

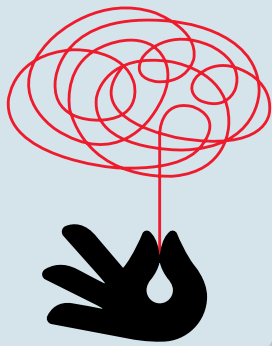


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**X-SKILLS™  
TUTOR GUIDE**

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# X-Skills™ Tutor Guide

## WHAT ARE X-SKILLS™?

Studies have shown that the single greatest factor which influences student success is not academic knowledge, but academic discipline. This includes skills such as planning and organization; follow-through and action; and sustained effort. All of these skills fall into a category known as Executive Functions, which can be thought of as the skills human beings develop to execute tasks independently.

Within this context, it is not surprising that 8th grade performance provides an early-warning system for post-secondary college or career readiness. If a student is not well on their way to developing the skills necessary to organize, prioritize and execute a multitude of competing tasks at the middle school level, they may find themselves falling further behind in high school and less prepared for the rigor of college or establishing a career.

For the most part, students can be coached to improve the skills which contribute to strong academic discipline. Beginning with middle school enrollments parents are offered an opportunity to integrate X-Skills™ development into their student's tutoring sessions. If they take advantage of this feature, the student is provided the Tutor Doctor X-Skills™ and 10-15 min. will be added to the beginning of each session. If your student has been provided the X-Skills™ at the consultation, you will be expected to help them implement it, review their progress as well as offer your experience and expertise to help them develop more efficient routines. This is a guide to help you support your student as they develop these skills.

**Please take special note as this will be vital to your coaching!**

## STUDENT'S RULES OF THE GAME:

- 1 You have to want to do this. The tool is in your hands. You can choose to master it or you can choose to throw it in the back of your locker, the bottom of your backpack or in the recycle bin. Just keep in mind that wherever this organizer ends up is directly related to where your X-Skills™ will probably end up.
- 2 You must identify a tutor, mentor, older sibling, friend or parent, whom you allow to hold you accountable on a daily basis. Your "accountability coach" should be someone you trust and respect and you must be willing to listen to their advice. They should also be someone who is vested in your success and, most importantly, someone who challenges you to work a little harder than you may sometimes want to push yourself.
- 3 You have to stick to the routine or you won't reinforce the habits required to accomplish the skills.
- 4 Don't consider this an exercise to learn a few lessons. Treat it as on-the-job training so that you can teach your friends how to manage their own daily tasks and achieve their goals!

**IMPORTANT:** To use this organizer effectively, you'll need to make sure you clearly understand the difference between the two types of tasks below:

**ALPHA TASKS:** Academic assignments, homework, tests, exams, projects and papers, and anything else that must be accomplished to ensure you achieve your academic goals.

**BETA TASKS:** Appointments, family commitments, sports, music/dance lessons, chores, job requirements and other quality of life extracurricular activities. These are important, but are not related to achieving academic success.

# Your Roadmap

The two pages below are the primary tools you'll use to guide your student's X-Skills™ development.

The **Weekly Worksheet** on the left will allow the student to identify and prioritize the tasks required to obtain your goals.

The **Weekly Calendar** on the right will be the road map that ensures the student stays on track to accomplish all of the critical tasks required to achieve their goals and dreams. How to use them will be described in greater detail in the following pages.

**Tasks Worksheet**

---

**Alpha Tasks**  
Assignments, homework, tests, quizzes, papers, projects and exams.

TASK	DATE DUE	EST. TIME REQ'D.	COMPLETE BY	# OBSTACLES (LIST BY LINE NUMBER)
01				
02				
03				
04				
05				
06				
07				
08				
09				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				

# RESOURCES REQUIRED (BY LINE #)

---

**Beta Tasks**  
Important tasks that increase your quality of life personal commitments, appointments and chores.

TASK	EST. TIME REQ'D.	COMPLETE BY	# TO DO LIST
01			
02			
03			
04			
05			
06			
07			
08			
09			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			

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WEEKLY WORKSHEET

**Calendar** Month: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_

MON: TUE: WED: THU: FRI:

**BEFORE SCHOOL CHECKLIST**

00					
01					
02					
03					
04					
05					
06					
07					
08					
09					
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					
15					
16					
17					
18					
19					
20					
21					
22					
23					
24					
25					
26					
27					
28					
29					
30					
31					
32					
33					
34					
35					
36					
37					
38					
39					
40					
41					
42					
43					
44					
45					
46					
47					
48					
49					
50					
51					
52					

**BEFORE DEPARTING SCHOOL CHECKLIST**

**End of Day Debrief**

ALPHA COMP. \_\_\_\_\_

INITIALS \_\_\_\_\_

NEW TASK \_\_\_\_\_

WEEKEND / ALPHA COMPLETE

**Weekly Alpha Goals** SCHEDULED ACTUAL % COMPLETE

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WEEKLY CALENDAR

# Weekly Calendar Prep Checklist

## STUDENT WILL:

- Assign a color to each subject at the beginning of the semester/course.
- Complete this checklist on Sunday evening using the **Weekly Calendar**.
- Block out the times that are booked for other tasks/activities (Boy Scouts/appointments) in the upcoming week.
- Add to the calendar as the week progresses and appointments/tasks come up.

