



Study Skills for High School Students

Ready to Learn

Organise

Get your life in order

Use your weekly study schedule to keep your learning material in order. Make sure you keep your schedule up to date. Be able to know what you need to do for school or work.

Use your study and study plan to know what is due ahead and know when it is due.

Use your weekly study schedule to keep your learning material in order.

Keep your notes in order so you can find and need them.

Take control of your time

Use your To Do List in your study plan to know what is due ahead and know when it is due.

Do things first. Do the tasks that are due first.

Do important tasks first. Do your homework and task preparation first.

Set learning goals for yourself and plan how you will achieve them.

Find the right balance between important tasks and everyday tasks.

Prioritise

Do

Get things done

Make sure you stick to your study schedule.

Break tasks into smaller, more manageable pieces. Complete them one at a time. Write notes to key points.

Start your assignments early to give yourself enough time.

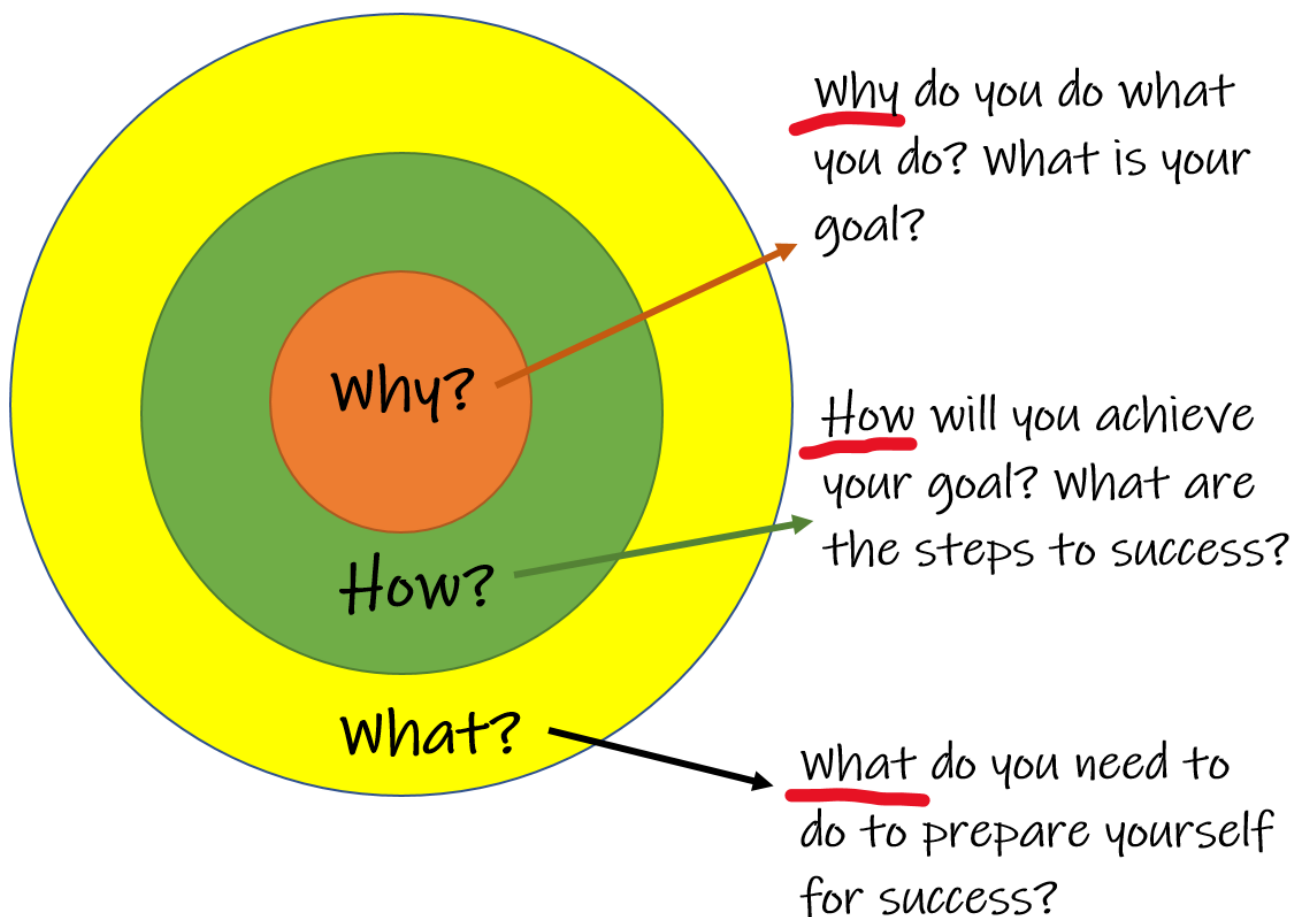
Ask your teachers for feedback and to explain things you don't understand.

