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TUTOR HANDBOOK

Kentucky Wesleyan College
PLIS Center

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Dear Student,

This handbook has been developed as a reference for peer tutors. Please read it thoroughly and keep it handy as a reference.

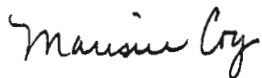
Tutor responsibilities, techniques of tutoring, suggestions for improving communication, conducting the initial tutoring session, and understanding the students you tutor are all covered.

Your job as a peer-tutor can be a most satisfying and rewarding experience. You are doing a great service for students and Kentucky Wesleyan. You may want to use this job on your first résumé.

Thank you for your participation. Feel free to call on me at any time for assistance. At the end of the year, you will be asked to evaluate the peer-tutoring program. I would appreciate your cooperation in this final effort.

Thanks again, and I look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marisue Coy".

Marisue Coy
PLUS Center Director

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Tutor Responsibilities

1. Tutor students in your area of expertise.
2. Arrive promptly for tutoring sessions; if it is necessary to cancel a session, call the student and reschedule.
3. Advise student on study habits, class attendance, and preparation for tutoring sessions when necessary.
4. Attend tutor training sessions.
5. Always check your e-mail for announcements and new tutoring assignments.
6. Try to conduct tutoring sessions in the Library Learning Center whenever possible.
7. If you conduct study sessions or tutor Wesleyan students, keep times/dates, names of student(s) tutored and course or subject on the PLUS Center **time sheet** and return the sheet to the PLUS Center at the end of **each** month.

If you conduct study sessions, it is imperative you pick up sign-in sheets and return the sheets to the PLUS Center after each session.

8. If you change your mailing address or telephone number, please notify the PLUS Center.
9. If any problems should occur, feel free to call Mrs. Coy at 852-3300, write an e-mail, marisuec@kwc.edu, or stop and see her in the PLUS Center.

Helpful Suggestions When Tutoring

1. Check student's class notes. They may need assistance on note-taking skills. If they have very few notes, suggest that they compare notes with other students in the class. Suggest rewriting notes and filling in missed details.
2. Check textbook underlining. Do students underline too much or too little?
3. Suggest note-taking in the margins of books.
4. Suggest taking notes on textbook material that is confusing.
5. Read over the study skills suggestions in the back of this handbook. Do not take for granted that students you tutor have acceptable study skills.

Do's and Don'ts for the Tutor

1. Listen and try to determine the student's learning problem.
2. Be positive, persistent, and available, but not "pushy."
3. Emphasize your peer relationship by:
 - listening for needs
 - explaining your role as helper and your limitations
4. Encourage student participation by having him/her work out problems, explain concepts, etc. In general, the less work you do for the student, the better.
5. Make your time with student "quality time" by:
 - minimizing distractions (time, place, people, tangible problems)
 - offering informal guidance on problem-solving, organizing, building effective study habits
 - reinforcing the student, being positive but honest
6. Ask questions and get the student's response so that you have the student problem solving as well as being comfortable with asking and answering questions in class. Avoid simple yes/no questions.
7. Praise and encourage the student as much as possible, but level with the student rather than make false promises.
8. Share your experience about the benefits of a regular, responsible relationship in the classroom.
9. Help students maintain perspective about courses, professors, and academic problems; emphasize confronting problems as a way of solving them.
10. Be prepared for occasional disappointment and frequent satisfaction.
11. Never criticize an instructor or teaching policy. If problems become too difficult to handle, report them to Mrs. Coy.
12. Never do homework for the students you tutor – the goal is the student's independence.

General Techniques of Tutoring

1. The first and foremost task of a tutor is to gain the confidence of the student who is being helped. One way to do this is to identify and keep in mind the various reasons why the student has fallen behind in his/her school work. The teacher may not be interested or may not have time to help the student; the student may feel inferior in class, or may not be properly prepared for the class. These are only a few of the reasons a student seeks the assistance of a tutor. The important thing to remember is that the student is looking for help on a personal basis. Try not to make the student feel inferior or inadequate by your actions or language.
2. Try to determine exactly, if possible, what kind of problems the student is having:
 - (1) Does the student understand what the assignments are and what is expected in class?
 - (2) Does the student understand the reading involved?
 - (3) Does the student have the proper prerequisites for the class?
 - (4) Does the student know where and what resources are available on campus?
 - (5) What is the student's attitude toward the class and toward the teachers?

These may seem like minor problems in comparison to the academic work involved, but if these problems are present, they will interfere with the student's ability to perform the work.

3. Encourage the student to do his/her own thinking. The tutor should attempt to start the student in the right direction on the work, and then give him/her assistance only when needed. Also, at the end of each session, the tutor should ask the student to give a summation of the material covered in order to insure that he/she has grasped the material content. The development of the logical and clear-thinking process will help the student in all courses of study.

-- From the Mars-Hill Tutor Handbook

Use the "Q" or Question Technique with YOUR Students

1. The "Q" technique is where you, or the student, or both, turn the content being studied into questions. You can also turn the student's notes into questions, or ask them to create questions from their notes. Then, you quiz the student by asking him/her the questions. This works because, what are all tests made of? Questions!
2. The "Q" Technique helps students learn and remember at a much deeper level, because the questions make the students search their memory for answers and organize the material in a way that creates the right answers. As a tutor, you quiz the students by asking them questions, and you help them answer the questions correctly by helping them organize their thoughts until they get the right answer.
3. But there is still more to the "Q" Technique. Helping the student create questions is also direct rehearsal or practice for any upcoming test. Practice answering questions helps students reduce anxiety about taking tests, because they have already been answering questions during the tutoring sessions and are better prepared to answer questions on a test, which also can mean better grades.

NOTES "Q" technique

Intro Psych
10/16

Memory "Q" column	NOTES 2
What are 3 ways to store information?	3 ways to store information sensory memory - everything sensed short term memory - 15-25 sec. Stored as meaning 5-9 chunks long-term memory - unlimited rehearsal visualization
What is chunking?	Organize information into chunks: birds, instruments, body parts, etc.
What are examples of mnemonics?	Mnemonics acronyms acrostics rhyming jingles keyword technique loci technique peg method
What does it mean to use my senses?	Using senses moving draw, diagram visualize
	There are 3 types of memory (sensory, short-term, & long-term). We can use chunking, mnemonics, & our senses to aid recall.

Turn key points in notes into questions

Summarize (daily)

How to HELP / Guide your Tutee in Q'ing their text:

What is the function of the motor cortex?

motor cortex an area at the rear of the frontal lobes that controls voluntary movements.

sensory cortex the area at the front of the parietal lobes that registers and processes body touch and movement sensations.

What is the function of the sensory cortex?

Functions of the Cortex = What are the functions of the cortex?

OBJECTIVE 5-6 | Summarize some of the findings on the functions of the motor cortex and the sensory cortex, and discuss the importance of the association areas.

More than a century ago, autopsies of people partially paralyzed or speechless revealed damaged cortical areas. But this rather crude evidence did not convince researchers that specific parts of the cortex perform specific functions. After all, if control of speech and movement were diffused across the cortex, damage to almost any area might produce the same effect. A television would go dead with its power cord cut, but we would be deducing ourselves if we thought we had "localized" the picture in the cord.

This analogy reminds us how easy it is to err when trying to localize brain functions. Complex activities such as speaking, drawing, and shooting pool involve many brain areas. For example, our experience of vocal music integrates brain activity in areas involved in speech and music processing. Merielle Besson and colleagues (1998) discovered this when recording electrical activity in the brains of French musicians listening to unaccompanied operatic solos. The musicians' brains processed the lyrics and tunes in separate brain areas en route to their experiencing "the exquisite unity of vocal music." Moreover, the spine-tingling thrills that music lovers enjoy appear to activate the same brain reward systems that are stimulated by sex and pleasing foods (Weinberger, 2004). As with other complex activities and experiences, music engages multiple brain areas.

