

## Back to School Tips



### What We Wished We Knew When We Were in School

#### Keep track of every test score

Yes, there is some wisdom in the saying that ignorance is bliss, but trust that report card grades are stressful enough, without the feeling that you got thrown a curve ball.

There are certain habits that the smart students have and one of them is that they keep track of the grade every quiz, paper, test they get. In high school I watched my best friend write down every grade she got in her student planner. I asked her why and she said that she liked knowing how she was doing in school and what she would have to get on an upcoming test to keep up her grades. Soon I started doing it too. It made life easier in the long run because I knew how I was doing and if I slipped up on a quiz or a test and I knew exactly what I needed to get on the next one to turn around my grade. It sounds slightly obvious, but having a target in sight made it easier to hit it.

#### How not to fail a research paper

My Freshman year of college I took an Egyptian history course my first semester and had a pretty fun time writing my first paper on prehistoric mummies. I found a fascinating book in the university library and cited it in the bulk of my paper. I was pretty proud of my paper and was excited to receive an “A” for a job well done. I remember sitting in class while the professor passed back the papers and announced that everyone had done really well. Then as he dropped my paper on my desk he added, “Well almost everyone did really well”. There was a large, red “D” on my paper. So after class, I peeled away to throw myself on the good graces of the Teacher’s Assistant. She said that I would be able

to re-write my paper up to at least a “B”. Apparently the “historian” I quoted the most, was a complete quack and all his findings on mummies that I had used in my paper were complete nonsense. She told me that I should have only used authors that were cited in the Encyclopedia Britannica. The same Teacher’s Assistant also had held an informational session after class a few weeks ago to give advice on how to write a successful paper. Needless to say that I had passed on the advice to my own peril. After I rewrote the paper, I got it back with a note from the professor saying that had I wrote this paper the first time around I would have received an “A”.

### Worried about what’s on the test? Make your Own.

This tip is admittedly work intensive, but when I found myself the most stressed about what would be on a test, I would just make my own. If you have been following along in class, you should be able to make a strong guess of what will be included on the test. Also, some teachers strongly hint what they will include in the test. So unless they are teaching you a lesson in Machiavellian principles, odds are what they suggest will be on the test, will be on the test. When in college, I always made a point to sit close to the teacher’s assistants , as they are the ones who made the tests up for the professor. Every time they took notes, I made sure I did as well and incorporated it into the practice test that I made for myself. On a few occasions I even took my self-made test to their office hours before a big exam to see if it passed muster.



If you have personal success stories that you would like to share with us, we would love to hear them. Please email us at [support@sagescholars.com](mailto:support@sagescholars.com) and let us know if you would be willing to let us share your experience in our next Market Cap and Gown publication.