## TUTOR WILL:

- Review to ensure that subjects have been assigned a unique color.
- Review the week to confirm that there is enough time to complete the **Alpha Tasks**.

## Complete on Sunday Evening (\*See the example on the following page)

- 1 Fill in the month, year and calendar dates at the top of the page and enter the hours of your day in the left-hand column. **NOTE:** The last hour before the **BEFORE DEPARTING FROM SCHOOL CHECKLIST** bar and the first hour after it should be the same.
- 2 Block out time already allocated to pre-scheduled **Alpha** or **Beta tasks**. **NOTE:** Include appointments, sports or music practice, chores, church and any other commitments that will limit your availability. We have indicated a routine eye doctor appointment which is scheduled from 8-10 AM on the 28th, as well as, a daily homework study group.
- 3 Transfer uncompleted **Alpha tasks** from last week to this week's calendar on the day they are due. Place them on the calendar during your school day at the time the class starts, then circle the entry on the calendar. **NOTE:** For example, we have carried over **5-page essay** and designated it to be completed on Thursday at 10 AM because that is when the student's English class begins.
- 4 Review your web-based assignment system (e.g., Power School) and place any upcoming assignments on your calendar in the same manner as the uncompleted **Alpha tasks** in step 3.
- 5 Identify individual time slots to complete the Alpha tasks now listed on the calendar. (You will be adding new tasks to these slots as the week unfolds.)

Now that you have your calendar prepped, you need to do one more thing before you start your school week. Select one of the colors below to represent each of your academic subjects and enter the hours for that class period in the table below. You'll be using this color code to keep track of assignments that are scheduled for completion beyond the current week, as well as to plan long-term projects, quizzes, tests, and papers due. (You'll only need to complete the color code one time at the beginning of each semester.)

For example:  **Lime:** SCIENCE (1-2PM)

**TIP: Any extra colors can be used to represent very high-priority tasks that are not academic in nature.**

For example, athletes could use tabs to remind them of competitions scheduled beyond the current week.

- |                                                                                                    |                                                                                                          |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  <b>Green:</b>  |  <b>Magenta:</b>    |
|  <b>Yellow:</b> |  <b>Light Blue:</b> |
|  <b>Red:</b>    |  <b>Lime:</b>       |
|  <b>Blue:</b>   |  <b>Pink:</b>       |
|  <b>Orange:</b> |                                                                                                          |

# Before School/ Before Leaving School Checklist

## STUDENT WILL:

- Run the **Before School Checklist** and **Before Leaving School Checklist** each day to ensure they have all of the tasks/assignments recorded.

## TUTOR WILL:

- There are no expectations at this step.

**Calendar** Month: SEPTEMBER Year: 20XX

MON: 26 TUE: 27 WED: 28 THU: 29 FRI: 30

**BEFORE SCHOOL CHECKLIST**

8:00					
8:30			EYE DOCTOR		
9:00					
9:30					
10:00				ENGLISH 5-PAGE ESSAY	
10:30					
11:00					
11:30					
12:00					
12:30					
1:00					
1:30					
2:00					
2:30					
3:00					
3:30					

**BEFORE DEPARTING SCHOOL CHECKLIST**

4:00					
4:30	HOMEWORK STUDY GROUP	HOMEWORK STUDY GROUP	HOMEWORK STUDY GROUP	HOMEWORK STUDY GROUP	HOMEWORK STUDY GROUP
5:00					
5:30					
6:00					
6:30					
7:00	ENGLISH 5-PAGE ESSAY				
7:30			BOY SCOUTS		
8:00					
8:30					
9:00					
9:30					
10:00					
10:30					

**End of Day Debrief**

ALPHA COMP. \_\_\_\_\_

INITIALS \_\_\_\_\_

NEW TASK \_\_\_\_\_

WEEKEND 10/1 10/2 ALPHA COMPLETE \_\_\_\_\_

**Weekly Alpha Goals** SCHEDULED \_\_\_\_\_ ACTUAL \_\_\_\_\_ % COMPLETE \_\_\_\_\_



# The Weekly Calendar - Capturing Academic Tasks

## STUDENT WILL:

- Estimate how much time it takes to complete the **Alpha/Beta Tasks**.
- Capture their **Alpha Tasks** on a daily basis and estimate time required, date due and date completed by.
- Write down any obstacles that might prevent the student from completing the task.
- Record any resources needed to accomplish the task.

## TUTOR WILL:

- Review tasks with their student to make sure all tasks are completed.
- If online classroom summaries (teacher listing of homework topics and assignments) are available, Tutor will review to ensure all assignments are accounted for and being completed.
- Ask the student if they have considered all obstacles to ensure they have been accounted for and will assist the student in creating strategies to help him/her overcome them.
- Assist student to review resources needed make sure all are found.

