible. When a teacher is absent there will always be assigned work for the students to complete in the study hall or another designated area. It is expected that work that is provided is completed for the next school day.

### **Valuables**

Students are asked not to bring items of value to school. If it is necessary to bring large sums of money, it should be left at the main office. **The school is not responsible for lost or stolen property.**

### **Class Preparation**

The Rainbow District School Board Code of Conduct states that students are to arrive to school prepared, on time and ready to learn. This means students are to arrive to each class on time, prepared and with all necessary materials.

### **Bicycles**

Bicycle racks are located in front of the school. Since this area is unsupervised, bicycles should be locked.

### **Fitness Room**

The fitness room will be available to students in grades 9-12. To be granted access to the fitness room students **MUST** receive safety training and sign the safety/responsibility contract. At **NO** time are students permitted in the fitness room without a trained partner. All fitness room rules are to be followed at all times.

### **Guidance Services**

The counsellor is available to all students to assist with current school program, future career or academic plans and personal concerns. The counsellor is involved with the organization of special programs concerned with career planning and lifestyle issues. Appointments may be made prior to classes or at lunch time.

## DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS

### *Ontario Secondary School Diploma*

#### What do you need to graduate?

➤ **18 compulsory credits**

Students must earn the following compulsory credits to obtain the Ontario Secondary School Diploma:

- **4** credits in English
- **3** credits in mathematics
- **2** credits in science
- **1** credit in Canadian history
- **1** credit in Canadian geography
- **1** credit in the arts
- **1** credit in health and physical education
- **1** credit in French as a second language
- **0.5** credit in career studies
- **0.5** credit in civics

#### Plus one credit from each of the following groups:

- **1** additional credit in English, or a third language, or French as a Second language, or a Native language, or a classical or international language, or social sciences and the humanities, or Canadian and world studies, or guidance and career education, or cooperative education\*
- **1** additional credit in health and physical education, or the arts, or business studies, or cooperative education\*
- **1** additional credit in science, or technological education, or cooperative education\*

#### In addition to the compulsory credits, students must complete:

- ✓ **12** optional credits
- ✓ **40** hours of community involvement activities
- ✓ The provincial literacy requirement

\*A maximum of 2 credits in cooperative education can count as compulsory credits

#### Course Fees

Course fees will comply with the Rainbow District School Board policy.

### Student Schedules/Course Load

Students in grades 9, 10 and 11 must have and maintain a course load of 8 subjects (4 per semester). Students in grade 12 with at least 24 credits may choose to take a 'spare' period. Part-time students must have the approval of the principal to carry a reduced load.

### Activities

The school offers a wide choice of activities, some of which may take place daily during lunch time. Other activities are seasonal and take place on other scheduled nights. Following is a list of activities that have been hosted in the past:

Athletic Council	Students' Council	Cross Country Running	Track & Field
Softball	Badminton	Band	Flag Football
Basketball	Tennis	Bowling	Glee
Hockey	Skiing	Yearbook	Curling
Woodworking	Variety Night	Volleyball	Environmental
Reach for the Top	Science Fair	Drama	Greenhouse
Golf	Intramurals	Prom Committee	Soccer

### Student Activity Fee

Student Activity fees are voluntary amounts that are used to supplement a student's school experiences through materials and activities such as student agendas, student recognition programs, yearbooks, extracurricular activities or theme days. Students may be required to pay additional fees to participate on school teams or in clubs.

### Insurance

We encourage all students, especially all those involved in extra-curricular activities, cooperative education, and intramurals to purchase student accident insurance. Application forms will be available early in the school year.

### Lockers

Lockers and locks are loaned to students. Students must use the lock provided and all combinations will be kept on file. The school maintains the right to search lockers at any time.

### Examinations

The school year includes the examination period and students must be present for each of their scheduled examinations. (see Dates to Remember). Arrangements to reschedule examinations are rare. ***Absence from an examination due to illness requires a doctor's note.***

Students late for an examination must obtain an admit slip from the main office.

Textbooks and other material not previously collected by the teacher will be collected at the beginning of the examination. Students will have to make arrangements to return or replace textbooks before the examination is written.

## Grade 9 and 10 Exam Exemptions

1. Exemptions are granted by the classroom teacher for grade 9 and 10 classes only. To be considered for exemption the student must meet specific criteria:

- The student will have achieved a grade of 75% or better in applied and academic courses at the end of the semester, based on term work.
- The student will not have missed more than **8 periods** in that class and be late for class fewer than **8 times**. Exceptions **may** be considered with medical validation, for school activities and for bereavement. Family holidays, hunting and fishing trips, appointments are considered unexcused absences for the purpose of exam exemptions.

**However, if a student meets the necessary criteria, but in the opinion of the classroom teacher it is in the best interest of the student to write the final examination, an exemption may not be granted.**

2. All students must complete the course culminating activity. For students granted exemptions the culminating activity will be weighted accordingly: for students writing the final exam the weighting will be divided between the final exam and the culminating activity. Please refer to your course outline for details.

