

## Florida State University: Academic Center for Excellence

### The Five-Day Study Plan

With the five-day study plan, you maximize your mastery of course material by taking advantage of the way your brain learns best: you organize your material and connect new information with information that is already stored in your long-term memory. Rather than try to assimilate new material in a marathon 10-hour study session the day before an exam, you schedule and plan five study sessions (at least 2 hours each) over a period of five days. You begin by dividing the material into four approximately equal parts or chunks of information. During each day, you prepare study materials for one chunk and then review previous material. You use active learning strategies to study the material and then self-test to ensure that you have learned it.

### How to Make a Five-Day Plan

Break the material into four approximately equal chunks. These chunks can be chapters or groups of chapters in your text, or they may be based on notes that you have taken in class or topics listed by your instructor. You work on the material in two ways: You prepare (organize the material), and then you review (learn it).

<b>Preparation strategies</b>	<b>Review strategies</b>
Create flash cards <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Words and definitions</li><li>• Questions and answers</li><li>• Names and dates</li><li>• Other simple factual information</li></ul>	Work with flash cards <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• By yourself: write or speak</li><li>• Work with a partner</li><li>• If you know an answer, put the card in a separate pile and spend more time with cards you don't know</li></ul>
Create study sheets containing definitions, formulas, dates, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Outlines</li><li>• Charts</li><li>• Diagrams</li></ul>	Rewrite study sheets without looking at the originals Explain the information to a partner or study group
Prepare your notes and text for review <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Organize notes by topic or chapter</li><li>• Take notes from the text</li></ul>	Work with your notes (don't just read them!) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Re-write notes</li><li>• Reduce notes to the very most important points</li><li>• Highlight or mark notes</li><li>• Highlight or mark text</li></ul>
Anticipate test questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Write questions in the margins of your notes or text next to where the answers are found in the notes or text</li><li>• Create a test that includes the kind of questions that will be on the exam (i.e., true/false, definitions, multiple choice) (don't use the questions in your text)</li></ul>	Practice your test <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cover the text, and see if you can answer the questions in the margins</li><li>• Take your test. Pay particular attention to writing out answers to essay questions</li></ul>
Select practice math problems from your text or online. Print them out, leaving space to do the problems	Solve the problems without looking at your text or notes
Prepare material for a tutoring session or study group <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mark parts of text or your notes that you do not understand</li><li>• Find math problems that you are having difficulty solving</li><li>• List topics or concepts that you need to learn</li></ul>	Participate actively in the tutoring or study group session <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Take new notes that clearly explain difficult material in your own words</li><li>• Explain in your own words how you do each step of solving math problems.</li><li>• Verbally "teach" the material to your tutor or study buddies</li></ul>

**Here is an example of a time frame for five days of study for a test on Ancient Greek Tragic Theatre**

<p><b>Tuesday:</b> Prepare first chunk (2 hours)</p>	<p><b>Preparation:</b> Re-read the three plays in Aeschylus's <i>Oresteia</i> Write out study sheets outlining the plots and characters Highlight notes on class discussion of the <i>Oresteia</i>; write out possible test questions on cards or a study sheet</p>
<p><b>Wednesday:</b> Prepare second chunk (2 hours) Review first chunk (30 minutes)</p>	<p><b>Preparation:</b> Re-read Sophocles's <i>Oedipus the King</i> and <i>Antigone</i> Write out study sheets outlining the plots and characters Highlight notes on class discussion of these plays; write out test questions on cards or a study sheet</p> <p><b>Review:</b> Tell the stories of the <i>Oresteia</i> to a study partner or write them out without looking at your study sheets. Compare your plots with your study sheets, note what you missed. Re-read or re-write your highlighted notes on the <i>Oresteia</i></p>
<p><b>Thursday:</b> Prepare third chunk (1-1/2 hours), Review second chunk (30 minutes) Review first chunk (15 minutes)</p>	<p><b>Preparation:</b> Re-Read notes on class lecture about Athenian culture; write study questions in the margins of your notes, and highlight the answers to your questions in the notes Write out possible essay questions about Athens and Greek tragedy</p> <p><b>Review:</b> As above for the <i>Oresteia</i> (focus on your weak points) Tell the stories of <i>Oedipus</i> and <i>Antigone</i> to a partner or write them out without looking at your study sheets. Compare your plots and character names with your study sheets, note what you missed.</p>
<p><b>Friday:</b> Prepare fourth chunk (1 hour) Review third chunk (30 minutes) Review second chunk (15 minutes) Review first chunk (10 minutes)</p>	<p><b>Preparation:</b> Re-read Euripides's <i>Medea</i> and <i>The Bacchae</i> Write out study sheets outlining the plots and characters; write out test questions about these plays Highlight class notes on these plays; write out test questions on cards or a study sheet.</p> <p><b>Review:</b> As above for Aeschylus and Sophocles (focus on your weak points) Work with your notes on Athenian culture: cover the notes themselves and ask yourself the questions you wrote in the margins; you can write the answers or recite them verbally to yourself or a partner; compare your answers with the answers in your notes Write outlines of answers to your essay questions on Athenian culture and Greek Tragedy, showing main points only</p>
<p><b>Sunday:</b> Review fourth chunk (30 minutes) Review third chunk (20 minutes) Review second chunk (10 minutes) Review first chunk (10 minutes) Self-Test (1 hour)</p>	<p><b>Review:</b> Tell the stories of <i>Medea</i> and <i>The Bacchae</i> to a partner or write them out without looking at your study sheets. Compare your plots and character names with your study sheets, note what you missed. As above for Athenian Culture (focus on your weak points) As above for Sophocles and Aeschylus (focus on your weak points) Get out all of your test questions and write out or recite the answers. Mark the ones you miss, look at your notes again, and test again on the missed questions.</p>