Announcer (00:00:03)

The Missouri State Journal, a weekly program keeping you in touch with Missouri State University.

Adair Seifert (00:00:09)

August is back to school season and families are starting to build habits to ensure their student reaches their academic goals.

Building strong study skills is a key ingredient in the recipe for student success.

What are some easy study habits you can start practicing?

I'm Adair Seifert and today, Michael Frizell, director of student learning Services at Missouri State University, offers insight on how to build strong study skills at any age.

Michael Frizell (00:00:34)

When I think about the common struggles that many students face building study habits and study skills, I think one of the things, especially if you're a parent listening, could consider is what happened during COVID. COVID gave us the effect of working from home in an environment where we were comfortable, which is a great study habit.

Actually, the more comfortable you are, the better off you're going to be.

But you don't want to be too comfortable the way you've got your desk is littered with fun stuff and it becomes play time instead of actually doing the work.

Many students approach studying without a plan, and that causes some trouble. Schools were forced to shut down quickly, faculty who were not used to teaching online suddenly had to adjust to this online environment, often asynchronous, meaning you weren't live. They laid it out for you. You listened to the video, and you read the books. What was happening is that students worked asynchronously.

We're able to kind of cut corners and I think any students are going to tell you that that they googled a lot of information. Well, that's surface level memorization techniques, so last fall, there was an impact.

Students weren't ready and they didn't have the habits they needed to think about doing stuff rather than as opposed to looking at stuff.

Adair Seifert (00:01:46)

Frizell suggests easy study habits you can build inside and outside of the classroom.

Michael Frizel (00:01:50)

A study skill that you could use would be to be prepared. You come in already reading the textbook that they're going to talk about. Now, students tell me, what if I don't understand the textbook?

Great, but I'd much rather have you come in with notes from your text and engage me in class rather than have me talk to you and then hope that you learn something later because real learning in college doesn't happen during the lecture. My job as a professor is to profess, to inspire. You get students to do something that you didn't do in high school, and that goes beyond the course material as presented, the only way to do that is to ask relevant questions to help you understand the material.

That's the first part, so being active in class is a good study habit.

The second one afterward is to do something with your writing. You're taking notes. What you do with it afterwards matters.

How many of you remember phone numbers besides for the relevant people in your life, because it's in your phone, so you can look at them anytime you want the same principle.

So, what I ask students to do with their notes afterward is to find some kind of mastery technique that allows them to engage in that material. Highlight problems and concerns. Write questions in the margins, predicting test questions.

If you ask yourself a question, you can't answer, turning to your peers, or even better, the faculty member, your first line of defense to help you through that studies show if you just did that for 15 minutes a day and reviewed that way, a very active way of review, you'll retain about 90% of the information without hostile air quote studying. Right. And I think that's the key here is that we have got to do something with it.

Adair Seifert (00:03:39)

He offers steps parents can implement at home.

Adair (00:03:42)

Some of the things parents can do to start at home with kids that are younger ages, say K through six is to encourage them to read more, read more means you can write more effectively.

In addition, you want that reading to be discussed, so you must get these kids to unpack the material they read. I'll give you a good example from my son. Early on he struggled a little bit with reading. He wasn't really that interested. He was very active.

So, we had a steady diet of Batman and the Hulk and Spiderman early on, and as he started to get older, he graduated to more complicated texts for younger kids, getting them to read early. Reading matters. It changes the dynamic in everything that they do in grade school. Because think about it, you're not only having to read math questions, but you've got to read your history book. If you're really going to understand athletics, you've got to read the playbook.

Adair Seifert (00:05:02)

That was the director of Student Learning Services at Missouri State University, Michael Frizzell.

I'm Adair Seifert for the Missouri State Journal.

Announcer (00:05:10)

For more information, contact the Office of Strategic Communication at 417-836-6397, the Missouri State Journal is available online at ksnu.org.