

*“The Academic Skills Booklet
is designed to help you
become a more independent
and effective learner.”*

THE ACADEMIC SKILLS BOOKLET
SCE VERSION
OAS – FALL 2007

~ School of Continuing Education ~

Academic Skills Booklet

Office of Academic Services • Providence College



PROVIDENCE
COLLEGE

TOPICAL INDEX

<i>Topic Number</i>	<i>Topic</i>
I	Foreword
II	Mission Statement – Providence College
III	What is your Learning Style?
IV	Organizational Study Tips
V	Test Taking Strategies
VI	Reading Comprehension
VII	Note Taking Tips
VIII	How to Write “A” Great Paper
IX	Library Navigation
X	Oral Presentation Tips
XI	On Campus Help
XII	Appendix

Academic Skills Booklet – SCE Version

Office of Academic Services • Providence College

Fall 2007

- Editor: **Daniel Kwash, M.Ed.**
- Writers: **Kathleen Cartier, '02; Jill Gardner, '03; Ryan Haddad, '03; David Tanski, '03**

FOREWORD

True education never ends; for the more we learn, the more we realize how much there is to be learned. Providence College has promoted this dynamic of lifelong learning through the School of Continuing Education for more than 85 years. For the adult student, the decision to pursue an education takes place in the midst of commitment to family, demands of a career, and a host of other responsibilities. In response, SCE has established programs and structures to provide support to adult students throughout their courses of study.

The *Academic Skills Booklet* represents one of the aforementioned sources of support. The various academic suggestions and strategies in this booklet do not guarantee you success. Rather, these suggestions are another means of assistance along your academic journey. Your own effort and determination, while utilizing the valuable people and resources around you, are the most important factors in your success.

Several special “thank you’s” are in order. Dan Kwash, Associate Director in the Office of Academic Services, skillfully edited the skills booklet, coordinated its publication, and served as a writer. Katie Cartier ‘2002, Jill Gardner ‘2003, Ryan Haddad ‘2003, and David Tanski ‘2003 – all Providence College students – wrote several sections of the booklet. As a result of their collective work, the *Academic Skills Booklet* will benefit Providence College students for years to come.

Good Luck!

Madeleine Metzler
Associate Dean
School of Continuing Education

Bryan Marinelli
Director
Office of Academic Services

MISSION STATEMENT

PROVIDENCE COLLEGE

Providence College is primarily an undergraduate, liberal arts, Catholic institution of higher education. Committed to fostering academic excellence through the sciences and humanities, the College provides a variety of opportunities for intellectual, social, moral and spiritual growth in a supportive environment.

The College actively cultivates intellectual, spiritual, ethical and aesthetic values within the context of the Judaeo-Christian heritage. These values are nurtured by the unique tradition of the Dominican Order which emphasizes quality teaching and scholarship.

Providence College recognizes the unity of the human family that proceeds from its one Creator. It therefore encourages the deepest respect for the essential dignity, freedom and equality of every person and welcomes qualified women and men from all religious, racial and ethnic backgrounds. Providence College prepares its students to be responsible and productive citizens to serve in their own society and the greater world community.

What is Your Learning Style?

Academic Skills Booklet • Office of Academic Services



PROVIDENCE
COLLEGE

LEARNING STYLES

What Is A Learning Style?

- It is based upon the characteristics/behaviors that an individual uses in order to attain their optimal academic performance. We all learn in different ways and it is helpful to have an understanding of your personal learning style. This will allow you to assess your strengths and identify the strategies needed to compensate for your weaknesses. Hopefully, by taking the Learning Styles Inventory, you will have a better idea of the skills needed to become an even more effective student at Providence College.

There Are 3 Types Of Learners

- **Visual Learners** = Are able to understand information using their eyes as the primary way of learning.
- **Kinesthetic Learners** = Are able to comprehend information by manipulating things with their hands.
- **Auditory Learners** = Learn best by using their hearing and being vocal.

Learning Styles Inventory – Directions: Place a check next to the answer that best represents your style.

	Column A	Column B	Column C
My emotions can be interpreted by my:	<input type="checkbox"/> Facial expression	<input type="checkbox"/> Voice	<input type="checkbox"/> Body Language
At a party I prefer to:	<input type="checkbox"/> People watch	<input type="checkbox"/> Talk in a small group	<input type="checkbox"/> Take part in an activity (i.e., dancing)
During my free time I like to:	<input type="checkbox"/> See a movie, sporting event, or theatre production	<input type="checkbox"/> Listen to music, radio, or go to a concert	<input type="checkbox"/> Work out or engage in some type of physical activity
The type of class I prefer is:	<input type="checkbox"/> History	<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Art
I enjoy classes that are set up as:	<input type="checkbox"/> Having the teacher write the material on the board	<input type="checkbox"/> A discussion	<input type="checkbox"/> Working with classmates on a group activity
While working with someone I prefer to do it:	<input type="checkbox"/> Face to face	<input type="checkbox"/> On the telephone	<input type="checkbox"/> On the golf course or while on a jog
If I am assembling something I prefer to:	<input type="checkbox"/> Read the directions on my own	<input type="checkbox"/> Have someone tell me how to do it	<input type="checkbox"/> Play around with the pieces and figure it out
When reading I prefer to:	<input type="checkbox"/> "Take a picture" of what I am reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Hear the dialog (i.e., in class or on tape)	<input type="checkbox"/> Read intense stories or I prefer not to read at all
When I try to focus on my work I become:	<input type="checkbox"/> Distracted by movements	<input type="checkbox"/> Distracted by noises	<input type="checkbox"/> Distracted by the activities around me
When spelling out something I:	<input type="checkbox"/> Try to see the word	<input type="checkbox"/> Try to sound it out	<input type="checkbox"/> Write the word out to see if it looks right
ADD THE TOTALS FROM EACH COLUMN	COLUMN A TOTAL:	COLUMN B TOTAL:	COLUMN C TOTAL:

So What Type Of Learner Are You?