## Capturing your academic (Alpha) tasks

- 1 During class, write down all of your academic assignments on the **Weekly Worksheet as they are assigned** and enter the date they are due in the **Date Due** column. These are your most important priorities so we'll call these **Alpha tasks** from now on.
- 2 Estimate how long it will take to complete the assignment and fill in the time on the **Estimated Time Required** column.
- 3 Select a date you plan to complete each task by and enter it in the **Complete By** column.  
**NOTE:** If possible, choose a date one day prior to the actual due date for near-term assignments and two days prior for long-term projects, papers and exams.
- 4 Write down any obstacles which might prevent you from completing the task in the Obstacles block. Write the associated task with the letter "A" (for Alpha) followed by the line number (i.e. A1). Purpose? You'll want to develop strategies for overcoming these obstacles.
- 5 If you need specific resources to accomplish the task, note the line number in the **Resources Required** block and jot down a note on how you will obtain the resource.

### Alpha Tasks

Assignments, homework, tests, quizzes, papers, projects and exams.

TASK	DATE DUE	EST. TIME REQ'D.	COMPLETE BY	#	OBSTACLES (LIST BY LINE NUMBER)
01	PREPARE FOR HISTORY QUIZ	01/28	10 MIN	01/27	A1, A2 MISSING CLASS DUE TO EYE DOCTOR
02	READ MATH CH. 2 & 3	01/28	30 MIN	01/27	
03	SCIENCE WORKSHEET	01/21	10 MIN	01/28	
04	READ MATH CH. 4 & 5	01/21	2 HRS	01/28	
05	PREPARE FOR MATH TEST	01/30	2 HRS	01/21	
06	UPDATE STUDY GUIDE	10/1	2 HRS	10/1	
07	SCIENCE PROJECT	10/30	20 HRS	10/28	
08					
					# RESOURCES REQUIRED (BY LINE #)
09					A7 BUY MATERIALS FOR DISPLAY
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					
15					

**NOTE:** WHETHER A TASK BELONGS ON THE **ALPHA** OR **BETA** LIST IS DETERMINED BY WHETHER IT CONTRIBUTES TO ACADEMIC SUCCESS OR NOT. FOR EXAMPLE, THE EYE DOCTOR APPOINTMENT ON WEDNESDAY COULD BE CLASSIFIED AS AN **ALPHA TASK** IF THE STUDENT CAN'T SEE THE BLACKBOARD OR READ THE TEXTBOOKS.



# The Weekly Calendar - Transferring Tasks

## STUDENT WILL:

- Transfer alpha tasks to upper portion of **Weekly Calendar** along with the due date.
- Transfer each task to the **Date Due** column and enter it during the hours of the respective class period by subject.

## TUTOR WILL:

- Ensure that the student has correctly transferred all of their **Alpha Tasks** to the correct due dates.
- Ensure that all uncompleted **Alpha Tasks** from previous week have been transferred correctly to this week's calendar. (Have the student record them in red and circled to make sure they are priority.)

## Transferring Alpha tasks from your Weekly Worksheet

Transfer your Alpha tasks to the weekly calendar you prepped on Sunday evening. Transfer each task to the **Date Due Column** and enter it during the hours of the respective class period by subject. For the example, Alpha tasks 1-5 were transferred to the weekly calendar as follows.

- > **A1** was placed at 8:00 (History Class)
- > **A2, A4** and **A5** were placed at 9:00 (Math Class)
- > **A3** was placed at 1:00 (Science Class)
- > **English 5-page essay** is circled because it was carried over from the previous week as an uncompleted Alpha task.

Calendar		Month: SEPTEMBER		Year: 20XX		A7
MON:	TUE:	WED:	THU:	FRI:		
26	27	28	29	30		
BEFORE SCHOOL CHECKLIST						
8:00		A1: HISTORY QUIZ				
:30		EYE DOCTOR				
9:00		A2: MATH CH 2 & 3	A4: MATH CH 4 & 5	A5: MATH TEST		
:30						
10:00			ENGLISH 5-PAGE ESSAY			
:30						
11:00						
:30						
12:00						
:30						
1:00			A3: SCIENCE WORKSHEET			
:30						
2:00						
:30						

**NOTE 1:** NOTICE THERE IS A CONFLICT ON THE 28TH BETWEEN THE PREVIOUSLY SCHEDULED ROUTINE EYE DOCTOR APPOINTMENT AND THE ALPHA TASKS DUE IN HISTORY AND MATH. THIS CONFLICT PRESENTS AN OBSTACLE TO ACADEMIC SUCCESS AND MUST BE RESOLVED. IF THE EYE DOCTOR APPOINTMENT WAS DUE TO SOMETHING LIKE THE STUDENT COULDN'T SEE THE BLACKBOARD OR WAS GETTING HEADACHES WHILE STUDYING, THEN IT SHOULD BE RE-PRIORITIZED AS AN ALPHA TASK.

**NOTE 2:** ALSO NOTICE THAT THERE ARE NO ENTRIES FOR TASKS A6 AND A7 ON THE CALENDAR. A6 WILL BE PLACED ON THE WEEKEND SCHEDULE AND A7 IS DUE BEYOND THE CURRENT WEEK. A7 IS A SCIENCE PROJECT SO IT HAS BEEN COLOR-CODED YELLOW AND WE WILL BE PLACING A YELLOW TAB ON THE TOP OF THE ACTUAL CALENDAR PAGE WHEN IT IS DUE.

