

Methods of Teaching, by Tony Attwood, 2019 Edition

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Active Learning Assignment – 2

Don't mix work and play.

We've already said, you cannot learn anything by having your head in your hands, lying down on your bed, trying to work with the music on being interrupted regularly by messages.

If you try and work in that way all that happens is that you feel you have been working for a considerable length of time, and you probably realise you have not learned anything.

Then in desperation you say, "It's no good, I can't learn this subject," and put the book down.

But the fact is that if you set aside anything that can interrupt you, just for 15 minutes, you can learn a lot. However, if you have your phone on so that each time you have a message you can look and see who it is from, your focus will be lost. Indeed you might as well put the revision or homework away and just use your phone because at least that way you won't be pretending you are working.

If you had two pages of notes to learn, you could have learned them in ten minutes of active learning. With the lying down on the bed method, or sitting with the phone on, you might learn one page in 20 minutes. If you are lucky.

And there is another point here. As and when you go to work, the chances are you are going to be in a job where having your phone on, is simply not allowed – at least if you want to have and keep a job which makes use of your intelligence.

So use your phone and listen to music, and then turn everything off and work for just 10 minutes in an organised, calm way. Then break for five minutes and do some more work for ten. Then take a 15-minute break and if you still have some work to do start the process again.

Here is a summary:

- Turn off all devices completely – not just by putting them on silent, but totally.
- Don't lie down; don't sit with books on your knees.
- Sit at a desk or table with everything you need around you.
- Prepare your work by revising what you have done before on this topic.
- Work for 10 minutes.
- Take a 5-minute break.
- Work for 10 minutes.
- Take a 15-minute break.
- Work for 10 minutes.
- Take a 5-minute break.
- Work for 10 minutes.
- Take a 15-minute break.

And if you really want to up your level of learning, go somewhere where you have never worked before. Another room, a park, a library, anywhere that is different where you can focus on your work for a short while.

Now choose a topic to learn and make notes on what you achieve in the table below.

	What you did	What you achieved
Preparation		
10 minutes work		
5 minutes break		
10 minutes work		
5 minutes break		
10 minutes work		
5 minutes break		
15 minutes work		
5 minutes break		
10 minutes work		
5 minutes break		
15 minutes work		

How do you feel about the work? _____

What would you change next time and why? _____

Active Learning Assignment – 3

Working through routines.

In order to work well you have to go through a routine. Most of this should now be very familiar to you. Be relaxed and organised. This means taking a few deep breaths calmly breathing in and out slowly.

Find a place to work. This means sitting at a chair which is moderately comfortable, with a tabletop in front of you. Try to choose a place where there are few sounds to distract you. This is not always possible and throughout life you will have to work in situations in which there are sounds going on around you. At least try to get the best working environment you can.

Only put on the desk or table in front of you those things which you actually need:

- Notebook
- Pen.
- Computer if using it for your work
- Pencil.
- Rubber.
- Paper.
- Ruler.
- The books you need.

Move anything else that is not needed to one side or put it on the floor. Turn your phone off.

Now think for a moment about the best way in which you can work. For example, if you are right-handed it makes sense to have the book in which you are writing slightly to your right. The book you are referring to would then be to your left.

If you wish to take note of the point you have reached, you can then use your left hand or put the ruler at the relevant place in the book.

If you are using a computer work out if you are more comfortable having any book or set of notes you are using on your left or your right, and adjust your position so that you have space to work and can see what you need to see. Five minutes sorting out your workspace effectively is worth another 15 minutes of study, because your studying becomes much more effective.

Ten minutes of working in this sort of environment is going to allow you to process information very rapidly indeed. After ten minutes take a look at the work you have done. Make any immediate corrections that are necessary. Now take a five-minute break.

Answer these questions:

- What have you learned in this ten minutes?
- Was any of the learning multi-sensory?
- Was it effective learning?
- How could the learning have been more effective?