If the majority of your check marks were in:

- Column A = **You are a Visual Learner**
- Column B = **You are a Auditory Learner**
- Column C = **You are a Kinesthetic Learner**

Some Helpful Tips For Your Learning Style

VISUAL LEARNER	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Draw charts/maps/diagrams• Create flashcards (When doing this, on the front side have the word; on the back have the definition and an example)• Make lists• Color code your work• Use multi-media equipment (videotapes or computers)
AUDITORY LEARNER	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use a tape recorder for the class (Use this only to fill in what you missed while going over your notes)• Get a study buddy/group to go over the material• Read the notes aloud to yourself• Put your summarized notes on a tape recorder• Participate and be active in class discussions• Create mnemonics to aid in memorizing the material• Teach the material to someone else in the class
KINESTHETIC LEARNER	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create flashcards• Take frequent study breaks• Rewrite your notes• Design your own sample quizzes/tests• Create a map on a topic (this can be done with note cards or post-it notes)

Note: If two or more column totals from the Learning Styles Inventory are similar, combine the various tips from each of the categories.

Organizational Study Tips

Academic Skills Booklet • Office of Academic Services



PROVIDENCE
COLLEGE

ORGANIZATIONAL STUDY TIPS

Something to think about:

Each adult student has a unique amount of time each day to study and learn. What separates students is how disciplined they are with the time they have available.

Before you start to improve your Time Management take into consideration the following steps:

- **BE ORGANIZED!** This is the first and the most important step. Have your work in folders for each class so you can avoid having your work/papers scattered all over your room.
- **AVOID PROCRASTINATION.** We all do this to an extent but you do not want *Long Term Projects* becoming *Short Term Projects* (i.e., working on the project the night before it is due).
- **STUDY QUALITY VS. QUANTITY.** Contrary to popular belief you may hear a student say, “I studied 3 hours straight for the History exam.” It was great that the individual disciplined him/herself for that amount of time but your brain is like a sponge ... you can only absorb so much information at a time. It is better to study hard in 45-minute bursts and then take a break for a few minutes.
- **REVIEW YOUR WORK ASAP.** Make sure to go over the material on the day that you have the class (even if it is only for fifteen minutes right after class). As a result, you will have much higher retention of the material.
- **TAKE ADVANTAGE OF “HIDDEN” TIME.** Try to find the hidden time during your day to study (e.g., lunch hour, during breaks, before work begins, etc.). The more work you complete during the day, the less you may have to do in the evening. Set aside time on weekends to do some intensive studying. You must be very strategic and organized to maximize your study opportunities – they are there, you just may need to work a little harder to find them.



How To Use Your Assignment Book Effectively

1. When you get your syllabi from your classes write down the due dates of all of the assignments for the class (papers, tests, quizzes, and projects). If you have an *Assignment Book* that has a monthly calendar write everything down there as well as in the daily calendar. This gives you the opportunity to see what is due monthly, in addition to one day at a time.
2. In the back of your *Assignment Book* (or on a blank page) use a ruler and set up a *Grade Log Page*. This will give you an idea of where you stand in your classes, as well as provide you with information in the event that your final grade comes into question. A sample of this is on the next page.

Important Reminder

Hold on to all of your homework assignments and any other graded material (have a folder for each course) until you receive your final grade for the class. Mistakes can occur and grades may be changed as a result of this. Your documentation can help make any necessary corrections. You are accustomed to doing the same things in your personal life, such as saving bank statements, tax returns, receipts, etc.

Sample Grade Log Page

Write Down:

- The date of the assignment
- The type of assignment (test, quiz, homework, lab, paper, or project)
- The grade

HISTORY	MANAGEMENT
Lecture 1-7 9/20 75 (Quiz)	Proposal 9/21 B
Paper 10/1 C+	Proposal 10/16 B
	Presentation 10/18 A-

Academic Time Management Method One: The Weekly Checklist

On a piece of blank paper (or use your assignment book) break down your weekly assignment for your class by writing down what you want to accomplish for the week. Below is a sample assignment for reading/studying your notes for class.

- Monday: Attend class**
Try to review your notes right after to class even if it is only for a half-hour (this can help you by moving the information into long-term memory).
- Tuesday: Re-write your notes**
This could be done by typing your notes on the computer, writing out the information on note-cards or creating an outline. This reinforces the information that you went over in class on Monday.
- Wednesday: Go over the notes from Monday (for at least 1 hour)**
Try to do this during your lunch hour if possible (the more time you spend on it during the day, the less you will have to do at night).
- Thursday: Same as Wednesday**
- Fri/Sat/Sun: Review, create and take a quiz from the notes**
This will serve as a review sheet for your eventual exam.

**MORE EFFECTIVE WORK DONE IN A SHORTER AMOUNT OF TIME =
A MORE EFFECTIVE STUDENT**

Academic Time Management Method Two: The Specified Time Schedule

This method will be effective if you are an individual who needs to have more structure and repetition in your schedule. Once again, this is only as effective as you are consistent in using it.

1. Block in times for your **daily responsibilities** (i.e., work, dinner, laundry, etc).
2. **Block in the times** you will be attending class on the master schedule (sample follows). For a blank master schedule go to the **Appendix Section**.
3. After you have blocked out all responsibilities and classes, look at the available time slots and fill some of them in as **“studying time.”**
 - ✓ Pick the times of the day that you’re **at your best** and/or you find **hidden time** (i.e., I am a morning/afternoon person, so I would schedule a majority of my studying time during those hours).
 - ✓ It is beneficial to study at least one hour for the classes you will be attending **that day**. If you have Math and Science classes on Monday, then study at least one hour for math and one hour for science that day.
 - ✓ It is **NOT** beneficial to study for long stretches of time. When you break up your studying into segments, you will retain more of the material.
4. While you are figuring out when to schedule time to study, make sure you schedule some down time for socializing and relaxing. If you make sure you do this, then you are more likely to follow through with your commitments.
5. Once you have made your schedule, **commit to following it for a week**. After the week, make any necessary adjustments to the schedule and continue to follow it.
6. Make a concerted effort to study for each class you have for at least one hour. This will serve as a good review going into the next week of classes. The earlier in the day the better ... maybe a Saturday morning while the kids are still asleep.