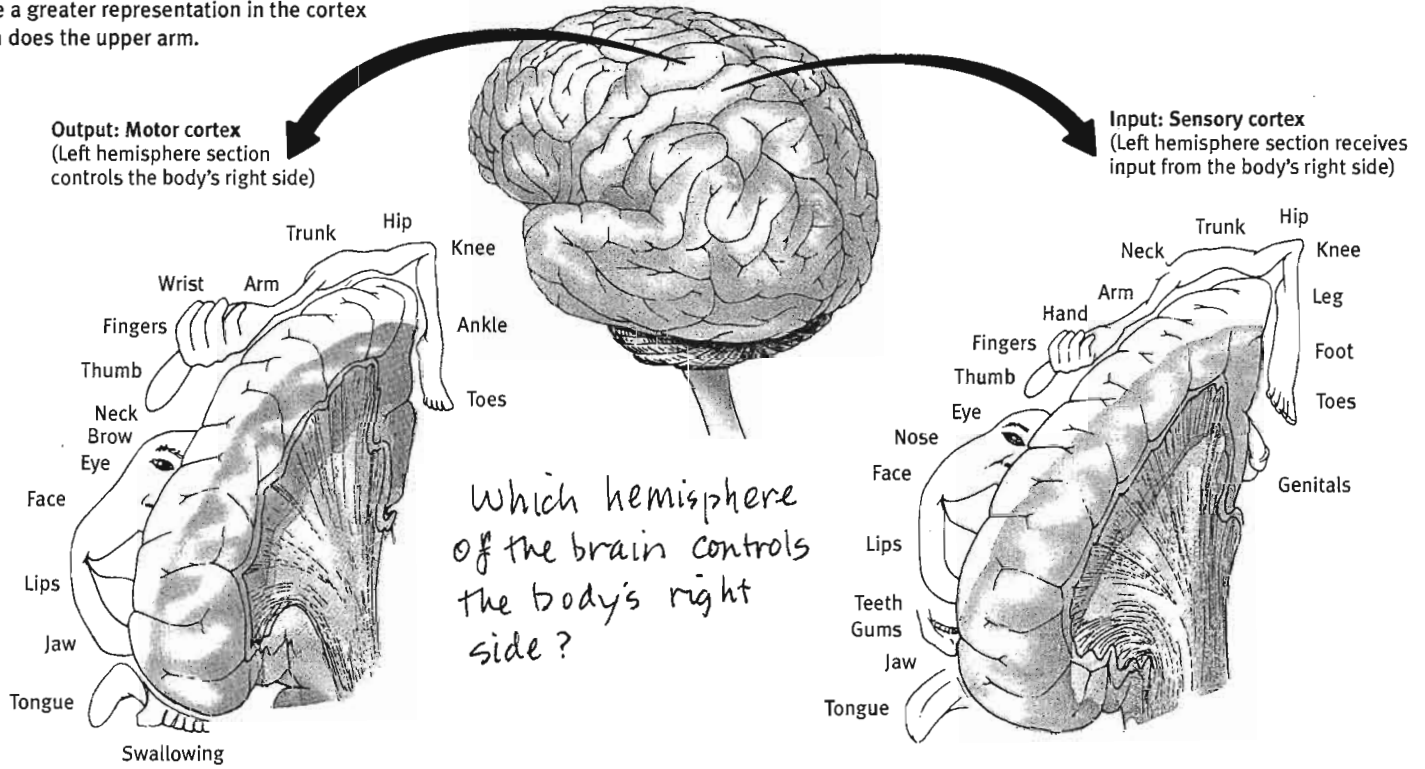
Motor Functions = what are examples of motor functions?

Scientists have, however, localized simpler brain functions. For example, in 1870, when German physicians Gustav Fritsch and Eduard Hitzig applied mild electrical stimulation to the cortexes of dogs, they made an important discovery: They could make different body parts move. The effects were selective: Stimulation caused movement only when applied to an arch-shaped region at the back of the frontal lobe, running roughly from ear to ear across the top of the brain. This arch we now call the **motor cortex** (FIGURE 5.15). Moreover, when the researchers stimulated specific parts of this region in the left or right hemisphere, specific body parts moved on the *opposite* side of the body.

Do the fingers have more or less cortex?

FIGURE 5.15
Left hemisphere tissue devoted to each body part in the motor cortex and the sensory cortex

As you can see from this classic though inexact representation, the amount of cortex devoted to a body part is not proportional to that part's size. Rather, the brain devotes more tissue to sensitive areas and to areas requiring precise control. Thus, the fingers have a greater representation in the cortex than does the upper arm.



Does the brain feel pain?