Illustrations include a girl with books, a clock, and a boy thinking.

The Circle of Success

One of the most common questions students ask when starting a new topic or when they are challenged to learn a new skill is “what is the point of doing this?” This statement is often followed up by “I won’t need this in my life when I leave school!” While on the surface this is a logical argument (when would a student who wants to be a carpenter ever need to apply his or her knowledge of Shakespeare?), this is because teachers often talk about the topic or a skill students are going to learn (this is logical, too), rather than the *reason* students are learning that topic or skill. In effect, we often focus on the WHAT rather than the WHY. By focussing on the WHAT we easily lose sight of the purpose of learning and how learning will help us achieve our long-term goals.

The Circle of Success



If we start with the WHY, perhaps what we are learning at school would become a lot more relevant. This is because you would start a topic or learn a new skill in the context of your career goal and what you would like to do with your life. While it is a good idea to start with the WHY, the HOW and the WHAT are also important as they are the steps that will help you achieve your goal. When looking at the things you need to do to be **ready to learn** in order to achieve your goal, then the WHAT not only refers to the topics you learn at school, but also to study skills that will help you manage the learning process and help you take control of your learning. To be **ready to learn**, you must develop both good **learning habits** and **learning skills**. Only once you are **ready to learn** can you effectively focus on developing key skills (The Hawkesbury Learning Journey and WALU – the HOW) that will help you succeed and achieve your goal (the WHY).

Ready to Learn

Students who are **ready to learn** understand the purpose of being organised and knowing HOW to study. Being **ready to learn** includes using a diary or calendar, making time to study and complete your work, and planning ahead to complete assignments and assessment tasks on time without stressing about it.

To be ready to learn you must develop:

LEARNING HABITS

- Using a diary or calendar
- Using your timetable
- Using the study guide
- Creating a study schedule
- Organising and managing school equipment and digital files
- Creating a learning space

LEARNING SKILLS

- Problem solving
- Thinking ahead
- Managing time
- Managing urgent things first
- Following the Hawkesbury Learning Journey (skills process)
- Using the WALU scaffold to create study notes
- Using technology

There are 15 things you can do to develop your learning skills and habits:

Organise your learning material and know where you keep your books and equipment.

Organise

Use your timetable to know which books you need for school each day.



Use your diary and study guide to plan ahead and know when work is due.

Use your weekly planner to create a study schedule at home.

Keep your notes neatly organised so you can find things when you need them.

Use the To Do List in your study guide.

Prioritise

Focus on urgent things first — plan ahead to complete tasks and assignments that are due first.



Set time aside to do important things such as your homework, assessment task preparation and assignments.

Set learning goals for yourself and plan how you will achieve them.

Find the right balance between important tasks and every day tasks.

Make sure you stick to your study schedule.

Do!

Break things down into smaller parts to make it easier to complete your work.



Follow up class work at home — practise linking class notes to key skills to create study notes.

Start on assignments early to give yourself enough time.

Ask your teachers for feedback and to explain things you don't understand.