Sample For Academic Time Management Method Two

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
8 am	Breakfast/ Commute					Breakfast	
8:30 am						Work	
9 am							
9:30 am							
10 am							
10:30 am							
11 am							
11:30 am							
12 pm	Lunch/ Study					Lunch	
12:30 pm							
1 pm							
1:30 pm	Work					~ Your options ~	
2 pm							
2:30 pm							
3 pm							
3:30 pm							
4 pm							
4:30 pm	Dinner/ Commute					Dinner	
5 pm							
5:30 pm							
6 pm	Math Class	PTA Meeting	Soccer Practice	History Class	Free	~ Your options ~	
6:30 pm							
7 pm							
7:30 pm	Review Class Notes	Laundry/ Study	House Chores	Review Class Notes			
8 pm							
8:30 pm		House Chores	Study				
9 pm - ?							

***Shading denotes studying/class time**

Test Taking Strategies

Academic Skills Booklet • Office of Academic Services



PROVIDENCE
COLLEGE

TEST TAKING TIPS

Prior To The Exam – Quick Tips:

- **Study:** This is an obvious tip but make sure to plan your study accordingly. Try to go over the material each day that you have the class and, as a result, you will have a higher retention of the information.
- **Use flashcards:** This is a good strategy to employ especially for a class in which you have to know definitions. It is important to include an example of the term you are studying on a flashcard because, on an exam, a professor may give you an example of the term and not ask for the definition only. This will also help in *learning* the term, rather than simply memorizing it.
- **Create a review sheet:** This is a great way to review for an exam. At the end of each week (or each class) jot down some questions from your notes/reading assignments (you play the role of the teacher) but do not write in the answers immediately. A week prior to the exam start answering your own questions – now you have an “instant pre-test/review sheet.”
- **Talk to the professor:** If you have any questions at all go to see the professor. Professors are the best resource for succeeding in class. Show them what you are reviewing so you can see if you are on the right track.
- **Review with classmates:** Get a study group together or just one fellow classmate because you can bounce ideas or questions off of each other. Reviewing the work aloud will aid in retaining the material.
- **Tutorial assistance:** The Tutorial Center, located in the Office of Academic Services (lower level of Phillips Memorial Library), has content tutors for any subject. Make an appointment if you are unclear on some of the class material or if you would like additional time to review. Some academic departments also run their own tutorial sessions – check the OAS Web site for a schedule of these sessions (www.providence.edu/academicServices).

During The Exam – Quick Tips:

- **Preview the exam:** Take a look at the entire exam to see what it entails and manage your time accordingly. **READ THE DIRECTIONS!**
- **Do a mind dump:** This is especially effective for an essay exam. Write down on a piece of paper all of the information that you know on the particular topic. This will help in recalling the information, as well as organizing the material for your essay answer.
- **Do the easiest problems first:** Go through the exam and if you come to a problem that is costing you too much time, circle it, then go onto the next question. You do not want to spend too much time on a particular question because you are allotted only a certain amount of time to complete the exam. **Remember**, the more time you spend on one question, the less time you can spend on the next one to which you know the answer!
- **Never leave an answer blank:** In general, it is better to guess and write in any answer than to leave an answer blank. You could get partial credit for your answer. If you leave an answer blank, you are guaranteeing yourself that you will receive no credit.

- **Ask the professor for clarification:** While taking the exam, if you come across something that you do not understand ask the professor. S/he certainly will not give you the answer, but you may have a better understanding of what the professor is asking of you.

True/False Exams – Quick Tips:

- **If one part of the statement is false the whole statement is false:** All you are looking for is one word or one piece of information to make the statement false.
- **Assume all statements are true:** This type of mindset going into a true/false exam will help because now you are just looking for that one item to make the statement false.
- **“Always” and “never” tend to indicate that the statement is false:** These types of words are called *absolutes* and there are very few absolutes that are true.
- **Words such as “some,” “most,” “rarely,” and “usually” are often true:** Words that do not give specific meanings are usually true. This is due to the fact that these words are not absolutes and refer to more of a “gray area” of meanings.
- **Cross-out double negatives:** A question may contain double negatives to confuse you. In cases in which you may see a double negative, cross out the negative and the prefix.

Statement	Cross-out	Meaning
Not untruthful	Not untruthful	truthful
Not indirect	Not indirect	direct
Not untrustworthy	Not untrustworthy	trustworthy
Not impossible	Not impossible	possible

True Or False Examples:

1. ____ June is never a winter month.
2. ____ As a general rule, it is important to study two hours for every one hour of class.
3. ____ Most students would not be dissatisfied by having a 1.00 cumulative grade point average.

Answers:

1. **False** “Never” is an absolute; July is a winter month in the Southern Hemisphere.
2. **True** The word you focus on is “general” because it is not giving a specific meaning.
3. **False** Cross out the double negative and then re-read the statement

Multiple Choice Exams – Quick Tips:

- **Try the cover up method:** After reading the question, cover up the answers with a piece of paper and slide the paper so you can see the answers one at a time only. This can prevent you from feeling overwhelmed by looking at all of the answers at once and will encourage you to read each answer carefully.
- **Start with the questions that you can answer right away:** This will help in managing your time for the exam. If you come to a question you are unsure of or feel it will take some more time, circle it, and go back to it later.

- **Treat each statement as a true/false answer:** By taking each answer and evaluating it against the question you will have to ask yourself, “does the answer fit the question?” Each question and answer then becomes its own true/false question.
- **Cross-out each answer that is incorrect:** This will help obviously, by the process of elimination.
- **Watch out for the double negatives** (same as the True/False tip).
- **Words such as “always,” “never,” and “only” are frequently incorrect:** There are few statements that have no exception.
- **Watch out for the statement, “all of the above”:** Those are usually correct, but ... if one of the statements is incorrect then you have just eliminated two possible answers right away (that specific answer and “all of the above”).

