

GETTING ORGANISED



AGENDA

- Starter
- The Paper Flow
- What? When?
- Create a System
- Conclusion
- Student Assessment

Objectives

Students will examine ways to organise information and materials for their school subjects.

Students will identify the importance of planning and scheduling study time.

Students will create systems for organising their work.

Materials Needed

- One copy of the “Organisation Checklist” activity sheet for each student (Part III)
- One copy of the “My Study Week” activity sheet for each student (Part III)

Starter (3 minutes)

Ask students to think about the order in which they do things in the morning.

Ask questions such as the following:

- Would you fix your hair before getting into the shower? Why not?
- Would you put on your shoes before putting on your pants? Why not?
- Would you butter your bread before putting it in the toaster? Why not?

Point out that what have become our everyday habits are really ways in which we organise ourselves. Explain to students that in this lesson they will learn habits of organisation that can help them study and learn more successfully.

Part I The Paper Flow (15 minutes)

Purpose: Students examine ways to organise information and materials for their school subjects.

1. Students examine their personal organisation habits.

Ask students to name the classes they are taking. List these classes on the board. Have students describe how they keep track of information, assignments, and materials for each class. Elicit their reasons. Ask students who keep notebooks or binders to explain why they are helpful organisational tools.

Point out whenever possible the various organisational tools that students already have in place. Emphasise that one important tool is to keep notebooks for each class or a binder with different sections for each class.

2. Students learn how to organise notebooks and binders.

Ask students to describe and show how their notebooks/binders are organised.

Point out individual differences. For example, some students may find that keeping a notebook works best for some subjects. Others may find that keeping a binder works best because binders allow papers to be easily removed or inserted. Some students might even wish to use a combination of both notebooks and binders.

Help students understand that when work is completed, it's often a good idea to keep the work so it may be reviewed later. Other times, work needs to be cleaned out. Ask for suggestions on how students might clean out their notebooks or binders. (Students might respond: go through the notebooks and binders, and identify material that might be helpful when reviewing for tests or working on projects; find a place to keep these materials at home—on a bookshelf, for example. Loose papers could be filed in subject folders.)

Summarise your discussion by writing the following points on the board:

- Students should have a notebook or a section in a binder for each subject.
- Students should have a place to write assignments and notes, and a place to keep completed homework and handouts.

Part II What? When? (15 minutes)

Purpose: Students evaluate the importance of planning ahead and scheduling study time.

1. Students assess their personal time management habits.

Review the list of classes written on the board. Continue your discussion about organisational methods. Ask questions such as the following:

- How do you keep track of assignment due dates or test dates for each of your classes?
- How do you plan your studying so that everything you need to do gets done on time?
- What are some ways you can improve your time management skills?

Acknowledge responses that offer suggestions on how to plan ahead. Tell students that planning ahead is another important part of getting organised. If students have not mentioned making a schedule or a to-do list, remind them of the techniques they learned a few sessions ago in “Lesson 4: Managing Your Time” of Module 4: Managing Personal Resources.

2. Students consider how to plan their study time.

Share the following study tips with students:

- Decide on the best time of day to do homework.
- Study at that same time every day.
- Plan and schedule exactly what you need to accomplish.
- Write down your study schedule and stick to it!
- Work on the most difficult subjects first, before you get tired.

Part III Create a System (15 minutes)

Purpose: Students identify organisational systems that work best for them.

1. Students organise their notebooks or binders.

Discuss how students might use their notebooks or binders to plan and organise their classwork. Through questions and comments, guide students to point out that if their notebooks or binders are organised by class, and if each class section includes daily assignments and notices of upcoming tests, then they can transfer this information to a daily or weekly schedule. This becomes their to-do list.

Distribute copies of the “Organisation Checklist” activity sheet. Focus attention on the first section of the activity sheet, titled “About Notebooks and Binders.”

Group students in pairs. Tell them to look through any notebooks or binders that they have with them to see how well they are organised. Tell students to fill out the first half of the checklist, and to reorganise their notebooks and binders if they need to. Remind them to list anything they need to do or materials they may need to help them organise, such as additional notebooks, a binder, paper, and pencils.

2. Students make a schedule.

Focus students’ attention on the reminders at the bottom of their checklists. Tell students to read through them as you distribute copies of the “My Study Week” activity sheet.

Suggest that at the beginning or end of each day, students go through their notes for each class, enter upcoming assignments and tests in their notebooks or binders, and write up a schedule of what needs to be done. Model suggestions on the board (e.g., “English—Monday: read pages 50–60, work on rough draft”).

Remind students to keep their schedules in their notebooks. Suggest that they use a schedule like this, adapt it, or make up one of their own that works better for them.

Conclusion (2 minutes)

Ask students to name useful methods for organising their notebooks and binders. Ask them to explain why their organisational systems may change occasionally. Elicit from students the following key points that were taught in this lesson:

- It is important to have a system for planning and organising classwork.
- Organise your work; keep a notebook or binder with information and materials for each class.
- Plan ahead; make a schedule to organise your study time.

Student Assessment

1. Think of the space in which you usually do homework. With what you learned today in mind, how can you set up this space to keep yourself organised?
2. Why is it important to make and maintain a weekly schedule?

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Using Quotations

“Getting your house in order and reducing the confusion gives you more control over your life. Personal organisation somehow releases or frees you to operate more effectively.”

Discuss this quote as a class. Have students identify ways they can organise their homework/study time more effectively. Then, have them describe how such organisation can free them to do other things.

Addressing Multiple Learning Modes

Have students brainstorm a list of materials needed for studying at home. Have them look through an office supply catalog for organisational ideas that can be made by using materials found at home.

Have students find or create containers for pencils, file folders, etc., that will keep their personal study areas organised. Have them decorate their containers.

Writing in Your Journal

Have students identify one area of their lives in need of organisation. Have them write a plan for organising this area in their journals.

Using Technology

Students create a class Google Slides where each student designs one slide about motivation and inspiration, encouraging them to persist with keeping on top of their study. Students can look through this when they need encouragement.

Homework

Have students make two checklists, one for home and one for school, of items that they routinely need to carry between school and home (e.g., textbooks, pens). Have them also make a list of two “study buddies” in each of their classes whom they can call for clarification on an assignment.

Plan rewards for students who come prepared every day for a week. Give these rewards at various intervals.

Additional Activity

Students create a class Google Docs for all students to share and access tips and inspiration about organisation.

ORGANISATION CHECKLIST

About Notebooks and Binders

Do I have...

- ☐ notebooks, folders, or a binder for my classes?
- ☐ a separate notebook or a separate section for each class?
- ☐ a place in front to write assignment notes and due dates?
- ☐ a place for homework?
- ☐ a paper in each notebook for notes and classwork?

Things I need to get organised:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

About Study Schedules

Be sure to...

- ☐ decide on a time to study each day.
- ☐ make a schedule for what you need to do.
- ☐ note specific assignments.
- ☐ follow through on your plans!

MY STUDY WEEK

SUBJECTS	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY