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How to perform well in Maths...

Prioritise Maths

In order to deal with a subject you find difficult, you need to prioritise it on your Lifestyle Timetable. It should therefore be ranked in your top three subjects and entered first onto the timetable with the possibility of including more study blocks for it than other subjects (See Chapter Two for more details on this). In these subjects, you need to: ask for plenty of help from your teacher, work with a study buddy, find ways of learning that best suits you, break it into manageable chunks, write a good set of notes that you can relate to and understand, think outside the box and ultimately dig in and persevere. These are all the characteristics of successful students.

“Someone once told me not to bite off more than I could chew; I said I’d rather choke on greatness than nibble on mediocrity”

Unknown

People regularly ask me about how Maths is learned and I believe it is a subject everyone can do well in by being more open minded and willing to try different methods. For sure, your parents have a role to play here, so make sure and get them involved. During this chapter, I will try to enrich you with information to master my subject. I will also provide you with some tools and ideas to tie parts of the Maths course together.

Maths: Learning by Doing

To me, Maths is a subject where you need to be continuously ‘learning by doing’ and the importance of attempting exam style questions cannot be underestimated. Reading through questions and text like you do in other subjects will not work in Maths and having access to a structured solution book for exam questions is important. Inevitably with some challenging questions in the subject, you will run into difficulties getting started and this is where having the first line or two of the solution can be extremely helpful; a detailed solutions book is ideal for this. I believe that referring to the first part of a solution and then revisiting the question yourself is a very efficient way of developing key Maths skills. This technique isn’t one much practiced in other subjects.

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You must adopt a different approach to maths; it is unique. A genuine attempt to start a question in Maths will allow you to gain some momentum and progress to apply the concepts you have learned in class. In my experience, the biggest stumbling block to achievement in Maths is getting the question started; but a single grain of rice can tip the scales.

In general, if you are finding it difficult to get started and feel lost in Maths, start by practising the part (a) questions in your past exam papers and work your way upwards to part (b) and so on. Maths is about having a go, knowing the tricks, when to use formulae, consistent practice and really believing in your ability and the work you have done.

Key Area One: Parents - You Need to Gently Introduce Maths Early

Parents, I would advise you not to stand idly by in relation to Maths; you can't afford to. You may or may not have had a good experience in your own school days with Maths, but you need to leave that to one side now and get stuck in, as "you can help!" It is important to introduce Maths to your child from an early age so that they carry good habits with them into their teenage years. Maths appears in so many different tasks we do during our day; we are performing Maths calculations constantly and aren't even aware of it. Young children are like sponges who love soaking up new information and experiences, so there are always opportunities to pass on lifelong skills to them in this subject.

...Extract from 'Chapter 8: Case Study: Here is how you prepare for...Maths' of Joe McCormack's book "How to ACE the Leaving Certificate" for ALL subjects.

For more Information on Joe's work, see his website www.acesolutionbooks.com or follow him on Facebook for useful links and Secondary School resources by clicking this link:

<https://www.facebook.com/joe.mccormack.3591>.