A very important tool that will help you in this process is your study guide.

When you take your study guide home, place it in a visible place in the space where you study and do your homework. Don't place it too high – you should be able to reach it to write on it.

Make sure you read the information in this booklet and complete the activities. This will help you learn how to use your study guide properly.

Use a felt tip pen or marker to write on your study guide. You can wipe it clean with a damp tissue or cloth.

Create a Study Schedule

A weekly planner - also known as a **study schedule** - is a very important tool that will help you keep track of all the things that need to be done and the time you have available to do them. A weekly planner will help you plan ahead and manage the learning process effectively from week to week.

My Weekly Planner							
Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
At School	English essay due				Science project due		
4:00 – 5:00	Soccer training		History	English			
5:00 – 6:00		Work	Business Studies	Science	Work	Minimum 4 hours of study during week end	
6:00 – 7:00	Dinner and rest		Art	Maths			
7:00 – 8:00	Maths	Dinner and rest	Dinner and rest	Dinner and rest	Dinner and rest		
8:00 – 9:00	English	Science	Science	History Business	"Me" time		
9:00 – 10:00	"Me" time	"Me" time	Maths	"Me" time	"Me" time		

The best way to create a study schedule is to think of time in terms of one-hour blocks. This will allow you, for example, to see at a glance how much time you have available each day after school. How much time you decide to spend on each subject or course will be different from week to week. For example, if you have a Science project coming up, you will spend more time on that project. The following week, once that project is completed, you may spend less time studying Science and more time on, say, an upcoming English essay.

It is also important to keep a balance between school work and other important things in your life. While some people might tell you that you must study six hours after school every day, this is simply not achievable for most people. You need to do what feels right for you. Remember, one hour of study is still better than no study at all. After a while - when you are comfortable studying for one hour - you may extend this to two hours, or more.

Activity:

Use a blank weekly planner to create a draft study schedule.

Once you are happy with your study schedule, transfer it onto your study guide on the wall in your learning space.

Make sure you stick to your study schedule. Change it if it's not working for you.

Use the To Do List

One very useful tool to help you focus on things that have to be done is to have a **TO DO LIST**.

A common mistake made by many students is to try to do too many things at once. At best, you will get stressed and overwhelmed, at worst, you will think that there's just too much to do and you will give up. A To Do List can help you manage all the things you have to do by focusing on the most important and most urgent tasks first. Your To Do List should never have more than 4-5 tasks at a time, with the most achievable and urgent tasks near the top. As you complete each task, tick it or cross it off and then move to the next task.

Your To Do list will help you always feel in control and it will give you a sense of achievement.

Your To Do List can also help you modify and adjust your weekly schedule – after all, you should make time to do the things that are on your To Do List.

Many smart phones have task and “to do” apps that can be used to help you prioritise your work and time.

My To Do List	
1	Research History assignment ✓
2	Do Maths homework ✓
3	Adjust study schedule ✓
4	Work on essay draft
5	Update my backup disk

Activity:

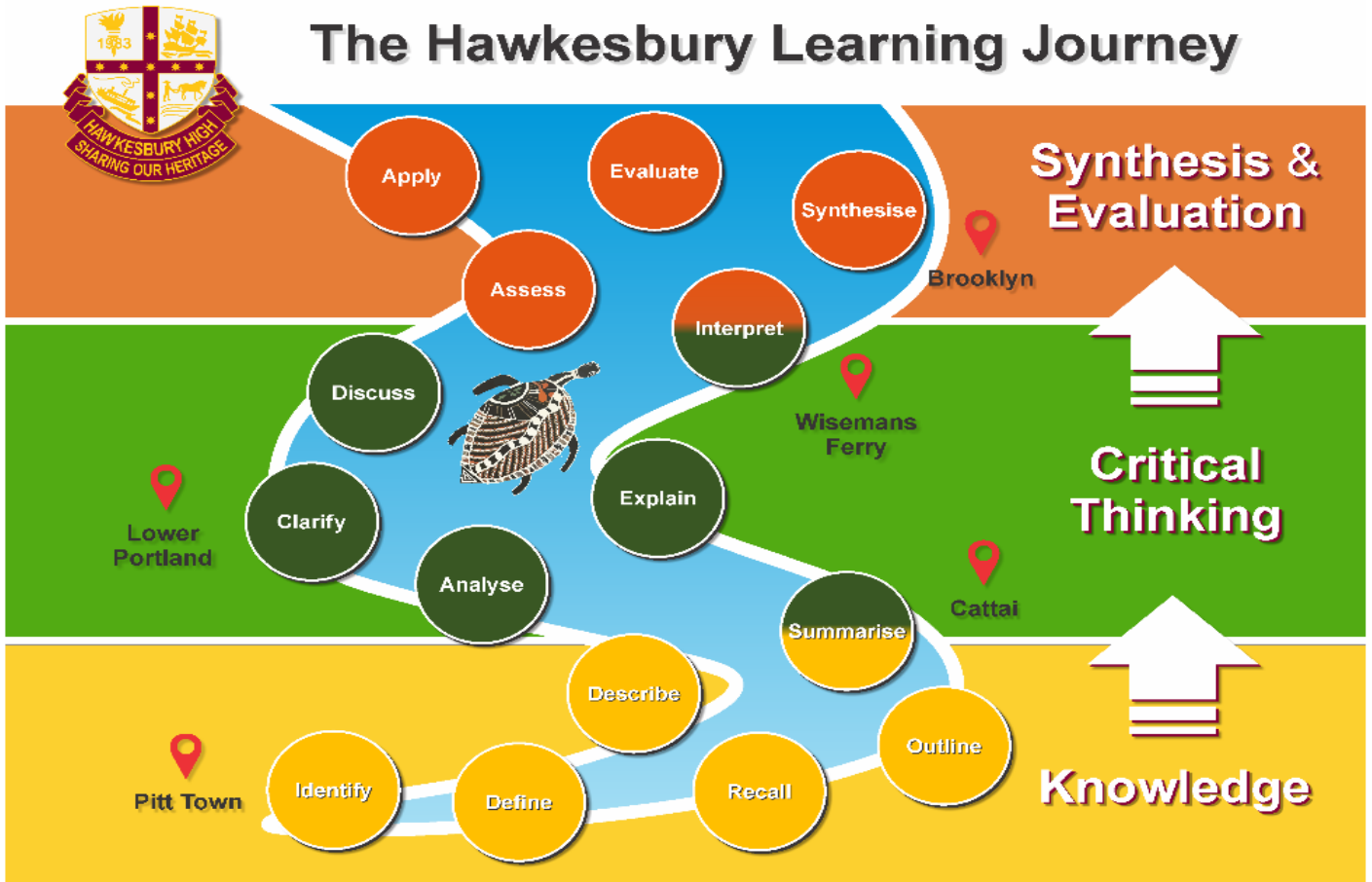
Write five things on your To Do List in your study guide that you have to do.

Make sure you place the most urgent tasks (things that are due sooner or have to be done first) at the top of your list.

Cross out or tick each task as you complete it.