# The Weekly Worksheet

## STUDENT WILL:

- Transfer **Beta Tasks** from **Worksheet** to **Calendar** for execution.
- Create space in the week to complete them.

## TUTOR WILL:

- Review to ensure that **Beta Tasks** are prioritized lower than **Alpha Tasks**.
- Review to make sure the student is able to complete all tasks.

## Beta Tasks and To-Do List

- 1 Use the **Beta Task worksheet** to capture other critical tasks which must be completed, but aren't related to academic success. These include appointments, music lessons, sports practice, extracurricular activities, hobbies, family or job commitments and chores.
- 2 Estimate how long it will take to complete the task and enter the time into the **Estimated Time Required** column.
- 3 Schedule time on your weekly calendar to accomplish these tasks.
- 4 Use the **To-Do List** to capture any tasks that are not classified as Alpha or Beta tasks.

### Beta Tasks

Important tasks that increase your quality of life personal commitments, appointments and chores.

TASK	EST. TIME REQ'D.	COMPLETE BY	#	TO DO LIST
01	ROUTINE EYE DOCTOR APPT	2 HRS	9/28	BUY STAMPS
02	BOY SCOUTS	90 MIN	9/28	
03	BSU GAME	6 HRS	10/1	
04	LUNCH W/ FAMILY	3 HRS	10/1	
05				
06				

# Completing the Weekly Calendar

## STUDENT WILL:

- Transfer tasks to the schedule to ensure that he/she completes everything.

## TUTOR WILL:

- Review plan and lend expertise to help the student implement and build more efficient routines.

## Creating time slots for new Alpha and Beta tasks

Once you've placed your new tasks on the calendar on the date due, you will need to create a time slot to accomplish the task during your after-school hours.

Simply select the date when you plan to work on the task and write in the Alpha task number in the slot. If you are going to break the task up across several sessions, place a dot to the right of the number to indicate there is more work to be done. Circle the Alpha task number on the actual date you plan to complete the task.

Once you've slotted your Alpha tasks, do the same for the Beta tasks.

## Example:

**Calendar** Month: SEPTEMBER Year: 20XX **A7**

MON: 26 TUE: 27 WED: 28 THU: 29 FRI: 30

**BEFORE SCHOOL CHECKLIST**

8:00  
8:30  
9:00  
9:30  
10:00  
10:30  
11:00  
11:30  
12:00  
1:00  
1:30  
2:00  
2:30  
3:00  
3:30

**BEFORE DEPARTING SCHOOL CHECKLIST**

4:00  
4:30  
5:00  
5:30  
6:00  
6:30  
7:00  
7:30  
8:00  
8:30  
9:00  
9:30  
10:00  
10:30

**End of Day Debrief**

ALPHA COMP.	1	2	2	2
INITIALS				
NEW TASK	A6: UPDATE STUDY GUIDES		A7: SCIENCE PROJECT	
WEEKEND	10/1	10/2	ALPHA COMPLETE	2
	B3: BSU GAME			
	B4: SUNDAY LUNCH W/ FAMILY			

**Weekly Alpha Goals** SCHEDULED ACTUAL % COMPLETE

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**NOTE:** IN THE EXAMPLE, YOU'LL NOTICE THE A3 ON THE 27TH IS NOT CIRCLED, BUT THE ONE ON THE 28TH IS. THIS IS BECAUSE THE STUDENT CHOSE TO BREAK UP THE ASSIGNMENT OVER TWO DAYS. THE CIRCLED A3 INDICATES THE STUDENT WANTS TO COMPLETE THE TASK BY THE 28TH.

# Using the Sticky Tabs

These sticky tabs act as a persistent reminder of ongoing projects.

## HOW IT WORKS:

- > Once a student knows the due date of a large assignment (ex. Due in 3 months) they record it in the Long Range Planning pages at the back of the X-Skills™.
- > They put a sticky tab on the week that this large assignment is due.
- > The student will break down the large assignment into smaller more manageable subtasks with due dates associated to each one.
- > The student places another tab with the same color as the large assignment for all of the weeks that correspond with the sub-task due dates.
- > End result: at a quick glance, the student will know exactly when his/her large assignments are due, and when all of the sub-tasks due dates are planned out.

### STUDENT WILL:

- Use the colored (based on course) sticky tabs to mark the due date for any task that is beyond the current week as well as all subtasks for major projects/papers (everything they have used the project planning for).

**Technique:** Label the sticky tabs with the Alpha number.

### TUTOR WILL:

- Work with the student to ensure each long-term project/task is properly recorded.
- Coach the student on how to create an action plan with sub-tasks to complete the project in time.
- Review to make sure the plan is realistic.
- Remind the student to circle the task on the date that they aim to complete it.
- Ensure the student is following the plan defined.



# Tasks Worksheet

## Alpha Tasks

Assignments, homework, tests, quizzes, papers, projects and exams.

