

**Effective study skills
are the sole
foundation of a sound
education”**

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To establish whether or not effective study skills are indeed the core foundation of a sound education, there firstly needs to be an understanding of what study skills are and what is meant by a sound education. Other factors that impact on education also need to be explored. The term study skills is defined in Wikipedia (2012) as " techniques to assist the individual to be an effective learner. " Although some students may naturally possess good study skills, most people do not. However Cottrell (2008) explains " a skill is a learned activity, something that can be developed through practice. " Time management, active listening, reading comprehension, presentation skills, memory techniques, critical thinking skills, research and evaluation, writing skills are all categorised as study skills and whether a natural attribute or an acquired skill have to be fine tuned and developed in order to be effective. A review by Biggs & Purdie (1996) found that study skills can be taught and that they can add between one and two grades to a students results. However as education is defined in the Collins English Dictionary (2006) as " the imparting and acquiring of knowledge through teaching and learning" there are many other factors beside study skills that impact on an individuals education. Social, economic and cultural backgrounds can have a massive influence over the ability for young people to access even the most basic education. In many parts of the world, free public education is still not readily available for all children and as reported by the BBC (2006) a study carried out by the Nations Education Organisation Unesco finds sending one child to primary school can cost more than a month's wages in many third world countries. Having access to free education however does not necessarily guarantee success. Children of lower socioeconomic groups who

have access to free education can face many barriers in education, with attitude, aspiration and behaviour toward education playing a part; proving "life opportunities can make a significant difference on natural intelligence (Stella 2008) Parenting skills can also impact on a child's education, for instance, a child's reading ability is associated with the reading environment around them and there is evidence (Joseph Rowntree Foundation March 2010) that parental involvement with school is associated with achievement. Previous negative experience can also be a barrier to learning for students from all walks of life. A bad learning experience in the past can have a lasting impression on a students' attitude towards education. This leads on to the final ingredient - lack of motivation. The student has to have a willingness to learn and no amount of techniques and skills can improve a persons desire to want to learn. In conclusion, although popular opinion agrees effective study skills are a necessary and valid tool in the building of a student's education, unless all the other pieces in the jigsaw are in place study skills are either irrelevant or ineffective and therefore cannot be deemed to be the core foundation of a sound education.

References

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