Creating A Study Plan

The most important part of being prepared for a test is to begin reviewing material early and often as part of your daily study routine. The ideal study plan is an organizational strategy that breaks up multiple chapters/topics into chunks of information that can be reviewed over a period of 5-7 days in short, frequent study sessions. The study plan should incorporate rehearsal strategies, elaboration strategies and self-testing for optimize memory and learning.

**Step 1: Daily Study Routine - Weeks Before the Test**

- Keep up with daily reading assignments
  - Take notes as you read or outline chapters
  - Make flashcards for formulas, definitions, vocabulary, dates, names & places
  - Predict test questions from readings
- Take notes in class
  - Rewrite notes for clarity and organization
  - Compare class notes with reading notes
  - Predict test questions from class notes
  - Practice problems and formulae
  - Make flashcards

**Step 2: Preparation & Organization - Make A Study Plan from Study Materials**

- Make an outline or study guide of topics that will be covered on the test
- Create charts, diagrams and hierarchies
- Organize your study materials by breaking material up by topic or chapter
- Assign 1 chunk/topic/chapter per day
- Schedule 2 hours per day to study new material and 30 minutes to review material from the previous day so it stays fresh in your mind

**Step 3: Practice, Rehearse & Elaborate - Actively Study & Self-Test**

- Practice flashcards by reciting or writing vocabulary, definitions or formulas from memory
- Practice writing or reciting main ideas, steps, processes or concepts from memory
- Quiz yourself on predicted test questions & practice writing essay questions
- Talk through or summarize concepts in your own words alone or with a study group
- Re-create charts, graphs or hierarchies from memory
- Use analogies (comparison between two things), keyword method (pictures to remember words) & real-life examples (connect something new to something you already know)
- Create examples and acronyms to help you remember and retain concepts

**Study Definitions:**

- **Acronym** - An abbreviation of words to make a learning device. For example, ROY G. BIV is the acronym for remembering the colors of the rainbow in order (Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue, Indigo, and Violet).

- **Analogy** - Comparing two things for the purpose of explanation. For example, Forrest Gump used the analogy that “life was like a box of chocolates, you never know what you’re gonna get” to explain the randomness of life.

- **Elaboration Strategies** - requires the student to expand on what is being learned by comparing it to something already known by creating an acronym, analogy or keyword.

- **Keyword Method** - is used to remember vocabulary & definitions by pairing an image with a word. For example, to remember the definition of the Spanish word La Carta (the letter), think of a mailman delivering a letter in a cart.

- **Rehearsal Strategies** - using repetition to memorize information.
## Study Plan Example

### Get Organized:
- Make an outline or study guide of topics that will be covered on the test
- Organize flashcards, charts, diagrams and hierarchies by topic
- Break material up by topic or chapter. Assign 1 chunk/topic/chapter per day
- Schedule 1.5 - 2 hours per day to study new material and 30 minutes to review material from the previous day so it stays fresh in your mind

### Day 1 (2hrs)

**Prepare Chunk 1/Chapter 5**
- Make flashcards with vocab, names, dates, formulas
- Answer questions on study guide or at the end of the chapter

**Practice, Rehearse, Elaborate & Self-Test**
- Practice flashcards by reciting or writing answers and retesting missed answers
- Practice answering the question to the study guide in your own words

### Day 2 (2.5 hrs)

**Prepare Chunk 2/Chapter 6**
- Create an acronym to remember the steps to a process
- Create a chart comparing the theorist of child development

**Practice, Rehearse, Elaborate & Self-Test**
- Practice writing the acronym and talk through the process
- Re-create the chart
- Quiz yourself on the theorist similarities and differences
- Use the last 30 minutes to review Day 1

### Day 3 (2.5 hrs)

**Prepare Chunk 3/Chapter 7**
- Predict possible essay questions
- Make a test in quizlets to review the chapter

**Practice, Rehearse, Elaborate & Self-Test**
- Practice reciting main points and writing answers
- Take the test until you get all the answers correct
- Use the last 30 minutes to review Day 2

### Day 4 (2.5 hrs)

**Prepare Chunk 4/Chapter 7**
- Re-write notes and and make flashcards
- List practice problems

**Practice, Rehearse, Elaborate & Self-Test**
- Recite answers then reverse the sequence
- Work practice problems
- Use the last 30 minutes to review Day 3

### Day 5 (2.5 hrs)

**Prepare Chunk 5/Chapter 8**
- Make formula cards
- Identify a concept or a process
- Create a graph or concept map

**Practice, Rehearse, Elaborate & Self-Test**
- Practice writing formulas
- Talk Through or explain/teach the concept or process to someone else
- Recreate graph or concept map from memory and explain each part
- Use the last 30 minutes to review Day 4

**Note:** The study plan above uses multiple preparation strategies and accompanying practice strategies as examples. When making your own study plan, you can use the same 3-4 strategies for each day.
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