

Active Study Strategies

Studying = Thinking!

Studying ≠ Memorizing: You need to remember some information to get started, but then make sure you can apply, analyze, synthesize and evaluate with the target material.

1. **Make Connections:** Connect with unfamiliar concepts using information you already know. In your notes, recall related content from other courses, other units in the same course, and your personal experiences.
2. **Make Content Memorable:** Analyze by creating visual organizers (ie: tables, mind maps, and organizers)
3. **Teach yourself and Others:** Use your own words to describe, elaborate, clarify, extend, and explain. Also, create examples, write questions, and answer textbook questions.
4. **Test yourself:** Make flash cards and use old exams to check your knowledge.

Make your own Study Questions

Create practice questions that force you to think critically. Even the act of writing the question will help you process information. Here are some examples:

REMEMBERING: List, find, name, identify, locate, describe, define

EXAMPLE: *When was the Canadian Charter of Rights enacted?*

UNDERSTANDING: Interpret, summarize, explain, infer, paraphrase, discuss

EXAMPLE: *Why did most provincial premiers oppose the new constitution?*

APPLYING: Using and applying knowledge, solving problems, designing, manipulating

EXAMPLE: *Should protesters be allowed to target specific religious groups?*

ANALYZING: Identifying and analyzing patterns, recognizing trends, comparing and contrasting

EXAMPLE: *Compare and contrast the Canadian Charter with the US Bill of Rights.*

EVALUATING: Critically examining, making judgements, critiquing, defending

EXAMPLE: *Should Canada keep the British crown as its head of state?*

CREATING: Use information to create something new, construct, plan, produce, devise

EXAMPLE: *Envision a scenario when the federal government would invoke the notwithstanding clause.*

Improve your writing and study skills! Book an appointment with a writing advisor and/or academic coach on OSCARplus. Questions? Email skills@mcmaster.ca.

