

USEFUL TIPS FOR SUCCESS IN HIGH SCHOOL CHEMISTRY

Tried and true strategies for having a successful year in chemistry.

- * **Come to class every day.** If you are absent, take responsibility.
- * **Do pre-lab assignments and turn in labs on time.**
- * **Study chemistry every day.** Even twenty (even 10) minutes every day is better than cramming on the weekends. *USE your "FREE" periods within the school day to get academic work done.*
- * **Stay organized.** A three ring binder and a system of notetaking will go a long way toward making high school chemistry seem easier. Organize the material that must be memorized. Make flash cards summarizing essential memory bank material, especially the vocabulary.
- * **Work lots of problems.** You should try to do every problem assigned (and then some). *You must take responsibility for your own learning.* Make sure you get to an *independent level of problem solving before every test.* Make sure *showing your work is a habit*
- * **Always show your work.** *Practice problems the way that you are required to show them on tests.* Include units with your work and always consider significant figures. For more involved problems, make a list of knowns, unknowns and any relevant equations.
- * **Do not spend too long on any one problem.** If, after looking back at your notes or examples from the text, you haven't solved the problem, you are probably missing something and further effort is a waste of valuable study time. Go on to other problems, and return to these difficult ones when you have had a bit more practice. If you still can't solve it, **ask for extra help.** If you are too shy to do so during class time, then schedule an appointment and come for help. Post questions on the Moodle. *Students who ask questions regularly learn more chemistry and thus get higher grades.*
- * Keep up with all of the reading. **Read** (do not just skim) and **take notes** on the scheduled material before you come to class, and read it again after the lecture. *Vocabulary definitions are not notes.*
- * **Ask Questions.** Do not be afraid to stop the teacher and ask a question....waiting until later to get it on your own will backfire on you in the long run...plus, it is likely that there is at least one other person who does not understand. That said, come for extra help if you need to.
- * **Take Notes during class.** If you are only writing down what the teacher writes down, you are not taking enough notes. To study, read through the notes carefully, and make sure that you understand each concept. Have the text open, and expand upon each point covered in the lecture. *Making a fresh but neater copy of your is a waste of your valuable study time.*
- * Form study groups. **Teaching each other** is an ideal way to learn chemistry.
- * **Think molecules.** That is, think about what is happening on the molecular level. Consider the particles on a microscopic level and think about the structure of the atoms involved. Chemistry is much more than equations. You will find this course difficult if you ignore this way of thinking.
- * **KNOW THAT YOU ARE CAPABLE OF LEARNING CHEMISTRY.** Believing in yourself and getting motivated are sometimes the toughest hurdles. *Once you believe, you are on your way.*

Toward the end of every year, I have students say they wish they had paid more attention to this list of tips from Day 1..... learn from their experience.....☺!