



FREE PRINTABLE RESOURCE

Learning Habits and Study Skills

A No-Prep Unit for Grades 3-5

What's inside

Three lessons that teach upper-elementary students HOW to learn, not just what: setting up to focus, practicing in a way that actually sticks, and showing what you know on test day. Teacher notes, student worksheets, and answer keys included. Print and teach - no prep required.

Standards. Supports CASEL self-management and practical classroom routines for planning, persistence, reflection, and independent work. This is a study-skills resource, not a direct Common Core standards assessment.

Format: 3 complete lessons | Print & digital | Teacher notes + worksheets + answer keys

How to Use This Unit

- Each lesson is designed for a short 20-30 minute block - morning meeting, a content block, advisory, or another flexible lesson window.
- Open with the Warm-Up. The prompts can be read aloud or adapted to reduce reading barriers and support different learners.
- Use the Teaching Points as your talking script. Say them in your own words.
- Hand out the Student Worksheet for guided practice. For younger readers or students who need support, read each question aloud and let them draw as well as write.
- Check quickly with the Answer Key. Many answers are open-ended - the key tells you what a good answer looks like.
- Finish with the Extension when you want to carry the skill through the week.
- Everything is print-and-go. You may print the PDF for personal, homeschool, or classroom use. Do not resell or redistribute it as a paid product.

Teacher reference. Evidence note: the retrieval-practice and spacing guidance reflects established learning-science research; suggested work-block lengths are examples, not fixed rules.

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Answer Keys — all lessons

LESSON 1

Set Up to Focus

Objective. Students will identify their own distractions and set up a workspace with a clear, manageable work block.

Key Vocabulary

Focus	Keeping your attention on one thing.
Distraction	Anything that pulls your attention away.
Workspace	The place where you do your work.
Work block	A set amount of time when you work on one thing only.
Checklist	A written list you tick off so nothing is forgotten.

Warm-Up (Bell-Ringer)

Read silently for two minutes. Make a tally mark every time your attention leaves the page. How many marks did you get?

Teaching Points

- Focus changes from moment to moment. A supportive setup - clear materials, fewer distractions, and a specific next task - can make sustained attention easier.
- Many distractions are predictable, such as notifications, noise, missing materials, or hunger. Some can be reduced ahead of time, while others may need a backup plan.
- Set up first when possible: clear enough space, gather what you need, and reduce unnecessary notifications or distractions before starting.
- Try a short work block with a clear finish point, then take a brief break. The exact length should fit the student, task, and setting rather than forcing one timer for everyone.
- Write the next task in specific terms. 'Read pages 40 to 46' is easier to act on than a broad reminder like 'do reading.'

Extension / Take It Further

Try one short work block tonight using a length that feels manageable. Tally distractions again and compare the result with today's setup.

LESSON 1 • STUDENT WORKSHEET

Set Up to Focus

Name: _____ Date: _____

Build a realistic focus set-up that fits your actual workspace and needs.

1. List the three things that distract you most.

2. Pick one from your list. Write one way you could reduce or manage it.

3. What three things do you need on your desk before you start homework?

4. Write one of tonight's tasks the specific way.

5. Why can a short work block make it easier to START?

LESSON 2

Practice That Sticks

Objective. Students will compare passive rereading with retrieval practice and use one self-testing strategy.

Key Vocabulary

Review	Going back over something you already learned.
Reread	Reading the same text again.
Self-test	Covering the answer and trying to remember it before you check.
Spacing	Practicing a little on several different days instead of all at once.
Cram	Trying to learn everything the night before.

Warm-Up (Bell-Ringer)

Close your book. Without looking, write down three things you remember from yesterday's lesson. Now check. How did you do?

Teaching Points

- Rereading can help with initial understanding, but familiarity is not the same as being able to recall or use the idea later. Combine rereading with active retrieval when you need durable memory.
- Retrieval practice is a high-utility study strategy: cover the answer, try to recall it, then check and correct. The important part is attempting retrieval and using feedback.
- Flashcards are more useful when you attempt an answer before flipping, then check, correct, and revisit items you missed instead of only rereading the cards.
- Spacing practice across multiple sessions is generally more effective for long-term learning than putting the same total study time into one last-minute session.
- Getting something wrong during practice can be useful when you check the correction. Errors can point to ideas or steps worth reviewing next.

Extension / Take It Further

Make 10 flashcards for this week's content and self-test on three different nights.

LESSON 2 • STUDENT WORKSHEET

Practice That Sticks

Name: _____ Date: _____

Answer each question about how practice works.

