

## ELG STRATEGIES CHECKLIST - MODULE 3 - STUDYING IN ENGLISH

As you work your way through the ELG modules, use this checklist to note the strategies you would like to try, then start planning how you might begin to use them. It will also be useful to note the strategies you already use, so that you have a better understanding of your learning approach.

\* **ELG Star Tips** are those strategies that were found by our research to be positively associated with higher academic outcomes.

<b>MODULE 3: STUDYING IN ENGLISH</b>
<p><i>English is best learnt through active communication and by integrating language learning with academic learning. The strategies introduced in this module will help you to improve your English skills as you use them in your studies and your daily life. They include social, cognitive, and metacognitive learning strategies.</i></p> <p><b>What does our research show?</b>          Students who tended to have <b>higher academic achievement</b> reported using these strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* <b>following lectures on a handout</b> and adding their own notes.</li> <li>* <b>doing assignments</b> as soon as possible after receiving them. *</li> </ul> <p><b>linking new knowledge</b> to what they already know.</p> <p>Academic achievement tended to be <b>lower</b> for students who reported that they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>do not attend</b> classes and only read the materials or depend on friends to provide notes.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>only study what is needed</b> to pass the course.</li> </ul>

<b>SOCIAL LEARNING STRATEGIES</b>			
<p><b>What are social learning strategies?</b>          Social learning strategies include interaction with other people who may be friends, class groups, or tutors and lecturers. Interacting and exchanging points of view or ideas helps you to learn. With social learning you are activating both your listening and speaking skills to reinforce your learning.</p>			
<b>Below are some social learning strategies used by our students. Which ones do you use? Which ones would you like to try?</b>	<b>I do this already</b>	<b>I'll try this one</b>	<b>Might try later</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> I discuss academic problems with friends who can understand my point more easily. Homework is really important so I can check if I understand the chapter/lecture or not.			
<input type="checkbox"/> I discuss lecture slides that I don't understand with course mates.			
<input type="checkbox"/> During a lecture, tutorial or lab class, I usually check my notes with friends to see if I have understood everything.			
<input type="checkbox"/> I usually ask friends, whether they are from an English speaking background or not, whenever I have a problem understanding something in my course,			
<input type="checkbox"/> Group study is a good idea for improving English and learning another point of view from your friends.			

<input type="checkbox"/> I think if friends get together and discuss the chapters that are going to be taught, it helps in understanding the concepts better.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Join a Toastmasters club, try to make friends and do group assignments with people from different cultures.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Arrange a weekly meeting with friends who come from different countries. Have different topics to discuss every week and a presentation by one or two members about their own cultures as well.			

## COGNITIVE LEARNING STRATEGIES

### ***What are cognitive learning strategies?***

These are the strategies we use to actually learn our content material. So when you do things like make summaries, review, categorise ideas, link knowledge to what you have already learned or to past experience, you are using cognitive learning strategies.

Cognitive learning strategies may involve the *what*, the *how*, the *why* or the *when* of acquiring knowledge.

Below are some cognitive learning strategies used by our students. Which ones do you use? Which ones would you like to try?	I do this already	I'll try this one	Might try later
<b>Look for linkages between what you are learning and your previous knowledge and understandings:</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> I find the relationships and applications to connect with my past study and life experiences.			
<b>Use alternative sources for understanding topics - don't just rely on one textbook:</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> I thoroughly read my textbooks and lecture notes, and where I need to understand some points better, I look up the information in different ways. I try to look at things from different sources, other than only what the lecturers give us.			
<input type="checkbox"/> I find other textbooks that are related to the topic or unit, or try to find other books that are helpful which are recommended or listed. Then, I go to the internet to find out more about those topics if I still don't understand them.			
<input type="checkbox"/> If I can't understand the theory, I go to the library and look at other books because the theory is the same but the way that the writer presents it is different.			
<input type="checkbox"/> I often try to find books related to the subject I am learning so as to have multiple meanings of a topic and then I try to find out the similarities from all of them			
<b>Go to class prepared:</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Always have something in my head before going to class, so that I can discuss and give opinions as much as I can during classes.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Always prepare for class and have at least a basic idea of the topics to be covered.			
<b>Previewing is important to link prior knowledge with the lecture material. This is one of the most effective ways to learn:</b>			