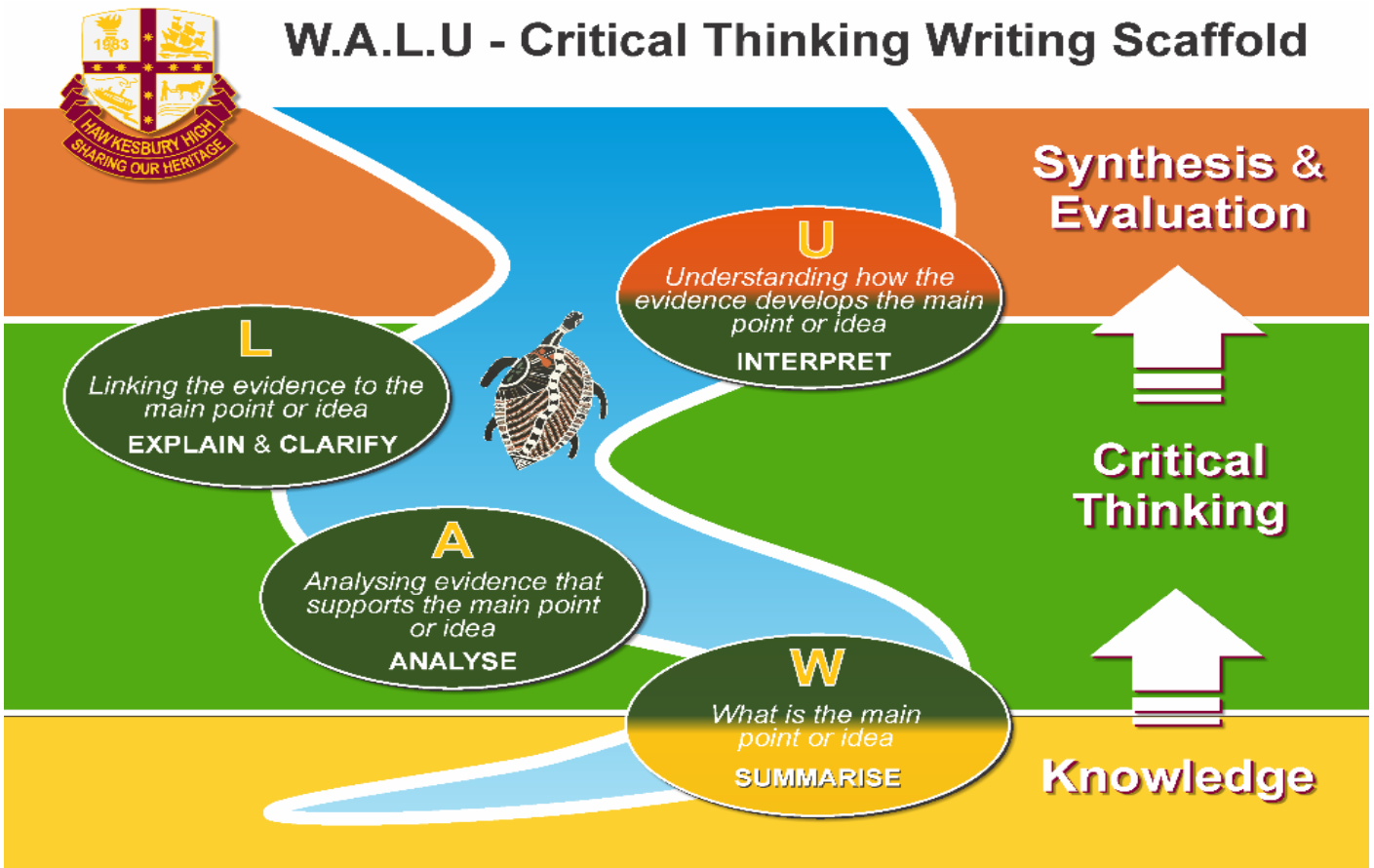
The Hawkesbury Learning Journey

The Hawkesbury Learning Journey



W.A.L.U – Critical Thinking Writing Scaffold

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Creating Study Notes



WALU Paragraph Writing Scaffold



W

Summarise

What is the main point or idea?

A

Analyse

Analyse evidence that supports the main point or idea

L

Explain

Link the evidence to the main point or idea

U

Interpret

Understanding how the evidence develops the main point or idea

Essay Writing Scaffold



Essay Writing Scaffold

Identify

Define

Describe

Introduction

Summarise

Analyse

Explain

Interpret

Summarise

Analyse

Explain

Interpret

Summarise

Analyse

Explain

Interpret

Body

Synthesise

Evaluate

Conclusion