If It Comes To Guessing...

...and it involves numbers, throw out the highest and lowest numbers and choose one in the middle (also, look for the most rounded number- this would end with a “0”).

...go with the longer of the statements remaining.

Multiple Choice Examples – Circle The Best Answer

1. In order to be elected into the Baseball Hall of Fame a batter should have at least _____ hits.
 - a) 2400
 - b) 3000
 - c) 4240
 - d) 2570
2. Potassium is:
 - a) never found in red meat.
 - b) the only chemical necessary for pH balance.
 - c) should never be combined with Vitamin C.
 - d) abundant in many fruits and vegetables.
3. The North was victorious in the Civil War because:
 - a) they had a more advanced railroad system than the South.
 - b) they were better soldiers than the South.
 - c) they were aided by Mexico.
 - d) all of the above

Answers:

1. B: Throw out the highest and the lowest numbers and go with the more rounded one.
2. D: The first three answers have absolutes in them.
3. A: The second answer is false so that eliminates both B and D since C was a distracter (it has nothing to do with the answer).

Essay Exams – Quick Tips:

- **USE AN ERASABLE PEN:** Remember, neatness does count!
- **Outline the answer before writing your essay:** Use the inside cover of the blue book and write down the information you know and then number it in the order of writing your essay.
- **Make sure you have an introductory paragraph:** In this paragraph you want to make sure that you explain the point of your essay answer (i.e., your thesis statement).
- **Write a concluding paragraph to summarize your essay:** This reinforces the points you made within the essay. It should be somewhat similar to your introductory paragraph.
- **Use your strongest point first in your essay answer:** This is to grab the reader's attention immediately.
- **Underline the key words in your essay question/statement:** By doing this you will be able to look back quickly to see if you are answering the question.

Helpful Terms To Know

ANALYZE	Break into separate parts and discuss or interpret.
COMPARE	Examine qualities or characteristics in order to discover resemblances. This usually refers to similarities more than differences.
CONTRAST	Show differences between two or more ideas, topics, concepts, etc.
CRITICIZE	Make judgments as to a given topic or evaluate its worth by backing up your statement with specific examples.
DEFINE	Give a clear, specific meaning.
DESCRIBE	Give a detailed account. Include characteristics and qualities.
DIAGRAM	Present a chart, plan, or graphic representation.
DISCUSS	Examine an issue and present or argue its pros and cons with details and examples.
ENUMERATE	List several ideas, aspects, events, reasons, etc.
EVALUATE	Give your opinion or the opinion of an expert. Include both advantages and limitations.
EXPLAIN	Clarify and interpret material presented, state "who," "what," "where," and "why."
ILLUSTRATE	Give concrete examples.
INTERPRET	Comment upon, give examples, and describe relationships.
JUSTIFY	Give reasons or prove.
LIST	Present an itemized series.
OUTLINE	Give main points and necessary supplementary material, omitting details.

PROVE	Support with facts or evidence.
RELATE	Show how things interconnect.
STATE	Explain precisely.
SUMMARIZE	Give the main points or facts in condensed form.
SUPPORT	Back up statements with facts and proof.
TRACE	Show the order or progress of events.

This list was excerpted from: www.newbury.edu/support/tests.htm.

Essay Example:

Compare and contrast the differences between full-time and part-time college attendance.

- How are you going to organize the essay prior to writing it?



Reading Comprehension Tips

Academic Skills Booklet • Office of Academic Services



PROVIDENCE
COLLEGE

READING COMPREHENSION TIPS

Some Quick Tips To Improve Your Reading Comprehension

- **Read early in the day:** This will allow you to concentrate and retain more information than studying later at night when you may be tired. When tired, your concentration and comprehension will decrease.
- **Read for short bursts:** Try to read for 35-40 minutes at a time and then take a short break. If you have this as your reading goal it can serve as a motivator in trying to really focus on the material at hand. Try to make these “bursts” quality reading time.
- **Find a quiet location:** Try to avoid your residence hall room on campus as well as the lounge. There are too many distractions there that are not conducive for quality reading.
- **Monitor your comprehension:** Ask yourself every once in a while, “What have I learned?” If you are having trouble answering this, then re-read the material, ask a classmate, or ask the professor for some clarification.
- **Try skimming the chapter first:** Take a look at the title page, preface, subtitles, the introduction and the chapter summary before reading the entire chapter.

Remember: *College Textbooks are designed to help you by providing...*

MAJOR HEADINGS

Italicized/Bold Words

- List of Main Points
- Repetition of information/facts
- Summaries

What Type Of Reader Are You?

Are you a passive reader who likes to use a highlighter?

Result: Reading passively delays learning because you are continually re-reading the material highlighted and you may have the tendency to become lazy and highlight most of your reading. Ask yourself this question, “did I retain most of the material I highlighted?”

Are You Reading The Material For Hours At A Time Just To Get It Done?

Result: You become a lazy reader (you develop a lower retention of the material read as well) and you do not really focus your attention on the critical points; i.e., you “zone out.”

Improve Your Reading By Being A More “Active Reader”:

• **Method One: SQ3R Method**

Survey: Look over the chapter and get an idea of what it will cover. This will cognitively ease your way into the reading assignment.

Question: Think about, “what is this chapter about?” and “what examples support the author’s point in the chapter?”

Read: Go over the material carefully and if you have any questions with vocabulary or concepts write them down and review them after you finish that particular section. Continue assessing your reading to see if you are understanding the material.

Review: This is an extremely important point. Try to do this a couple of times each week. By reviewing, you will begin to see the larger picture of the main concepts introduced. Think of this as an athlete or a musician who continues to practice and becomes better and better during his/her performances. The more you review the material (i.e., “practice”) the better your understanding will be of that topic because you are “exercising” your brain.

Recite: Practice by saying aloud the material you are reviewing. This helps immensely because you are utilizing both hemispheres of your brain.

