

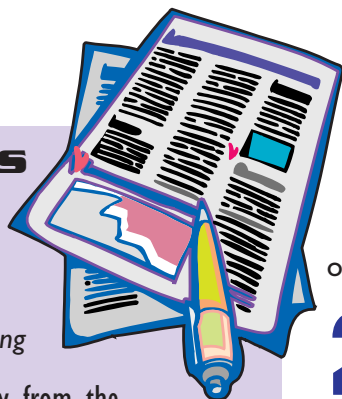
# The Great Studying 8

## Use News To Build Skills

Learning standards: comparing, summarizing

1. Choose a long story from the newspaper. Time how long it takes you to read it. Then read it again, using the tips on this page. Time yourself a second time and see whether you cut back on the time you used.

2. Choose an article from the newspaper that you think will be really interesting, read it, and write a brief summary of what you read. Then choose an article about something that doesn't interest you at all. Again, read it and write a brief summary. Compare the two tasks. Which was easier? Why? Did the article of low interest surprise you in any way?



**1** Plan to look over material for a few days, not just the night before the test. After all, you don't eat all your food for the week on the same day, do you? You don't want to overstuff your brain all at once, either.

**2** Find your sweet study spot. You know how baseball players find the sweet spot on the bat that enables them to take their best shot? Studying is the same way. Find or create the environment that helps your brain take its best shot. Your study spot should be quiet, well lit, and comfortable without being too comfortable. Ever wonder why your school desk and chair are okay to sit in but not so comfy that you feel like falling asleep? Well, it should be the same at home. Think of yourself as Goldilocks. Find yourself a place to sit that's not too hard and not too soft – but just right. And quiet doesn't have to mean silent. While it's not a good idea to study with the TV on, relaxing music might actually help you if it's played softly in the background. Rap and hip-hop make great music but lousy study buddies.

**3** First things first. That means you should study the most important material first while your mind is freshest. That's why teachers sometimes tell kids to do math homework first. It's complicated, so you want to get at it when your mind is at its best.

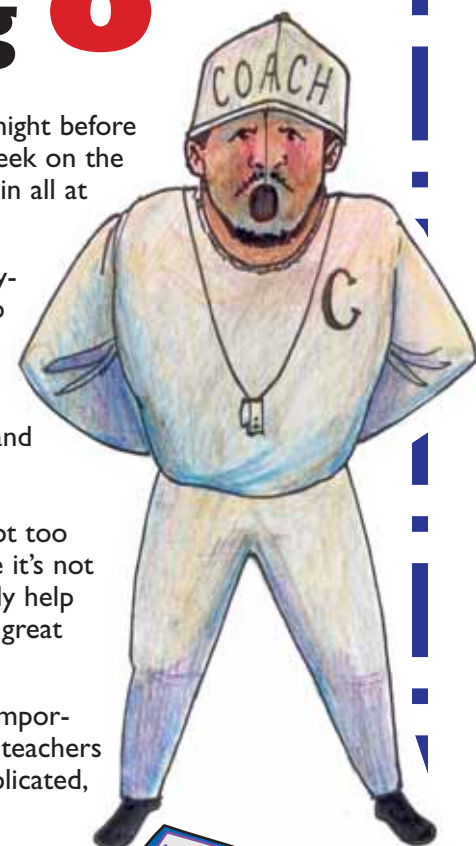
**4** Learn the main ideas that you need to know. Then go back and get the details.

**5** Take breaks. Just be sure they are short breaks so that you don't lose what you just learned. Get up, walk around, eat an apple, then go back to where you left off.

**6** Study buddies are good, but pick the right ones. Don't study only with your best friends. Choose a study buddy who is serious about doing well in school. You can have fun too, but kids who are too much fun may not help you do your best studying.

**7** Don't move on until you understand what you read. If you can't recall and recite much of what you learned, go back and go over that part again.

**8** Go to bed at your regular time. Getting a good night's sleep is incredibly important to keeping your mind sharp.



## Use News To Build Skills

Learning standards: taking notes, understanding main idea

Use the newspaper to practice taking notes. Choose a story and circle the main idea of each paragraph. Then underline the details about each main idea. After you finish, jot notes about the story in the newspaper margins.