

Don't waste your time: The best and worst study techniques

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The Journal News:

Are you highlighter happy? If so, you can blame that B- on the bright fluorescent pink, yellow and greens lines running through your textbooks.

When it comes to study techniques, highlighters, mnemonics and re-reading just don't make the grade, according to a report released by the Association for Psychological Science. In the report, Professor John Dunlosky of Kent State University and a team of psychological scientists reviewed the scientific evidence for 10 learning techniques commonly used by students.

So what gets an A+, or as the report puts it, "high utility"?

Two strategies: taking practice tests and spreading out a study session, the so-called distributed practice.

Quizzing yourself and spreading out your studying over time (sorry, it's the opposite of procrastination and cramming) can improve performance across many different kinds of tests, and their effectiveness has been repeatedly demonstrated for students of all ages, report Dunlosky et al.

After admitting to the good professor that I had taken a yellow highlighter to his 55-page report published in the Psychological Science in the Public Interest, I asked him to explain his findings.

He had his own admission: He has a favorite highlighter, and it sits on his study table.

Read the whole story: [*The Journal News*](#)