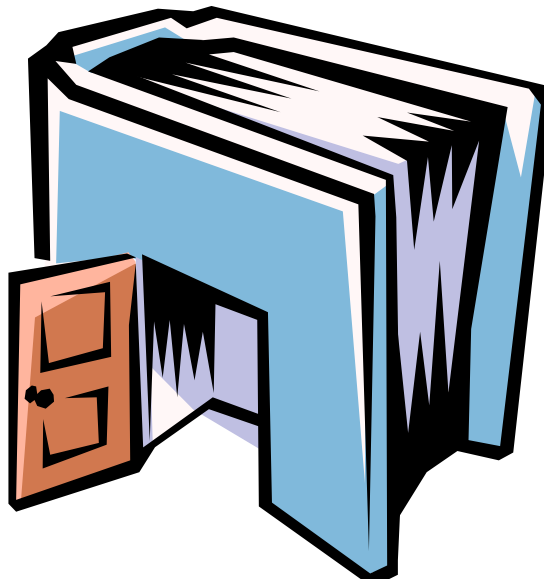
- **Method Two: Design Your Own Question Notes**

1. Split the page so you have questions in one column and answers in the other column.
2. From the chapter headings, make study questions that you feel could be on the test (also look for and develop “cause/effect” questions from them).
3. Look for words in **bold print**. These are usually definitions; make sure you can give an example for the term. This will help because professors will sometimes give you an example of the term and not ask you specifically for the definition. This will aid you in learning the material instead of just memorizing it. *Remember:* You are playing the role of the instructor.

Practice: Please go over the reading sample on the next page and write out what you think are the important points of the material. A sample of what your questions/notes should look like appears right after the sample.

Remember: Writing questions and notes may be time consuming at first, but keep in mind that you are not rewriting the chapter. Rather, you are picking out the important points and, as a result, you now have your review sheets prepared for the exam!

THE END RESULT ... A more active learner and better retention of the material since you are writing the information out!



READING SAMPLE

Research on the learning of factual material has been done in two general ways. In many studies psychologists have examined verbal learning, or how students learn verbal material in laboratory settings. For example, students might be asked to learn lists of words or nonsense syllables. Other studies have investigated learning facts from books, lectures, class presentations, movies, and other more typical forms of classroom instruction. These studies may take place in psychological laboratories or they may be done in classrooms.

Verbal Learning

Three types of verbal learning tasks typically seen in the classroom have been identified and studied extensively: the paired-associate task, the serial learning task, and the free recall learning task.

1. **Paired-Associate Learning:** This type of task involves learning to respond with one member of a pair when given the other member of the pair. Usually there is a list of pairs to be memorized. In typical experiments the pairs are arbitrary. Educational examples of paired-associate tasks include learning state capitals, names and dates of Civil War battles, addition and multiplication tables, atomic weights of elements, and word spellings.
2. **Serial Learning:** This involves learning a list of terms in a particular order. Memorization of the notes on the musical staff, the Pledge of Allegiance, the elements in atomic weight order, and poetry and songs are serial learning tasks. Serial learning tasks occur less often in classroom instruction than paired-associate tasks.
3. **Free-Recall Learning:** These types of tasks also involve memorizing a list, but not in a special order. Recalling the names of the fifty states, types of reinforcement, and the organ systems in the body are examples of free-recall tasks.

This text was taken from: Slavin, R. (1988). *Educational Psychology: Theory Into Practice* (2nd ed). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Questions

1- **What is verbal learning?**

2- **What are three types of verbal learning?**

3- **What is Paired Associate Learning?**

Give an example

4- **What is Serial Learning?**

Give an example

5- **What is Free-Recall Learning?**

Give an example

Answers

1- How students learn lists of words under a controlled condition.

2- a) Paired-Associate Learning
b) Serial Learning
c) Free-Recall Learning

3- Respond with one member of a pair when given the other member of the pair.

Examples: Knowing the states/capitals; multiplication tables.

4- Learning a list of names in a particular order.

Examples: Notes on a musical staff {(E)very, (G)ood, (B)oy, (D)eserves, (F)udge}; order of the planets.

5- Memorizing a list but not in any order.

Examples: Organ system in the body; the fifty states

Note Taking Tips

Academic Skills Booklet • Office of Academic Services



PROVIDENCE
COLLEGE

HOW TO TAKE GREAT LECTURE NOTES

1. Be prepared for class

- **Do the readings assigned:** If you don't have time to read them intensely still open the book and skim the pages so you get a general idea of the reading. This makes it easier to pick up the important facts from a professor's lecture if you already have some general knowledge of the topic.

2. "Read" the professor

- **Pay attention to the subject at hand:** At the beginning of the class the professor will probably say what the subject of the lecture will be. Write it down! Then, when you're listening to the lecture you will know what kind of information to which you should be paying even closer attention.
- **Listen for sub-topics:** The professor might ask questions or give sub-topics. Pay attention to these—they're the skeletons of what he or she is trying to say.
- **Write down the information the professor writes on the board:** He/she wouldn't waste time writing it if it wasn't important.
- **Use free time wisely:** While the professor explains main points with examples, etc. utilize this "free time" to fill in the notes you didn't get a chance to finish, if necessary.

3. Get involved

- **Develop your own shorthand:** Don't write every word out or you'll never get all the important words down.
- **Ask questions if you don't understand something:** If you don't understand a concept while you're in class then you will have a much tougher time understanding it when you go back to look at your notes.

4. Check your work!

- **RECOPY YOUR NOTES:** It is not enough to just take notes in class. Rewrite and reorganize them right after the lecture or as soon as you can. This way the lecture will be fresh in your head and you can organize your notes effectively. Also, this is a great study habit—it will reinforce the main ideas and cut down on your studying time in the long run.