TASK	DATE DUE	EST. TIME REQ'D.	COMPLETE BY	#	OBSTACLES (LIST BY LINE NUMBER)	
01	PREPARE FOR HISTORY QUIZ	09/28	90 MIN	09/27	A1, A2	MISSING CLASS DUE TO EYE DOCTOR
02	READ MATH CH. 2 & 3	09/28	30 MIN	09/27		
03	SCIENCE WORKSHEET	09/29	90 MIN	09/28		
04	READ MATH CH. 4 & 5	09/29	2 HRS	09/28		
05	PREPARE FOR MATH TEST	09/30	2 HRS	09/29		
06	UPDATE STUDY GUIDE	10/1	2 HRS	10/1		
07	SCIENCE PROJECT	10/30	20 HRS	10/28		
08						
09						
10						
11						
12						
13						
14						
15						

## Beta Tasks

Important tasks that increase your quality of life personal commitments, appointments and chores.

TASK	EST. TIME REQ'D.	COMPLETE BY	#	TO DO LIST
01	ROUTINE EYE DOCTOR APPT	2 HRS	9/28	BUY STAMPS
02	BOY SCOUTS	90 MIN	9/28	
03	BSU GAME	6 HRS	10/1	
04	LUNCH W/ FAMILY	3 HRS	10/1	
05				
06				
07				
08				
09				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				

# Calendar

Month: SEPTEMBER

Year: 20XX A7

MON: 26    TUE: 27    WED: 28    THU: 29    FRI: 30

**BEFORE SCHOOL CHECKLIST**

8:00				
:30				
9:00				
:30		A1: HISTORY QUIZ EYE DOCTOR A2: MATH CH. 2&3	A4: MATH CH. 9&5	A5: MATH TEST
10:00				
:30			ENGLISH 5-PAGE ESSAY	
11:00				
:30				
12:00				
:30				
1:00				
:30			A3: SCIENCE WORKSHEET	
2:00				
:30				
3:00				
:30				

**BEFORE DEPARTING SCHOOL CHECKLIST**

4:00	HOMEWORK STUDY GROUP				
:30	HOMEWORK STUDY GROUP	HOMEWORK STUDY GROUP	HOMEWORK STUDY GROUP	HOMEWORK STUDY GROUP	HOMEWORK STUDY GROUP
5:00					
:30					
6:00			BOY SCOUTS		
:30					
7:00	ENGLISH 5-PAGE ESSAY				
:30		A2	A3	A5	
8:00		A1	A4		
:30					
9:00					
:30		A3			
10:00					
:30					

**End of Day Debrief**

ALPHA COMP.	1	2	2	2
INITIALS				
NEW TASK	A6: UPDATE STUDY GUIDES		A7: SCIENCE PROJECT	
	WEEKEND	10/1	10/2	ALPHA COMPLETE
				2
	B3: BSU GAME			
	B4: SUNDAY LUNCH W/ FAMILY			

Weekly Alpha Goals	SCHEDULED	ACTUAL	% COMPLETE
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# Daily & Weekly Checklists

## STUDENT WILL:

- Complete the **Before School Check** to ensure he/she is prepared for the school day.
- Complete the **Before Departing School Check** that is intended to make sure the student brings home everything needed to complete the tasks that evening.
- Conduct an **End of Day Debriefing** and **End of Week Assessment** to assess his/her performance and measure improvement.

## TUTOR WILL:

- Conduct an **End of Day Debriefing** or **End of Week Assessment** to assess depending on your X-Skills™ program to assess the student's performance and measure improvement.

The last thing we need to review are the checklists you'll be completing on a daily and weekly basis to make sure you're prepared for each phase of your day and to assess your progress. The **Before School Check** will ensure you are prepared for the school day; the **Before Departing School Check** is intended to make sure you bring everything home you need to complete your tasks that evening; and the **End of Day Debriefing** and **End of Week Assessment** provide a simple means of assessing your performance and measuring improvement.

## BEFORE SCHOOL CHECK

- > Review tasks due today
- > Gather assignments, homework & books
- > Permission slips, flyers and any other paperwork
- > Electronics (iPad, phone, etc.)
- > Backpack
- > Gym bag
- > Musical instruments

## BEFORE DEPARTING SCHOOL CHECK

- > All homework turned in today?
- > Gather assignments, homework & books
- > Permission slips, flyers and any other paperwork
- > Electronics (iPad, phone, etc.)
- > Backpack
- > Gym bag
- > Musical instruments

## END OF DAY DEBRIEFING

- > Confirm classroom daily notes are all transcribed. (See How to Take Notes in the back of this organizer.)
- > Homework completed?
- > Enter number of Alpha tasks completed today on calendar. Take credit for turning in assignments on time and each task that you actually completed.
- > Transfer uncompleted Alpha tasks to a future date.
- > Identify new obstacles or resources needed. Discuss strategies for improvement.
- > Update weekly plan with parent, tutor or X-Skills™ coach.
- > Initial all checklists complete on calendar.