Mapping the Motor Cortex A half-century ago, neurosurgeons Otrid Foerster in Germany and Wilder Penfield in Montreal mapped the motor cortex in hundreds of wide-awake patients. Before putting the knife to the brain, the surgeons needed to know the possible side effects of removing different parts of the cortex. They painlessly (the brain has no sensory receptors) stimulated different cortical areas and noted the body responses. Like Fritsch and Hitzig, they found that when they stimulated different areas of the motor cortex at the back of the frontal lobe, different body parts moved. (Kids, don't try this without parental supervision.) They were now able to map the motor cortex according to the body parts it controlled (Figure 5.15). Interestingly, those areas of the body requiring precise control, such as the fingers and mouth, occupied the greatest amount of cortical space.

Neuroscientist José Delgado repeatedly demonstrated the mechanics of motor behavior. In one human patient, he stimulated a spot on the left motor cortex that triggered the right hand to make a fist. Asked to keep the fingers open during the next stimulation, the patient, whose fingers closed despite his best efforts, remarked, "I guess, Doctor, that your electricity is stronger than my will" (Delgado, 1969, p. 114). Scientists have also been able to predict a monkey's arm motion a tenth of a second before it moves—by repeatedly measuring motor cortex activity preceding specific arm movements (Gibbs, 1996).

Neural Prosthetics By similarly eavesdropping on the brain, could we enable someone—perhaps a paralyzed person—to move a robotic limb or command a cursor to write e-mail or surf the Web? To find out, Brown University brain researchers implanted 100 tiny recording electrodes in the motor cortexes of three monkeys (Nicolelis & Chapin, 2002; Serruya & others, 2002). As the monkeys used a joystick to move a cursor to follow a moving red target (to gain rewards), the researchers matched the brain signals with the arm movements. Then they let their computer operate the joystick. When a monkey merely thought about a move, the mind-reading computer moved the cursor with nearly the same proficiency as the monkey.

Newer research has recorded messages not from the motor neurons that directly control a monkey's arm, but from a brain area involved in planning and intention (Musallam & others, 2004). While the monkeys awaited a cue that told them to reach toward a spot (to get a juice reward) that had flashed on a screen in one of up to eight locations, a computer program recorded their neural activity. By matching the brain activity to a monkey's subsequent pointing, the mind-reading researchers could now program a cursor to move in response to the monkey's thinking (FIGURE 5.16). Monkey think, computer do.

In 2004, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved the first clinical trial of neural prosthetics with paralyzed humans (Pollack, 2004). The first patient, a paralyzed 25-year-old man, is now able to mentally control a television, draw shapes on a computer screen, and play video games—all thanks to an aspirin-sized chip with 100 microelectrodes recording activity in his motor cortex (Patoine, 2005).

Sensory Functions = what are examples of sensory functions

If the motor cortex sends messages out to the body, where does the cortex receive the incoming messages? Penfield identified a cortical area that specializes in receiving information from the skin senses and from the movement of body parts. This area, parallel to the motor cortex and just behind it at the front of the parietal lobes, we now call the **sensory cortex** (Figure 5.15). Stimulate a point on the top of this band of tissue, and a person may report being touched on the shoulder; stimulate some point on the side, and the person may feel something on the face.

The more sensitive a body region, the larger the area of the sensory cortex devoted to it; your supersensitive lips project to a larger brain area than do your toes (Figure 5.15). (That's one reason we kiss with our lips rather than touch toes.) Similarly, rats have a large area of the brain devoted to their whisker sensations, owls to their hearing sensations, and so forth.

Demonstration: Try moving your right hand in a circular motion, as if polishing a table. Now start your right foot doing the same motion synchronized with the hand. Now reverse the foot motion (but not the hand). Tough, huh? But easier if you try moving the *left* foot opposite to the right hand. The left and right limbs are controlled by opposite sides of the brain. So their opposed activities interfere less with one another. = Did you try this?