5. Where to go for HELP

- **See the professor:** This should be the first place to go (since this is the individual from whom you got the information) if you are having trouble or need clarification on any questions in your notes.
- **Friend/Classmate:** If you think you may have missed something, or just want to check the completeness of your notes.
- **Tape recorder:** If you find you are missing large chunks of lectures or you just can't keep up with the professor, tape the lecture and listen to it later to catch the notes you missed. (Make sure to ask the instructor first – some teachers do not wish to be recorded.)
- **The Office of Academic Services (OAS):** To review and improve note taking skills see a staff member or tutor (if you can fit this in your daily schedule).



How to Write “A” Great Paper

Academic Skills Booklet • Office of Academic Services



PROVIDENCE
COLLEGE

WRITING “A” GREAT RESEARCH PAPER

Being able to write an effective research paper is essential for every college student. Perhaps you will not write one until your sophomore or junior year, but when you finally encounter a class with a research paper it will probably be worth a high percentage of your grade.

An Overview

- Research papers take more time than most people think. **THEY CANNOT BE WRITTEN THE NIGHT BEFORE THEY ARE DUE!**
- The term “Research” paper implies outside research—thus you will need to cite books, periodicals, Internet sites, or more likely, a combination of all of these sources.
- Research papers are an easy way of boosting your grade if you are willing to work—think of them as an open book exam; they’re often worth just as much as an exam.

Suggested Steps For Writing A Research Paper

1. Pick a topic:

- If you’re lucky you actually have a choice of topics. Try to pick something you are interested in so you will not mind doing the research. Also, keep in mind that you must pick a topic for which there is a sufficient amount of information. *Hint:* Another source to find a topic could be viewing your Table of Contents in your textbook.
- Write down exactly what your topic is—it will make it much easier to find information on a topic if you know exactly what it is.
- At this point, you should keep your topic rather broad—you can narrow the topic once you have found your research and can see a possible area of focus.
- Talk to the professor—she/he can give you suggestions as well as help you to broaden or narrow your topic.

2. Search for sources:

- Try asking the professor for some guidance—it’s their class, chances are they will know the most about where to find effective sources. Tell him/her your topic and ask for any suggestions where to find good information.
- Other great places to gather information are Internet searches and, especially, reference librarians.
- Make sure your sources are from a variety of genres. For many topics it will be difficult to get primary sources (i.e., first hand data or narrative), but try to get a variety of different authors in order to get various viewpoints.

3. Review your sources/Creating index cards:

- Go through your sources to see which ones seem to be the best and most appropriate for your topic.
- Be realistic—if you’re a slow reader or are pressed for time, don’t pick several long books. Rather, try to find important chapters from books, periodicals, or Internet articles that are shorter.
- When you find a source you think will work well with your paper, write down the main point of the source on an index card along with all bibliographic information (this will help you later when you are writing the bibliography).

Sample Index Card:

Author's Name	Book Title
Main Point or Topic of the Quote	
Page Number and Related Quote (if the quote is too long then just put the first few words and the last few)	
Publisher Information and Copyright date (for bibliography)	

This will help you later when you are writing the bibliography.

4. Organize your index cards:

- Once you have your index cards with all of your sources on them, you are ready to organize.
- Group your index cards together in the form that works best for you (i.e., grouping by topic, author, time period, genre, etc.).

5. Develop a rough outline for your paper:

- By grouping your index cards you have essentially created your outline.
- You now must decide on a logical order in which to present your topics/arguments.
- As you construct your outline you should be thinking about the following questions:
 - ✓ What is the main point of this paragraph?
 - ✓ Would this topic fit better somewhere else?
 - ✓ What sources/quotes should I use to make this point?
 - ✓ How will this point/paragraph serve to explain my thesis?

6. Solidify your thesis:

- Now that you have outlined your paper, you know exactly what you will be saying—thus it is time to write your thesis.
- Look at what you plan to say and/or prove and try to write in one to three sentences the point of your entire paper.
- The thesis should be clean, concise and encompass everything you plan to say within the paper. A strong thesis won't help you if it's not what you actually cover in your paper.
- **A sample thesis statement:** Attention Deficit Disorder (A.D.D.) afflicts over 40 million people in the United States. This disorder does not discriminate against race or gender. In order to have a better understanding of this complex disorder, it is important to note its characteristics, causes, and treatments. A detailed analysis of A.D.D. will be presented; the analysis will include case studies and an interview with an individual who has been diagnosed with A.D.D.

7. Write the paper:

- Now that your paper is organized you can start writing the body—at no point during the research paper writing process before now did you need to go near a word processing program!
- Because you have already created a detailed outline for the paper, just stick to your outline and write.
- When writing remember a few key things:
 - ✓ What is this paragraph doing for my essay?
 - ✓ What is this sentence doing for my paragraph?
 - ✓ What is this word doing for my sentence?
 - ✓ Eliminate all unnecessary words, sentences, and paragraphs.
 - ✓ Also ask, could I say this in a clearer, more concise way?

8. The bibliography and avoiding plagiarism:

- Regardless of how wonderful your research paper is, no teacher will accept one without a bibliography and the proper citations.
- Each time you quote or paraphrase from a source make sure to cite it afterwards by writing the author's last name and the page number the quote was found on in parentheses.

Example: "This war was not fought for any reason other than national pride" (Gardner, 34).

- Remember to include a bibliography with the proper format (see example below). Because you have your index cards with all the relevant information, writing the bibliography should be a snap!

Here are some guidelines for bibliographies by sources – APA format:

- **Single Author Book:** Last Name, First Initial, Middle Initial. (Copyright). *Title of book* (only first word should be capitalized) Publication Place: Publisher.

Example: Smith, G. R. (1997). *The history of baseball*. New York: Harrison Publishers.

- **Multiple Author Book:** When a work has between two and six authors, cite all authors.

Example: Roeder, K., Simon L., & Smith, J. (1967). *Nerve cells and insect behavior*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

- **Interviews:** First initial and last name of the interviewee, the type of communication (i.e., personal interview), and the date of the interview

Example: J. Holt, Personal Interview, 12/23/01.

- **Letter:** First initial and last name of the letter writer, the type of communication, and the date.

Example: K. Baten, Letter, 3/4/99.