1. Compare two study moves: rereading your notes and covering them to write what you remember. What can each move help you do?

2. It is Monday and the test is Friday. Write a spaced practice plan.

3. How do you use a flashcard correctly?

4. How can an error during practice help you learn?

5. Cover this page. Now write two things you just learned about practice.

LESSON 3

Show What You Know on Test Day

Objective. Students will use a checklist for before, during, and after a test.

Key Vocabulary

Directions	The instructions that tell you what a question is asking for.
Key word	The word in a question that tells you what to do: list, explain, compare.
Estimate	A quick, close-enough answer used to check whether your real answer makes sense.
Check your work	Going back over your answers before you turn the test in.
Test nerves	The nervous feeling before or during a test.

Warm-Up (Bell-Ringer)

What is the last thing you do before you hand in a test? Be honest - for most people the answer is 'nothing'.

Teaching Points

- Before: aim for adequate sleep, food, and the materials you need. Preparation can reduce avoidable stress and make it easier to focus on the test itself.
- During, step one: read the directions carefully before answering so you know what the question is asking.
- Underline the key word in each question - list, explain, compare - and make sure your answer actually does that thing.
- Answer the questions you know first. Mark the hard ones and come back; do not spend all your time on question 3.
- Check your work. For maths, estimate first: if you estimated 40 and got 400, a step slipped somewhere.
- Feeling nervous before a test is common. A slow, comfortable breathing exercise is one quiet option; students can also use another approved calming strategy that works for them.

Extension / Take It Further

Use this checklist on your next real test, then write one sentence about which step helped most.

LESSON 3 • STUDENT WORKSHEET

Show What You Know on Test Day

Name: _____ Date: _____

Answer each question, then keep this page as your test-day checklist.

1. Name two things to do the NIGHT BEFORE a test.

2. What is the very first thing to do when the test is handed to you?

3. Underline the key word: 'Compare a whole grain and a refined grain.'

4. You get stuck on question 3. What should you do?

5. You estimated about 50, but your answer is 500. What does that tell you?

6. Name one thing you can do at your desk if you feel nervous.

Answer Keys

For teacher use. Print student worksheet pages separately to keep these hidden from students.

LESSON 1 Set Up to Focus

1. List the three things that distract you most.

Answer: Any three honest distractions.

2. Pick one from your list. Write one way you could reduce or manage it.

Answer: A realistic strategy, for example: silence a notification, gather materials first, use headphones if allowed, or plan a snack break.

3. What three things do you need on your desk before you start homework?

Answer: Any three needed items: pencil, the assignment, a book, paper, water.

4. Write one of tonight's tasks the specific way.

Answer: A task with a number or amount, for example 'Do math problems 1 to 12'.

5. Why can a short work block make it easier to START?

Answer: It creates a clear, limited next step. The useful length can vary by person and task.

LESSON 2 Practice That Sticks

1. Compare two study moves: rereading your notes and covering them to write what you remember. What can each move help you do?

Answer: Rereading can support initial understanding or review. Covering and recalling uses retrieval practice and gives a direct check of what you can remember without looking.

2. It is Monday and the test is Friday. Write a spaced practice plan.

Answer: Short practice Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday - for example 10 minutes a night - instead of one long session Thursday.

3. How do you use a flashcard correctly?

Answer: Read the front, try to answer out loud or in your head, THEN flip it over and check.

4. How can an error during practice help you learn?

Answer: After you check the correction, the error can point to an idea or step that needs more review or a different strategy.

5. Cover this page. Now write two things you just learned about practice.

Answer: Any two accurate points: retrieval practice checks recall; spacing practice helps long-term learning; errors can guide what to review next.

LESSON 3 Show What You Know on Test Day

1. Name two things to do the NIGHT BEFORE a test.

Answer: Sleep enough; pack your materials; do a short spaced review; plan breakfast - any two.

2. What is the very first thing to do when the test is handed to you?

Answer: Read the directions all the way through.

3. Underline the key word: 'Compare a whole grain and a refined grain.'

Answer: Compare - so the answer must show how they are alike AND different.

4. You get stuck on question 3. What should you do?

Answer: Mark it, move on to the questions you know, and come back to it at the end.

5. You estimated about 50, but your answer is 500. What does that tell you?

Answer: Something went wrong - check the place value or one of the steps and redo it.

6. Name one thing you can do at your desk if you feel nervous.

Answer: Box breathing: in 4, hold 4, out 4, hold 4.