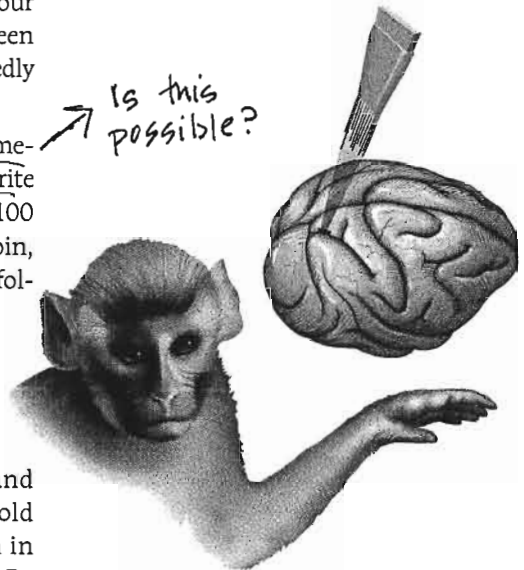


FIGURE 5.16
Mind over matter

Can just thinking make something happen? A California Institute of Technology research team led by Sam Musallam implanted electrodes in a parietal lobe region and recorded neural activity as a monkey planned to reach. When programmed into a computer's memory, this activity then enabled the monkey to move a cursor merely by thinking about it.

Can just thinking make something happen?

→ What determines the size of the sensory cortex?

TREPS TO WATCH OUT FOR

1. "You have Dr. _____ for history? Boy! He sure is a bore. Why I remembered when..."
(Remember you are "professionals" and it is not professional to join your client in cutting down one of the teachers.)
2. "I have a test I have to study for this morning. Would it be O.K. if we didn't meet now and meet later tonight?" (Call in advance and change your tutoring time if this is necessary.)
3. "This is a really stupid topic. I don't know why the teacher assigned it."
4. "How many times have I told you not to do that?"
5. "This exercise is so simple; I can't believe you missed half the problems."
6. "You don't understand that? You must have come from a really poor school."
7. "Since we've already wasted 35 minutes talking about your roommate, let's quit and call it a day."

IMPROVING INTERPERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS

1. Establish rapport and a positive relationship with students without encouraging dependency.
2. Jointly participate with the student in setting objectives for each session, start and end each session, deal with interruption effectively.
3. Improve your listening skills and patience.
4. Develop effective questioning skills. Teach your students to ask relevant, important questions. Establish dialogue.
5. Assess student progress positively, letting him/her know specifically how to succeed. Tutor sessions should be low anxiety situations. Reinforce each student as he/she needs it. Help students participate. Explore the reason for wrong answers in a positive way. Provide encouragement and support while your student struggles with a concept; praise him/her honestly when it is mastered.
6. Learn to cope with difficult situations – apathetic, passive students, the overly demanding student, the test anxious student.
7. Avoid student manipulation. Don't put down instructors to gain rapport with students.
8. We need to create situations that encourage student's academic and psychological growth. Try to create an environment in which the student is encouraged.

The Initial Tutoring Session

The initial tutoring session is important because it enables the tutor to establish an atmosphere in which he/she can work efficiently with the student throughout the semester.

Following are some general suggestions on how to conduct the initial meeting with a student. They are meant to give you some ideas about how to get to know the students with whom you will be working and how to set the tone for the semester.

The objectives for the first session generally include:

1. Obtaining basic information about the student.
2. Reviewing the Guidelines for Student Participation and establishing a business-like atmosphere for the tutoring session.
3. Beginning the tutoring process.

-
1. Obtaining basic information about the student.

Asking the student questions about his/her needs and background for the course can be the first step in establishing a rapport between you and your student. You are showing interest.

What is the student's attitude toward the course?

What are the student's goals for the semester?

What is the student's preparation for the course?

Establish a regular meeting time and place for the tutorial session.

A. You might ask questions such as:
Is this course required for you? or if it not, **Why are you taking this course?** **Do you need/want a specific grade in the course?** **Is the material being covered interesting to you?** **How do you like your instructor?** **How have you found the workload in the course to be so far?** **What's your impression of the textbook?** **What seems to be the most challenging part in this class?** **Where are you having the most difficulty?**

B. **Have you had any other courses in this field?** **What were they?** **How did you do in them?** **What other courses are you taking this semester?**

C. **Is this a good time for you to meet with me?** **Can we set this up as a permanent time?**

2. Guidelines for Student Participation

The tutor should go over the Guidelines with the student, emphasizing their importance. This process can create a business-like atmosphere in the session and help the student understand what is expected of him/her throughout the semester. Place particular emphasis on the following points from the Guidelines:

Emphasize the tutorial attendance requirement.

A. Repeat your name and telephone numbers where the student can reach you if it becomes necessary to cancel a tutoring session.

Emphasize student attendance at lectures, discussion sessions, etc.

