



## Concentration

### Why can't I concentrate?

Concentration is your ability to work without letting people, feelings or activities interfere. The key to concentrating more, is being distracted less! Here are three steps you can use to develop your concentration ability.

#### 1 - Establish It!

*External distractions* are things around you (people, noises, smells, etc.) which might and probably will attract your attention. Beware of what they are and separate yourself from them.

*Internal distractions* are things inside you (thoughts, emotions, physical feelings, hunger, tiredness, etc.) which tend to attract your attention. Beware of what they are and control them:



you, preferably before you begin to study.

#### 2 - Increase It!

Plan to concentrate. In other words, be prepared to pay attention to the task at hand. How interested are you in what you are doing? If not much, then try to come up with ways to make the topic more interesting.

The following techniques are useful to increase concentration:

- Divide tasks into manageable parts. Achievement will come sooner and more often!
- Keep track of your thoughts (e.g. mark an "x" in your textbook each time you catch yourself daydreaming).
- Use a pencil, highlighter, or anything else that will increase your active involvement in what you're doing.
- Vary your activities; a change is as good as a rest.
- Plan breaks according to your concentration span (you're not a machine!)



#### 3 - Make It a Habit!

Establish a regular place to do your work and decide on a regular starting time for doing work. Just as certain times and places are associated with eating, so it can be with concentration. Try to be consistent. Mature students may find it especially difficult to have a regular routine at home, so try to find a place at school where you can concentrate for a certain amount of time.

#### Points to Think About

- Concentration is not an ability you are born with; you have to learn, develop and practice it like any other skill.
- It's worth learning how to concentrate because you'll get more done in the same time.