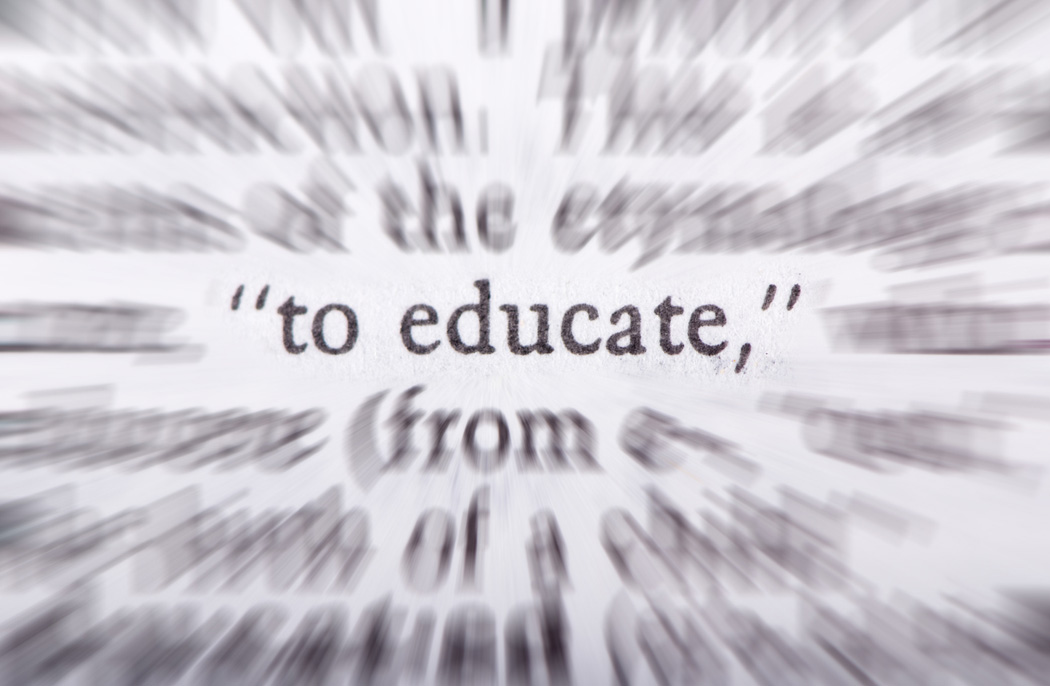
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**Study Tips for 6th Grade**

While many teachers spend some class time teaching study skills, students often need more guidance than they get in the classroom. In middle school, there's more homework, it becomes more difficult and it requires analytical skills your child may not have developed yet.

The study skills your child needs to do well on her test on Friday are the same ones she will need to succeed in high school and college: getting organized, taking good notes and studying effectively.

As your child moves toward independence, she's less likely to ask for your advice. She will need to go through some trial and error to come up with the strategies most compatible with her learning style. And you'll want to encourage her to take responsibility for her own school work. You can help her by monitoring homework, asking questions and helping her evaluate what works for her — and what doesn't.

Helping your child get organized

Getting organized is crucial for your child, says Linda Winburn, a veteran South Carolina middle school teacher who became the state's 2005 Teacher of the Year. "And the key is parent involvement."

Some tips to help your child get organized:

**Provide a place to study.**

It doesn't have to be a desk, says Winburn. "A kitchen counter is a great place, especially if mom's in the kitchen cooking."

The desk or table surface should be big enough so that your student can spread out papers and books. Make sure essential supplies such as pens, paper and calculator are close by. Have good lighting and a sturdy chair that's the right height available.

**Help your child develop a system to keep track of important papers.**

If your child tends to forget to turn in homework or can't quite keep track of how he's doing in a class, it might help to get him a binder with a folder in the front for completed work ready to be turned in and a folder in the back for papers returned by the teacher.

"For me, staying organized meant creating a system — any system — and sticking to it," says Gabriela Kipnis, now a student at the University of Pennsylvania. "I had fun color-coding, organizing and using dividers, but the truth is, all that mattered was that there was a method that I stuck with."

**Make sure your child has — and uses — a planner to keep track of assignments.**

Help your child get in the habit of writing down each daily assignment in each subject and checking it off when it's complete. Some schools provide these to students, and if not, you might want to work with your PTA or parent organization to provide planners at your school.

**Encourage your child to estimate how long each assignment will take.**

He can then plan a realistic schedule, building in study breaks after subjects that are most challenging, and allowing for soccer games and band practice. Helping your child keep track of time spent studying — rather than staring at a blank page — will help him think about how he's using his time. If he's spending too much time on a subject that might be a signal that he needs extra help or tutoring.

**Help your child break big projects into smaller ones.**

A big research project will seem less overwhelming and will be less likely to be left until the last minute if it's done in manageable chunks, each with its own deadline.

**Communicate with your child's teachers.**

If your child is struggling with organizational skills, talk to the school counselor or teachers about what might be causing the problems and brainstorm approaches to solve them.