3. Students who are granted an exam exemption may choose to write the final exam in an effort to improve their standing. Should their exam performance lower their grade, the exam will not be counted.

## FIRE EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

When the alarm sounds all students must be prepared to follow instructions.

1. Students follow the teacher in an **orderly fashion** to the appropriate exit.
2. Students **must remain with their class outside** and move well away from the buildings.
3. The last student out of the classroom and the school should close the door.
4. Students will return in an **orderly fashion** under the direction of the teacher. A signal will be given to re-enter the school.

***DO NOT RE-ENTER UNTIL INSTRUCTED TO DO SO.***

Teachers will review all emergency procedures including Hold and Secure, Shelter in Place, and Lockdown with students throughout the semester.

## Tips on How to be a Successful Student

**Do you have trouble remembering the things you learn in class?** Try these four steps, and you'll find it easier:

### 1. Learn it well the first time.

Make sure you really understand what was taught, then go over it at home by doing any assigned work. Write down any questions you have about the material, and ask your teacher or a knowledgeable friend.

### 2. Give yourself time.

Spend about 5-10 minutes on the material at home, and then go over it again every few days. This will help you to store it in your long-term memory.

### 3. The 3 R's: Review, Recite, Repeat.

After reading a section, quickly summarize it in your head or out loud. The verbal queue helps the information stick in your head better than just re-reading.

### 4. Use "handles" to help you remember.

- Think of what you already know about the topic and try to make connections between the old information and the new.
- Organize the information on a mind map so you can see the big picture.
- Associate the information to something like a picture, example, or even a metaphor.

## Do you know how to make notes that are actually helpful?

### Here are 3 tips:

1. Summarize the introduction to get the main topic or idea.
2. Listen or watch for key points that are relevant to the main topic. Textbook headings often tell you these points right away. Be sure to keep a couple of details about each key point.
3. Summarize the conclusion.

### Resources:

1. Dictionary: Keep one nearby when you're reading, or use one online.
2. Thesaurus: The synonyms a thesaurus can provide are good for making your writing more interesting.
3. Encyclopedia: This is a great resource to use to get information about a topic.
4. Atlas: a good atlas will contain different types of maps. For example, political maps, climate maps, agriculture, topography, industry maps, and more!
5. Internet: This is a good way to get up-to-date information, but the information isn't always correct. Try to get your information from more professional sites.

## How to get ready for a big test:

Before a test, find out...

- What kind of test will it be?
- How much will it be worth?
- What will it be about? Make sure you write this down so you'll know what to study.
- Are there any review questions available?

### Good reviewing:

- Gather all your materials, such as handouts and notes, and sort them by topic.
- Make a review schedule. It's much better to have a few short review sessions than to cram all the information the night before.
- Plan group-studies well before the test.
- Try different study strategies:
  - use textbook headings as questions, then answer them
  - practice defining or explaining things in your own words
  - Highlight key facts
  - Do review questions

Before a big test, it's always a good thing to be properly rested. Instead of studying late into the night, make sure you follow a review schedule so that you can get a full night of sleep before the test. Eating fruits or drinking juice in the morning will help to give your brain a jump-start.

**When you get the test...**

- Look over the whole test so you will get an idea of how much work there is, and how long it will take you. If you think you might be short on time, start with parts of the test that you are most comfortable with and those that are worth the most marks.
- Read directions carefully!
- Check over the test completely before handing it in!

**WHERE & WHEN:** Prior to studying run through this checklist to ensure your study area has the following:

- Peace and quiet
  - Distractions such as television and music keep you from focusing on your books and notes. Turn off or remove these distractions from your study area or move to a quieter location for optimum study ability
- Good lighting
  - Poor lighting can damage and strain your eyes. Give your eyes a break by making sure your study area is well lit.
- A moderate temperature
  - A temperature that is too warm will make you drowsy, while a temperature that is too cold will make you miserable. Try to keep a moderate temperature so you can focus on your studying and not have to worry about how cold or warm it is around you.
- A comfortable chair
  - A comfortable chair provides good back support and allows you to relax as you study (but not to the point of sleeping!)
- A clean workspace
  - Paper clutter on your desk can be distracting and may make it harder to find notes and assignments. Keep your desk neat and organized to make studying simpler and quicker.
- The necessary tools
  - Make sure you have all the supplies you need to study: pens, pencils, a calculator, a dictionary, scrap paper etc. This will reduce the time you'll need to study, since you won't be running around looking for loose ends.

By making sure you have these elements in your study area, your study session is sure to be a great success. Don't forget that your school and public library can be a great study space.

**HOW:**

Everyone has a different style of studying that works for him or her. Here are some tips that will help you find your study/learning style.

**When you encounter new information:**

1. Repeat it out loud
2. Try to picture it in your head (picture the event the words describe, or the actual spelling or sentence).
3. Try writing it down several times, or "write" it with your finger on your hand or some other surface.

**We wish you a successful school year!**