- **Periodical Entries:** Last name of Author, First Initial. (Publication Date). Article's Title. *Name of Periodical*, Volume Number, Pages.

Example: Usor, M. (January 12, 1999). Markets close at all time high. *New York Times Magazine*, 12, 44-45.

- **Newspapers:** Author's last name, the Initial of the first name. (The newspaper's date). Title of the article. (Only the first word of the title of article is capitalized unless there is a proper noun in the title). *Full Name of the Newspaper*, Pages the article is on.

Example: Perry, H. (April 22, 1984). Just eat it. *Boston Globe*, 12-13.

- **Web page:** Author's last name, First Initial (Date). *Name of the article*. [Online]. Available: Web Address. (Date Retrieved).

Example: Daly, B. (1997). *Writing argumentative essays*. [Online]. Available: <http://esplanet.com>. (July 31, 2001).

- **Journal Articles:** Author's Last Name, First Initial. (Copyright). Title Article. *Journal Name*, Volume, Page Numbers.

Example: Reid, M. (1999). Getting it right. *The Economist*, 4, 234-256.

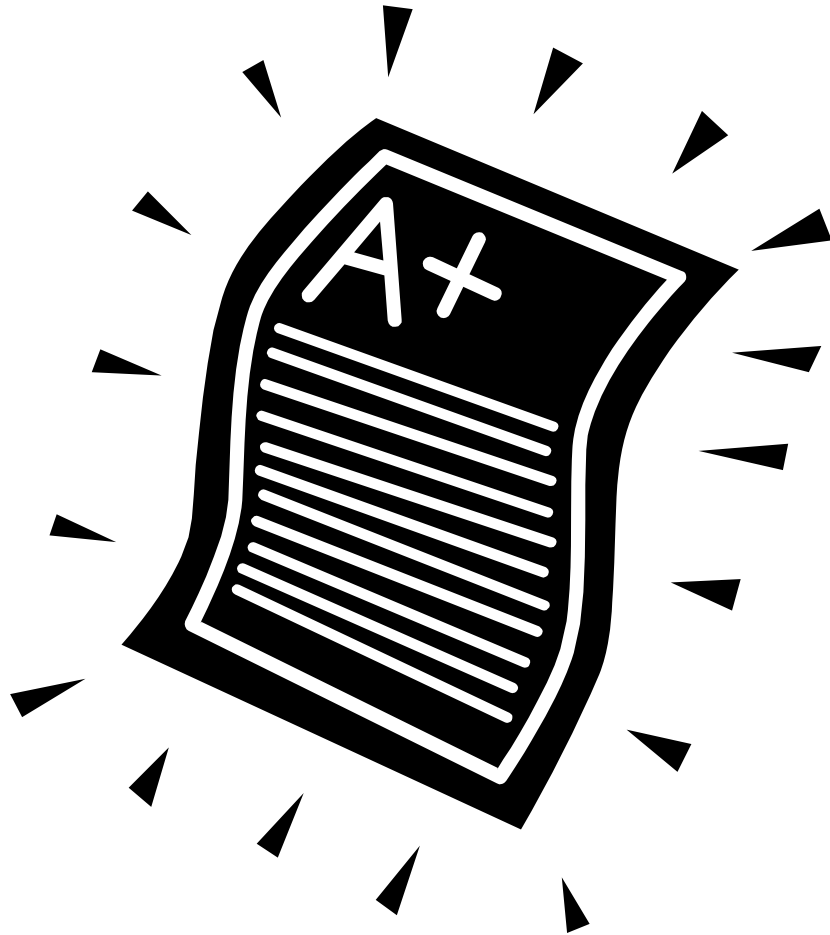
- **Television Broadcast:** Last Name, First Initial (Executive Producer). (Date of show). *The name of the show*. City where it was produced: Broadcasting company.

Example: Smith, J. (Executive Producer). (2001, July 31). *20/20*. New York: American Broadcasting Company.

For more information on bibliographies go through the PC library's homepage at www.rwu.edu/library/eref.html (it's at the bottom of that page under "Citing Internet Resources").

9. Proofread/Go for help

- Make sure to **save time** for this very important step.
- **Your professor:** He/she can read your paper if you have that option and you will be able to finish the paper with enough time. This is the most important person from whom to get feedback.
- **A family member or friend:** They can read your paper for general grammar and readability – something that makes sense to you may be very confusing to another reader.
- **The Writing Center:** The Writing Center Staff can assist you at any stage of the writing process. The Center is located in the basement of the Library (Library 104). The Center is open Monday through Thursday, during day and evening hours (contact the Center, x2095, for specific hours).
- **The Tutorial Center:** The Tutorial Center is also located in the basement of the library. Here you can make an appointment to meet with a tutor for a specific class or area of study. He/she can help you with the structure of your paper, as well as help you to improve the content. The Tutorial Center is open Monday – Thursday from 8:30 am–9:00 pm and Fridays from 8:30 am–4:00 pm. Call x2855 for more information.



Library Navigation

Academic Skills Booklet • Office of Academic Services



PROVIDENCE
COLLEGE

LIBRARY NAVIGATION 101

Library Hours

- Monday-Thursday 8:00 am – 1:00 am
- Friday 8:00 am – 8:00 pm
- Saturday 10:00 am – 8:00 pm
- Sunday 12:00 pm – 1:00 am

Hours usually change for holidays and exam periods – check the signs at the SCE office, the signs at the library itself, or on the library Web site (<http://www.providence.edu/library/>).

Places To Go For Help

1. **The Reference/Information Desk** – This is where to search for information to fixing printing problems on computers, these people usually can help with anything. Help desk staff can assist with just about anything – from searching for resources to fixing printing problems at the computer workstations.
2. **The Circulation Desk** – You can take books out there as well as place orders for interlibrary loans. Don't forget your PC ID card – it's your library card too!
3. **The Tutorial Center** – Located in the basement of the Library, you can make appointments to meet with a personal tutor in almost any subject area.