B. Explain the fact that tutoring is not a replacement for attending lectures, discussion sessions, or for meetings with the instructor for the course. It should be clear to the student that he/she should still seek out the instructor for extra help in the course. Emphasize the importance of getting to know the instructors.

Emphasize student preparation for tutoring sessions.

C. Tell the student always to bring course materials (handouts, review sheets, lecture notes, text) to a tutoring session along with questions on the reading, lectures, etc.

Concerning the above remarks: You may want to be firm, but you don't want to scare the student off. Most students seeking tutoring are freshmen or sophomores and need direction. As a tutor, you want to provide short-term assistance to the student in the course and long-term study skills and college-survival techniques. A good tenet is: **THE STUDENT SHOULD NEED YOU LESS EACH SESSION.**

Now that you have told the student what is expected, you want the student to understand what you, the tutor, can provide.

What can the tutor provide?

The tutor will be able to answer specific questions about the course materials and can help the student to clarify the lecture material, the reading, worksheets, etc.

You may also wish to tell the student briefly about your background in the subject area. You could mention that you have taken the course or that your major is in the field being tutored.

3. Beginning the Tutoring Process

Make sure there are at least 15 minutes of the hour left for this part. At this point, the student should begin to see that the tutoring session will benefit him/her. **THE STUDENT SHOULD LEAVE EACH SESSION FEELING THE SESSION ADDED TO THE UNDERSTANDING OF COURSE MATERIAL.**

The initial session is in place to begin.

What is the student's progress in the course?

Try to find out what material has been covered in lecture and how far the student has read in the text.

Ask to see the student's notes, textbooks, and other materials. While looking over these, begin asking questions concerning the student's progress. Ask, **What chapters have you read in the book?**, or **What has the professor been talking about in lecture?** Ask the student to explain a key concept or to define an important term.

You could also ask, **Have you had any quizzes yet?** Or if it is later in the semester, **How have you done on the exams?** You can ask students what grade they got on a test. The student may already have questions on the course material. Working with the student for the answers will insure that he/she leaves even the initial session with a better understanding of the course material.

ENDING THE INITIAL SESSION

Give the student a clear idea of what will be covered in the **next** tutoring session. Ask the student, **What is your assignment for the next class? What is going to be covered in the lecture next week?** The student should know what he/she should have done by the next meeting. Tell the student, for example, **Bring in a list of questions you have on the chapter assigned for class.**

Make it clear where and when the next session will be held. Say to the student, **I will meet you in this area at 1:00 p.m. next Tuesday.**

We hope these suggestions have helped you have a good initial session with your student.

Understanding the Students You Tutor

Many of the students you will tutor are “high-risk” students; that is they are unlikely to complete their studies. It is important for you as a tutor to understand the implications of this term. High-risk students, like all students, can be divided into two groups – successful and unsuccessful.

Successful high-risk students have at least some of the following characteristics:

1. Having a goal (future direction) in mind
2. Having some idea of how to achieve this goal
3. Ability to solve personal problems
4. Feeling support from others
5. More favorable attitudes toward school

In general, they are better able to cope with their problems and take positive actions to alleviate them.

On the other hand, as you might expect, unsuccessful high-risk students have many of the opposite characteristics:

1. Lack of potential
2. Inadequate conception of the work involved in succeeding
3. Importance of other activities over study
4. Interference from psychological problems
5. Failure to assume responsibility for own learning
6. Inhibition of language functions (poor reading, writing, and speaking skills)
7. Lack of understanding of standards for high-quality performance
8. Selection of inappropriate major
9. Vagueness about long-term goals
10. Lack of knowledge of their own shortcomings
11. Does not have a textbook

Our goal is to take students from this category to the first. Be on the lookout for rationalizations for failure – high-risk students expect to fail and consider it a prophecy!

Why Students Seek a Tutor

1. Change in demands of academic environment (example: new subject, increased reading demands).
2. Criteria of good performance unclear.
3. Instructor does not clarify criteria.
4. Student does not understand what success requires.
5. Student missed classes due to illness, death in the family, etc. and feels too far behind to catch up.

One or more of the above reasons for seeking help may result in:

1. Anxiety
2. Strong feelings of incompetence
3. Feeling that failure is imminent

As a result, they may:

1. Persevere in old learning habits and study more
2. Avoid study and give up
3. Drop out of school
4. Try new study approach and get help

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