

The six hour d essay



Having no background on what the article “ The Six Hour D... and How to Avoid It” by Professor Dewey is about leaves your mind guessing until you get around to reading it. This article is about study habits amongst college students. It discusses how many students claim to have spent a substantial amount of time studying but still receive a low grade; such as a D or F. Hence, “ the six hour D” title. Professor Dewey shows ways in which students fall into “ the six hour D” category and gives tips on how it can be easily avoided.

Getting a “ six hour D” in college courses is common. This is normally due to poor study habits. Most students don’t know how to go about studying for a test. They just believe if they read the material and answer study questions as they go that they will perform well on the exams linked to the material. Those students work with the text by reading the content; however they never truly understand it.

They will spend hours highlighting and writing answers to questions down. They take a memorization tactic to remember things as facts. This leads to problems when asked conceptual questions and how to apply the concept. They haven’t wired their brain for this type of thinking. They go into the test thinking they know the material but in reality they just know definitions. They have not absorbed the information, so without their notes and textbook they perform below average.

Noticing that a numerous amount of students were putting in a lot of effort with a low level of success, Professor Dewey offers suggestions on how to avoid “ the six hour D”. It isn’ t more time spent studying, its time spent

smarter. The two main ways suggested to prevent students from falling into “ the six hour D” rankings is to 1) block off the text and 2) attempt answering a study question. Dewey tells us that the road to success is led by self-testing. The best strategy to implement the two main ways to prevent a D while self-testing according to Dewey is, “ Read the material, trying to understand the underlying ideas.

A few minutes later, go back to the page, block off the text, read the question, and see if the answer can be retrieved from memory. “ This will show if you have a true understanding of the material or if you were just relying on your book. It is particularly easy to think you understand a concept when you have the answers in front of you or have just read the material. The suggested strategy uses the idea of metacognition versus the memorization route most often taken. Metacognition calls for “ thinking about thinking”. It is a more advanced way of thinking that leads to higher understanding. Professor Dewey’s suggestions have proven success behind them and would be useful to all college students struggling with study habits.

Unfortunately, I personally use a lot of the study habits that result in failure for most students. I have never spent much time studying. I have always been that kid that listens in class and does homework and just picks up the material from there. This worked very well for me in high school when classes were mainly about regurgitating information. However, college has a different approach. We need to be able to implement that things we learn which involves a deeper understanding. Often when I sit down to study I feel

lost at where to start. I usually begin with reading and creating flashcards for key terms and ideas.

After a solid run through of the reading and memorization of the flashcards, I more often than not feel prepared for exams. Just reading the material once through is not frequently effective for me because once the exam is in front of me I do not remember the information. This relates to how Professor Dewey says it is easy to feel like you are understanding with your study resources close to you. Flashcards are fairly effective for me. The repetition makes ideas stick. I usually color code them to so I have something tangible to associate with them as well. My study habits are not absolutely terrible but they could definitely use some work.

After reading the article I want to change my study habits some. My goal is to implement the strategy previously mentioned. I think self-testing myself as I read will allow for much more long term absorption of material. In addition, to increasing the skills in how I read I want to learn to create study questions for myself. When study guides are not provided it's easy to feel overwhelmed with the idea of exams. However, we can train ourselves to recognize important information and create our own study questions to be able to answer before exam day. Self-testing and self-created study questions are going to my new approach at studying.

The article “ The Six Hour D and How to Avoid It” by Professor Dewey was helpful. As a college student I found the tips useful. Dewey gave me ideas on how to increase my likelihood for success. The article also made me realize that the way I am and have been studying is not the most beneficial time

wise or information wise. I plan to take my newly gained knowledge to benefit my future academic endeavors.