## END OF WEEK ASSESSMENT

- > Tally the Alpha tasks you completed and enter the actual % completed in the green box.
- > Circle any Alpha tasks that you did not complete. These must be carried over to the following week.
- > Assess and discuss what went well and what prevented you from achieving your Alpha goal this week.
- > Capture the strategies that worked well so that you don't forget them. If you missed your goal, adjust your strategies, develop alternate courses of action and discuss how to improve next week.
- > Transcribe the week's notes to your Study Guide (See How to Take Notes in the back of this organizer.)

# Bringing It All Together - Student

## A Student's Daily Routine

### 1 SUNDAY EVENING

- > Prep your Weekly Calendar.

### 2 WEEKDAYS

- > Complete Before School Check.
- > During class use the Daily Worksheet to capture tasks by priority (Alpha, Beta or To-Do).
- > Complete Before Departing School Check.

### 3 AFTER SCHOOL

- > Transfer Alpha tasks to the day they're due on the Weekly Calendar.
- > Schedule after-school time to complete both Alpha and Beta tasks.
- > Use colored tabs to identify critical tasks due beyond the current week.
- > Use Project Planning Worksheets for long-term projects, term papers, exam prep, etc.
- > Transcribe classroom notes to your Weekly Spiral Notebook\*, then complete homework.

### 4 END OF DAY

- > Complete the End of Day Debriefing with your accountability coach.

### 5 WEEKEND

- > Review progress with your accountability coach.
- > Adjust plans for following week.
- > Transcribe notes to your End of Semester Study Guide.

## Setting S.M.A.R.T. Goals

### (S)PECIFIC

Your goals should be clear, concise and tangible.

### (M)EASURABLE

Measurement will give you specific feedback and hold you accountable.

### (A)CHIEVABLE

Goals should push you, but it is important that they are achievable.

### (R)ELEVANT

It's important to choose goals that matter.

### (T)IME-BOUND

Ground your goals within a time frame, to stay accountable and motivated.

## Goals For This Semester

Goals For This Semester	
Goal #1	
Goal #2	
Goal #3	

\*See the How to Take Notes section of this organizer for a description of the Weekly Spiral Notebook and the End of Semester Study Guide.



# Project Planning Worksheets

## STUDENT WILL:

- Use the worksheets below to plan for multi-step projects including, exams, essays, science projects and term papers.
- Break down the project into manageable sub-steps and place a colored tab on the appropriate calendar page when he/she intends to complete each sub-step by.

## TUTOR WILL:

- Lend expertise to review and help the student build an effective and realistic plan for his/her multi-step projects.
- Work with the student to break down the project into manageable sub-steps and place a colored tab on the appropriate calendar page.

Use the worksheets below to plan for multi-step projects including, exams, essays, science projects and term papers. Once you have broken down the project into manageable sub-steps, place a colored tab on the appropriate calendar page that you intend to complete each sub-step by.

## Example:


### Project Planning Worksheet

**Project:** TERM PAPER **Due:** DECEMBER 19

SUB-STEPS	EST. TIME REQ'D.	COMPLETE BY	NOTES
01	SELECT A TOPIC	1 HR	12/9
02	DEVELOP OUTLINE	1 HR	12/5
03	RESEARCH CONTENT	3 HRS	12/6
04	RESEARCH CONTENT	3 HRS	12/7
05	WRITE PAGES 1-10	3 HRS	12/8
06	WRITE PAGES 11-20	3 HRS	12/10
07	REVISE & EDIT	2 HRS	12/11
08	FINAL DRAFT	2 HRS	12/12
09	BIBLIOGRAPHY & FOOTNOTES	2HRS	12/12
10	COMPLETE & READY TO TURN IN	1 HR	12/13
11			
12	21 HRS TOTAL		
13			
14			
15			

**Project:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Due:** \_\_\_\_\_

SUB-STEPS	EST. TIME REQ'D.	COMPLETE BY	NOTES
01			
02			
03			
04			
05			
06			
07			
08			
09			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			


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# Bringing It All Together - Tutor

## Tutor's checklist for each session:

1

### REVIEW WEEKLY WORKSHEET:

- > Review tasks with their student to make sure all tasks are completed.
- > If online classroom summaries (teacher listing of homework topics and assignments) are available Tutor will review to ensure all assignments are accounted for and being completed.
- > Ask the student if they have considered all obstacles to ensure they have accounted for and assist the student in creating strategies to help him/her overcome.
- > Assist student to review resources needed to make sure all are found.
- > Review to ensure that beta tasks are prioritized lower than alpha tasks.
- > Review to make sure the student is able to complete tasks effectively.

2

### REVIEW STUDENT'S CALENDAR:

- > Review the week to confirm that there is enough time to complete the Alpha Tasks.
- > Ensure that the student has correctly transferred all of their alpha tasks to the correct due dates.
- > Ensure that all uncompleted alpha tasks from previous week have been transferred correctly to this week's calendar (have the student record them in red and circled to make sure they are priority).
- > Review plan and lend expertise to help the student implement and build more efficient routines.