<input type="checkbox"/> I preview the lecture materials before my lecture and also review them again after the lectures to ensure I completely understand as much as possible.			
<input type="checkbox"/> I find the relationships with my past study and life experiences.			
<b>Note-taking is another good strategy because you will have approached the material in different ways:</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Take notes in your own words with practical examples so that when you need to review you remember and understand the subject better.			
<input type="checkbox"/> I write down everything I need to understand as I can understand things written by me better. I also try to visualize or draw diagrams when reading to help me understand.			
<b>Reviewing is just as important as previewing:</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Reviewing</i> is just as important as <i>previewing</i> because it strengthens that connection between the old and the new knowledge.			
<input type="checkbox"/> The strategy to support my academic performance is to keep on reviewing the any previous materials that are hard to understand.			
<input type="checkbox"/> I don't 'memorise' the materials, I try to 'understand' them. Memorising is for people who want to 'pass' instead of 'learn'.			
<b>Some students may not have the English language skills needed to easily read more widely. For them it is important to start with the textbook:</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> I prefer using the textbook rather than reading journals because the textbook has a clear structure (chapters) and the language is easy to read. So I have a basic understanding before I read a journal article.			

## METACOGNITIVE LEARNING STRATEGIES

### ***What are metacognitive learning strategies?***

These are the strategies you use to **organise yourself**, such as:

- Time-management (e.g. meeting assignment deadlines, or knowing a lecturer's office hours).
- Finding the gaps in your knowledge.
- Identifying your weaknesses and working to improve them.
- Evaluating your improvement (e.g. by testing yourself).
- Setting goals.
- Planning activities to stay motivated.
- Constructing a learning journal or port-folio where you keep track of your learning, e.g., 'What did I learn today/this week?'
- Developing an individual learning plan.
- Debriefing yourself after a test or quiz and noting what you did not know.
- Scanning contents and index pages and bookmarking the relevant information to focus on.
- Designing your own test questions.

Below are some metacognitive learning strategies used by our students. Which ones do you use? Which ones would you like to try?	I do this already	I'll try this one	Might try later
* <b>Doing the assignments as soon as possible</b> is a good way to improve my academic performance.			
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>I design a day-to-day timetable</b> to ensure I allocate my time each day for studying. I also manage my lecture notes and study area well by preparing boxes for each subject and storing past lectures and notes and anything relevant in order in each box.			
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>I set out a plan</b> to read a newspaper almost every day and I try to ask some teachers or friends what type of TV or radio program was best to develop my English and I stick to that. In my first year I listened to Perspective on the ABC and in the second year the news on ABC TV almost every night.			
<p><b>Some words of advice</b></p> <p>A good metacognitive strategy is to have a thorough <b>understanding</b> of the cognitive learning strategies that work for you and when, and <b>plan</b> your use of them. So:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Think about your <b>preparation strategies for an exam</b> - memorising, outlining diagramming, self testing.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Identify <b>which of these strategies works best</b> with different types of material (lecture notes, textbooks, lab reports/manuals, etc.)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Then <b>plan your study time</b>, thinking about how to apply each of these cognitive learning strategies.</li> </ul> <p>Likewise, think about your <b>planning strategies for an assignment</b> (refer to Module 3 for more tips on this).</p>			
<p><b>More metacognitive strategies for you to try<sup>1</sup>:</b></p>	I do this already	I'll try this one	Might try later
<input type="checkbox"/> Ask yourself periodically if you are meeting your goals.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Try to use strategies that have worked in the past.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Pace yourself while learning in order to have enough time.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Understand your intellectual strengths and weaknesses.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Set specific goals before you begin a task.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Slow down when you encounter important information.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Make sure you know what kind of information is most important to learn. <input type="checkbox"/>			
Ask yourself if you have considered all options when solving a problem. <input type="checkbox"/>			
Focus your attention on important information.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Have a specific purpose for each strategy you use.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Make sure you know what your lecturer expects you to learn.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Use different learning strategies depending on the situation.			

<sup>1</sup> Strategies cited here were adapted from Schraw, G., & Dennison, S. (1994) Metacognitive Awareness Inventory. In *Contemporary Educational Psychology* 19, 460-475.

<input type="checkbox"/> Ask yourself if there was an easier way to do things after you finish a task.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Periodically review to help you understand important relationships between ideas.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Ask yourself questions about the text before you begin.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Consider several ways to solve a problem and choose the best one. <input type="checkbox"/>			
Summarise what you've learned after you finish.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Ask others for help when you don't understand something.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Reflect on the strategies you use when you study.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Think about the usefulness of strategies while you study.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Focus on the meaning and significance of new information.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Create your own examples to make information more meaningful. <input type="checkbox"/>			
Pause regularly to check your comprehension.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Make sure you know when each strategy you use will be most effective.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Ask yourself how well you have accomplished your goals once you have finished.			