

Word Up!

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LITERACY NEWSLETTER

Getting Organized

Organization is a trait that is not easy to come by. Many people try, but not all succeed. While nobody likes to be disorganized, for many students who are, lack of organization can spell certain disaster. Searching for lost assignments or course handouts can take up valuable time, and it's almost impossible to study and meet deadlines when notes from different subjects are all jumbled together.

Helping a teen get organized is not the easiest thing in the world. It takes patience and persistence, but parents need to hang in there and support their children as they help them learn to become more organized.

Learning how to focus and get something done is about more than just good grades - it's the foundation for success in school and life. Mastering the skills of getting organized,

staying focussed and seeing work through to the end will help your child in just about everything they do.

This issue of *Word Up!* is dedicated to helping your teens develop the skills they need to be more organized. With the new semester under way, this is the perfect time to get started. Tips and suggestions from successful students and adults are included in this

issue, but there's no "right" way to get organized. Students and parents need to be creative and flexible until they discover what works best for them.

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Organizing is what you do before you do something, so that when you do it, it is not all mixed up.



Wise Words Spoken by Winnie the Pooh



TEN WAYS TO HELP YOUR CHILD GET ORGANIZED

Developing good organizational skills is a key ingredient for success in school and in life. Although some people are by nature more organized than others, anyone can put routines and systems in place to help a child “get it together”. Below is a list of strategies you can use to help your child get - and keep - his or her life under control.

1. Use Checklists



Help your child get into the habit of keeping a “to-do” list. Use checklists to post assignments, household chores, and reminders about what materials to bring to class. Your child should use the “school agenda” or keep a small notebook dedicated to listing homework assignments.

2. Organize Homework Assignments

Before beginning a homework session, encourage your child to number assignments in the order in which they should be done. Starting with one that’s not too long or difficult is a good idea, but avoid saving the longest or hardest assignments for last.

3. Designate a Study Space

Your child should study in the same place every night. This doesn’t have to be a bedroom, but it should be a quiet place with few distractions. All school supplies and materials should be nearby.



4. Set a Designated Study Time



Your child should know that a certain time every day is reserved for studying and doing homework. Include your child in making this decision. Even if he or she doesn’t have homework, the reserved time should be used to review the day’s lessons, read for pleasure, or work on an upcoming project.

5. Keep Organized Notebooks

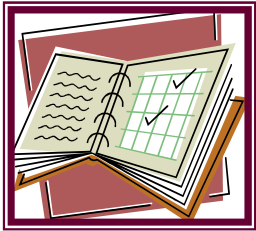
Help your child keep track of papers by organizing them in a binder or notebook. This will help when it’s time to review the material for each day’s classes, as well as make it easier to organize the material to prepare for tests and quizzes. Use dividers to separate class notes, or color-code notebooks. Separate “to do” and “done” folders, as well as provide a central place to store completed assignments.

Getting

6. *Conduct a Weekly Clean-Up*

Encourage your child to sort through their books, bags and notebooks on a weekly basis.

7. *Create a Household Schedule*



As much as possible, try to establish and stick to regular routine (dinner-time, study-time, down-time, bed-time). This will help your child fall into a pattern at home. Try to limit television-watching and computer play to specific periods of time during the day.

8. *Keep a Master Calendar*

Keep a large, wall-sized calendar for the household, listing the family's commitments, schedules for extracurricular activities, days off from school, and major events at home and at school. Note dates when your child has big exams or due dates for projects. This will help family members keep track of each other's activities and avoid scheduling conflicts.



9. *Prepare for the Day Ahead*



Before your child goes to bed, he or she should pack schoolwork and books in their backpack. Even the next day's clothes should be laid out. This will cut down on morning confusion and allow your child to prepare quickly for the day ahead, as well as get to school on time.

10. *Support Your Child*

While your child is learning to become more organized, help him or her develop organizational skills by photocopying checklists and schedules and posting them on the refrigerator. Gently remind them about filling in calendar dates and keeping papers and materials organized. Most important, set a good example.

Organized

Hands-On, Minds-On Learning Experiences

Portable Planetarium

Kwantlen Park students experienced the virtual night sky in the middle of the day thanks to Sky Lab, a portable planetarium from the H.R. MacMillan Space Centre. The wonders of space came to earth with a digital projector that allowed students to see stars, constellations, realistic deep sky objects, planets, and moons.



Hover Craft

Ever wonder how the Coast Guard hovercraft skips over the ocean at full speed leaving no wake? KP students learned the science behind it all in their grade 9 science classes. Using an ordinary leaf blower that makes air pressure that is captured under a platform, Mr. Greenall's students floated across the Den at high speeds and learned all about friction and air pressure.

Slam Poetry

Ms. Dhaliwal's and Mr. Larsen's English classes had fun playing with words with "slamsters" from Vancouver Poetry House. Students were exposed to poetry as a living, breathing art form and had opportunities to create and perform poems of their own. The purpose of the sessions was to help students understand that for their thoughts or ideas to hold weight, they must be heard!



Bard on the Beach

KP students received first hand experience in the art of playing Shakespeare in workshops led by Bard Education teaching staff. Through the use of voice, movement and acting exercises, students had the opportunity to explore Shakespeare's characters and language and learn how to bring Shakespeare's text to life.