3

### PROJECT PLANNING/TABS:

- > Work with the student to ensure each long-term project/task is properly recorded.
- > Coach the student on how to plan an action create for each sub-task to complete the task in time review to make sure the plan is realistic.
- > Remind the student to circle the task on the date that they aim to complete it.
- > Ensure the student is following the plan defined.

4

### WRAP UP (END OF EVERY SESSION):

Look the student in the eye and ask them: "Are you getting closer to your goals?"  
If they don't feel like they are, work with the student to find out what is stopping them.

The student's X-Skills™ also provides additional resources and techniques that you can consider at the back after the Project Planning Worksheets, the Notes, Calendars, and blank calendars Months. These resources include:

- > How to take effective notes
- > How to prepare for tests and exams
- > How to complete long-term projects, essays and research papers

# How to Take Effective Notes

Use this guide to help coach your students to take more effective notes.

Follow the simple **3-step process** below and you'll end up with a concise, effective **End-of-Semester Study Guide** that you can use as your primary tool to prepare for tests and exams. Along the way, you'll be reinforcing the concepts you need to know on a daily and weekly basis.

## 1 Taking notes in class

1. Use a stenographers flip note book to take notes in class.
2. Indicate the class and the date at the top of the first note sheet. Don't worry about how neat your notes are at this time as long as you can read them and can keep them in order.

## 2 Transfer notes to a spiral-bound notebook

1. Before you start any homework assignments, copy the classroom notes neatly into a standard spiral bound notebook. Draw a line down the right hand side of each notebook page about 1.5 inches from the right-hand edge. Copy your classroom notes to the left of the line and annotate the textbook page associated with the note to the right of the line. Only use the front side of each page for classroom notes.
2. Use the back of each page to capture notes from associated homework reading assignments which align with the classroom material on the other side.
3. Annotate any concepts that you don't fully understand and that you may need to have further explained by a teacher, tutor or classmate.

## 3 Create a your End of Semester Study Guide (use a 3-ring binder)

1. Each weekend, transcribe the past week's notes from the spiral bound notebook, to your 3-ring study guide in an organized and systematic manner.

2. Highlight important information and use color for any illustrations. Look up any concepts you don't fully understand and annotate textbook page numbers for any concepts you had to look up.
3. By the end of the weekend, you should have a strong understanding of all concepts in your study guide up to that point and in your own words.

### A few tips:

- > Staple, tape or glue everything in one study guide so that everything is always in one place.
- > Keep all tests and their corrections in your study guide using 3-ring pocket dividers.
- > Use colored pens to make corrections. Leave incorrect answers there.
- > Keep extra pages at the back of the study guide to capture lists, vocabulary, key dates etc., as well as to take notes for long-term projects.
- > Date your work so that it will always be in order.
- > Your final study guide should provide a comprehensive foundation so that you could confidently tutor someone else in the respective concepts using your own words.

### Other tips (add your own):

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# How to Prepare for Tests & Exams

**1** At the beginning of each semester, make sure you know exactly when all major tests and exams will be scheduled. Place a colored tab on your weekly calendar 2 days prior to the date of the exam. Organize your colored tabs by subject. Update the schedule at the beginning of each month.

**2** Use the **Project Planning Worksheets** to create a preparation roadmap based on the tabbed dates in **Step 1**. Transfer sub-tasks to your **Weekly Calendar** as P1 tasks.

**3** Use the ideas in the **“How to Take Notes”** section of this organizer to make sure you have an effective study guide to work from leading up to the test.

**4** The Sunday night before your test, organize your study materials. If you’ve prepared well leading up to the test, all you should need is your guide, your textbook and any previous tests, quizzes or assignments that you feel you need to review.

## A Few Tips:

- > Get a good night’s sleep and eat healthy the day before the test and the morning of the test.
- > Review the subject matter in reverse. Begin with the most recent topics and work backwards so that you are reviewing the oldest topics closest to the exam.
- > For any topic that you’re not absolutely confident that you understand, try this:
  1. Find a friend, family member, teacher or tutor who fully understands the material and ask them if you can teach them the topic. Set a time within the next 24-48 hours to set up this mini-session.
  2. Prepare for the mini-session as if you were the teacher yourself. You will be explaining the material to your friend or tutor, so make sure you anticipate their questions and are able to explain concepts in your own words.
  3. During the mini-session, teach the material to your friend or tutor as if they were a student. You won’t be able to do it perfectly, but that’s OK. The technique will allow them to identify where you need the most help and your confidence will skyrocket once you can explain the concept to someone else.
- > Don’t study with music that has lyrics in the background or a monotonous beat (like most rock or hip-hop).
- > Try classical music, jazz or serenity music instead.
- > For subjects which require multiple steps, like Math, treat them the same way you practice sports or music performances, with lots of repetition. Most math is process-driven, so you need to commit the mechanics to memory, as well as, the content.
- > For Liberal Arts subjects, like History and English, jotting down key ideas as you read is very useful. Make sure you have a good system for associating the key ideas with the chapter or worksheet where you read it.
- > Reward yourself for your hard work by planning something you enjoy doing after a good study session.
- > Color coded index cards can be used to study any topic. Use them to learn definitions; the steps of a process; to increase vocabulary; or, to memorize dates.