Resources In The Library

From the start menu on the computer, under references, you can search for books, magazines, newspapers and just about anything else by topic, title, and author. Because PC is part of the HELIN Network you can find out where books are located and order them from other libraries that are part of the network. **Do your research early** – it usually takes a few days to order from the other libraries.

- Helpful Databases Include:
 - ✓ ABI/Inform (business)
 - ✓ Academic Universe (full text legal information, newspapers)
 - ✓ ATLA (religion)
 - ✓ EconLit (economics)
 - ✓ ERIC (education)
 - ✓ GPO (government documents)
 - ✓ PAIS (political science)
 - ✓ Providence Journal
 - ✓ PsychInfo (psychology)
 - ✓ Social Sciences Index
 - ✓ Social Work abstracts
 - ✓ Sociological abstracts



Note: Databases may change, or be added, at any time.

- You can also access the World Wide Web from the library to do Internet research and searches.
- Microsoft Office is installed on library computers so you can type a paper, make a slide show, or create a spreadsheet without having to go back to your dorm or to a computer lab.
- Laptop computers, with wireless network access, are available for checkout and use **within** the library.
- If you don't know where to go for research, just go to the Help Desk. Someone is always there to tell you where to go for research, what words will give you the best search results, and anything else you might need to know.

Oral Presentation Tips

Academic Skills Booklet • Office of Academic Services



PROVIDENCE
COLLEGE

ORAL PRESENTATION TIPS

Do you feel sick the moment a professor even mentions the words, “oral presentation?” Do your friends say that you never shut up—until they see you freeze in front of a class? You are not alone in your fears. Most people fear getting up in front of a large group of people. Keep reading for some tips to make the process easier, if not less painful.

Be sure you practice. (*More than once!*)

- Take advantage of anyone that offers to listen to you present your topic.
- If there is no one available, use the old talking to the mirror trick or record your presentation and listen to it in order to hear what your presentation sounds like.
- If your presentation has time constraints, be sure to time your talk to make sure it conforms to the guidelines—a presentation may seem a lot longer than it actually is when it is written but not spoken.

Do not write your presentation out word for word

- By looking out at the audience, you show that you know enough about your topic to feel comfortable with only minimal notes.
- **WHEN USING POWERPOINT, KEEP SLIDES SHORT AND TO THE POINT.**
 - ✓ PowerPoint slides are not supposed to act as cue cards.
 - ✓ These slides should contain minimal information in large type so they are easy for the audience to read and understand.

Make eye contact

- This is another technique that shows the class that you are interested in your subject, and that you are interested in people’s reactions.
- Eye contact also keeps you from reading your presentation and makes it much more interesting for those who are listening.

Model your presentation after a lecture by your favorite professor

- Assuming, of course, that this professor is interesting and keeps the class engaged.
- Use the techniques this professor uses to keep the class engaged and interested.
 - ✓ Remember that you are only responsible for one day and that your professor has to do this every day – keep it in perspective and it won’t seem as stressful.

Breathe and smile ☺

- Relax and pretend that you are having a conversation with the class members whom you know.
- Realize that when your classmates do their presentations, they will be just as nervous as you are.



On-Campus Help

Academic Skills Booklet • Office of Academic Services



PROVIDENCE
COLLEGE

SOURCES OF ASSISTANCE

Need help adjusting to life at Providence College? Need help in some of your classes? Need to talk to someone other than a friend or a professor? Here are some of the places you can get help on campus.

1. **School of Continuing Education (SCE)**. When it comes to academic questions, this office is a tremendous resource. Staff members can assist you with how to complete your course of studies, help you add/drop or register for a class, and answer a variety of additional school-related questions. Visit the SCE office in Harkins 102 or call 401-865-2487.
2. **Office of Academic Services (OAS)** (www.providence.edu/academicServices). A variety of academic assistance is available through the OAS. To contact a staff member, visit Library 102 or call 401-865-2494. The Tutorial and Writing Centers are both operated by the OAS.
The Tutorial Center (401-865-2855) offers peer tutoring in many subjects, including DWC, Math, Accounting, Economics and the sciences, from 9:00 am to 9:00 pm during the week (9:00 am to 4:00 pm on Fridays).
The Writing Center (401-865-2664) offers writing tutoring from 9:00 am to 9:00 pm during the week (9:00 am to 4:00 pm on Fridays).
3. **Chaplain's Office**. Many students have developed relationships with members of the Dominican Community and find them to be very approachable and willing to help. To speak with someone in the Chaplain's office, stop by the office on the first floor of St. Dominic Chapel or call 401-865-2216.
4. **Financial Aid Office**. For school-related, financial assistance. To speak with someone in the Financial Aid office, stop by the office in Harkins 215 or call 401-865-2286.
5. **Student Accounts Office**. For school-related, billing and payment questions. To speak with someone in the Student Accounts office, stop by Harkins 400 or call 401-865-2284.
6. **PC Bookstore**. For course books and other convenience purchases. The Bookstore is located in the lower level of the Slavin Center; the phone number is 401-865-2181.
7. **Phillips Memorial Library**. Staff members can help you access paper and electronic course academic resources. There are also several computers available for student use. The library's phone number is 401-865-2242.
8. **Enrollment Services**. For assistance related to your official, Providence College academic records (e.g., transcripts, student status, etc.). To speak with someone in the Academic Records office, stop by Harkins 207 or call 401-865-2982.



Appendix

Academic Skills Booklet • Office of Academic Services



PROVIDENCE
COLLEGE

Time Management Schedule

Time/Day	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Pre 8:00 am							
8 am							
8:30 am							
9 am							
9:30 am							
10 am							
10:30 am							
11 am							
11:30 am							
12 pm							
12:30 pm							
1 pm							
1:30 pm							
2 pm							
2:30 pm							
3 pm							
3:30 pm							
4 pm							
4:30 pm							
5 pm							
5:30 pm							
6 pm							
6:30 pm							
7 pm							
7:30 pm							
8 pm							
8:30 pm							
Post 9:00 pm							