

# The Four Keys to College and Career READINESS

think:

## Key Cognitive Strategies

The Key Cognitive Strategies describe the thinking skills and strategies that allow students to develop and demonstrate competency in learning, applying, and extending academic or on-the-job knowledge.

Students are able to think strategically and insightfully about the work they do.



Have you ever played the game of SCRABBLE? Players draw seven random letters at a time and try to make words on the grid game board. Letters have different point values, and some of the squares on the grid have different values too. The player with the most points at the end of the game wins. When someone is just beginning to learn how to play the game, he or she usually just tries to make the longest words possible. But with a little experience and practice, players soon learn that there are a lot of different strategies they can use to win: playing "defense" by blocking opponents' next moves, playing a small word that racks up big points, and so on. When you approach a complex problem in a similar manner, identifying different ways of solving it and choosing the best option based on the information you have, you're thinking strategically.

- [Hypothesize/Strategize] **Problem Formulation:** Do you have a clear understanding of the problem and how it might be approached?
- [Identify/Collect] **Research:** Can you identify the research, information, or data needed to solve this problem?
- [Analyze/Evaluate] **Interpretation:** Can you synthesize research to make justifiable conclusions addressing the problem?
- [Organize/Construct] **Communication:** Can you create a clear, organized, and effective message summarizing the problem and solution?
- [Monitor/Confirm] **Precision & Accuracy:** Can you ensure the problem is addressed completely and accurately?

## Key Content Knowledge

know:

Key Content Knowledge describes the structure of knowledge and the student characteristics that determine how they interact with content. Students who possess grade-specific content knowledge are motivated to learn relevant facts, terms, and constructs, and to understand how they fit together.

Students work to see the "big picture" of knowledge, not just the factual details.



### A Portrait of Your Brain (aka How You Know Stuff)

The brain retains complex information to the degree to which it can: 1) generate connections or links among the pieces to make a structure; 2) associate emotions, positive or negative, with the information; 3) find the information meaningful, relevant, or useful; 4) apply or use the information in a variety of authentic situations; and 5) receive timely feedback on how useful the information was to achieve a specific purpose or general goal.

STRUCTURE OF KNOWLEDGE includes key facts, linking ideas, and organizing concepts.

[Reading & Writing] [Mathematics] [Science] [Social Studies] [The Arts]

RELATIONSHIP WITH KNOWLEDGE includes student's effort, value, and challenge level.

By working to understand the structure of knowledge, and by focusing on how you relate to content knowledge... YOU CAN LEARN TO BECOME AN EXPERT ON JUST ABOUT ANYTHING!

[insert your future here.]

act:

Key Learning Skills and Techniques are the tools that students use to study and to be responsible for their own ongoing learning. Possession of these skills enables lifelong learning and personal growth as well as the self-management behaviors that improve performance in college classrooms and the workplace.

Students with these skills know how to learn.

[Learning? You own that.]

- ### TO-DO List...
- Set and work toward goals.
  - Persist through challenges.
  - Assess strengths and weaknesses.
  - Stay motivated!
  - Seek help when needed.
  - Monitor progress.
  - Be confident in ability to succeed.
  - Gain proficiency in technology.
  - Use strategies to memorize & recall facts.
  - Collaborate with others!
  - Manage time effectively.
  - Be prepared to take tests.
  - Develop note taking skills.
  - Read strategically.

### Pop Quiz:

IQ is generally the most important contributing factor in students' grades. TRUE or FALSE?

**Answer:** FALSE. Research has shown time and time again that students' learning skills and techniques - like goal-setting, time management, and all the other items on the to-do list - have a greater impact on academic success than the basic brain power captured in IQ scores.

For example, Dr. Angela Duckworth, a professor at the University of Pennsylvania, followed 140 eighth grade students over the course of one school year. She asked them questions about their study habits and attitudes toward school, and she asked parents and teachers similar questions about students' learning behaviors. When she combined this information with student IQ scores, achievement test scores, attendance rates, and final class grades, she found that students' self-discipline was the strongest determinant of final grades - twice as important as IQ scores!

## Key Learning Skills and Techniques

go:

Key Transition Skills are those necessary to successfully adjust and perform within a student's chosen postsecondary environment. Students who possess this set of knowledge and skills thoughtfully explore their options, identify and obtain the necessary resources, complete the steps to pursue their chosen path, and are prepared for the challenges ahead.

Students know how to get where they want to go.

### NAVIGATING the road ahead:

Transitioning from high school to college and career requires students to navigate a complex process of personal, cultural, financial, and professional challenges. Your pathway won't always be a straight line either, but here are some kinds of skills and knowledge you'll need to find your way...

- College Knowledge:** Learn about different postsecondary options like 4-year and 2-year degrees, certificate programs, and apprenticeships.
- Self-Advocacy:** Be aware of resources available to support your goals and seek them out. Find a mentor or role model who's taken a path similar to the one you're traveling.
- College Costs:** Learn about how much it costs to go to college, how to pay for it, and what it would cost you over a lifetime to not go.
- Career Awareness:** Explore what kinds of careers are available, what interests you, and required skills and education.
- Life After High School:** Know that what it takes to succeed in high school is different from the knowledge, skills, and behaviors required to be successful in college or the workplace.

Did you know... The average person with a bachelor's degree will earn \$1,300,000 more than a high school dropout over their lifetimes? [Yep. Education pays.]

## Key Transition Skills and Awareness