## Day of the Test:

**1**

**First, look over the entire test briefly and work the questions you’re most confident in first.**

**2**

**Review your work the same way your teacher will, looking for mistakes.**

**3**

**Don’t get hung up on one question.**

# How to Complete Long-Term Projects & Research Papers

**1** As soon as you have been assigned a project, essay or research paper, place a colored tab on your weekly calendar 2 days prior to the date it is due. Organize your colored tabs by subject.

**2** Use the Project Planning Worksheets to create a preparation roadmap based on the tabbed dates in Step 1. Do this by first breaking down the assignment into manageable sub-tasks. For example, sub-tasks for a paper would include: Brainstorm topic, Create outline, Research content, Write first draft, and Complete bibliography.

**3** Estimate the amount of time required to complete each sub-task. This will give you an idea of how

much time you should initially allocate on your weekly calendar towards completing the entire project. Use the notes section to detail what you need to do in each sub-task.

**4** Transfer sub-tasks to your Weekly Calendar as P1 tasks.

**5** Below your roadmap, identify any obstacles or resources required to complete the project.

**6** Make sure you keep all of your notes, assignments, worksheets and research in one place. Adding a section to the back of your respective 3-Ring Study Guide will allow you to keep everything in one location.

## Techniques & Tips:

**1. Brainstorm topics.** If you have a choice of topics, you'll want to pick one that you are interested in and would like to know more about. Sit down at your computer or with a pad of paper and a pencil and start capturing any and all ideas that come to your mind that will allow you to explore a specific aspect of the topic.

(Some people brainstorm best while running or doing some other sort of aerobic activity – if this is how you do your best creative thinking, then go for a run! Just make sure to write the ideas down when you get home or you might forget the best ones.)

**2. Brainstorm content.** Once you've selected a topic, sit down and write down everything you currently know about the topic. It doesn't matter how much you already know. If you don't know where to start, simply use the Who, What, Where, When, Why and How technique to start the creative process.

For example:

- > **Whom do I think this topic is about or whom are the primary players in the event?**
- > **What happened during this event or what led to it happening?**
- > **Where and when did something happen?**
- > **Why or how did it happen?**

Beside each of your answers annotate whether you want to know more about that aspect of the topic.

**3. Collecting Information.** Information is available all around you. Some of it is factual, some of it is unsupported and other information is merely someone's opinion or speculation. Your job on a research paper is to learn as much as you can about a subject and present ideas in an organized and supportable manner. Depending on the subject matter and your teacher's guidance, it's possible to use all of the previous types of information – as long as you document them accurately so that your reader can draw their own conclusions about the content and veracity of the paper.

# How to Complete Long-Term Projects & Research Papers (continued)

## Techniques & Tips:

**4. Organization:** Papers may be organized in different ways depending on their purpose. Ask your teacher for guidance on format and structure for specific assignments. If you are not told exactly how to structure your paper then you can use the guidance below to get you going.

Essays and Research Papers are actually journeys. The Opening Paragraph tells the reader what the journey is all about and gives them a reason to keep reading. Until you can come up with a better idea, start your first sentence with “This paper is about...”

After that, you’ll want to grab the reader’s attention so that they have a reason to continue the journey to its destination. That destination will be your conclusion, so give them an interesting piece of information early on to pique their curiosity. Finally, wrap up the first paragraph with a few more details to explain why the journey is unique and worthwhile. If written well, the first paragraph will provide a quick roadmap for what the reader should expect on this journey.

**Body Paragraphs:** These are the way-points you are taking the reader on as you navigate them to your destination (conclusion). Each supporting paragraph should stand on its own to explain that specific aspect of the journey.

A carefully written topic sentence will allow your reader to understand that they have arrived at the next way-point and to expect to learn more about this way-point or how it relates to the overall journey. Use the rest of each body paragraph to elaborate as necessary on the content introduced in the topic sentence.

When you are ready to move on to the next way-point, start a new paragraph with a new topic sentence. Use transition words or phrases to help your reader smoothly transition from one way-point to the next. Transitions can be used to reinforce concepts, to provide direction, to offer counterpoints, to redirect and for many other purposes. To learn more, simply search for Transitional Words and Phrases online.

Once you’ve guided the reader through all of your way-points, your final task is to wrap up the journey with a conclusion. Hopefully, your readers will arrive at this destination well-informed, relaxed and feeling like it was worth the effort. Your conclusion should also remind the reader what the journey was about in the first place; which pieces of information they should take away to reinforce that purpose; and, why the journey was worthwhile.

**5. Identifying sources of information:** Bibliographies list the sources you used to research your paper and Footnotes/Endnotes are intended to accurately document and give credit to the original source. Your teachers will provide you with their preferred formats for each of these.

**6. Revising and editing:** Always plan on re-writing your paper a minimum of 2-3 times and make sure you account for this time on your weekly calendar. Rewriting will help you refine your ideas, reorganize the structure, rewrite sentences and streamline the content. If you can, set the paper down after each re-write and give yourself a day or two before you re-write it again. Always have someone else proofread your papers before turning them in.

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