

Study Skills Challenge

The **BIG** Idea

- What have I learned about study skills?

AGENDA

Approx. 45 minutes

- I. Warm Up: Relax! It's For Fun! (5 minutes)
- II. Word to the Wise (10 minutes)
- III. Who Dunit? (10 minutes)
- IV. The Quick Fix (15 minutes)
- V. Wrap Up (5 minutes)

MATERIALS

- PORTFOLIO**
 - Portfolio page 20, Grade 7 Skills Checklist (Study Skills only)
- STUDENT HANDBOOK**
 - Student Handbook page 39, Suspect's Daily Planner
 - Student Handbook page 40, The Quick Fix Watch
- FACILITATOR RESOURCE**
 - Facilitator Resource 1, DO NOW: Study Skills Challenge
 - Facilitator Resource 2, Word to the Wise, four copies (additional copies if students want to take the game home)
 - Facilitator Resource 3, Who Dunit? Suspect Statements
- Paper bags (10 per class, see **Preparation**)
- Pencils (one per student)
- Assorted rewards for game winners (around 30 to 40 per class, if you want to give everyone who figures out "Who Dunit" a prize)

OBJECTIVES

During this lesson, the student(s) will:

- Have fun reviewing some of the study skills they've learned.
- Think creatively about skills that will help them in school and life.
- View study skills issues with humor.

OVERVIEW

Learning study skills and organizational techniques will help students in every aspect of their lives—as long as the information “sticks.” One way to ensure that it will is to reinforce it with a variety of experiences. In this class, students have the chance to apply their knowledge to new, fun challenges, which will help them remember all the skills they’ve learned.

PREPARATION

- Make an overhead transparency of (or copy onto chart paper) **Facilitator Resource 1, DO NOW: Study Skills Challenge.**
- Print “Word to the Wise” sheets on heavy paper or card stock, and cut the sheets into separate letters. Each group of three students will need nine letters per game, so you need approximately 90 letters total for one game (if you think you will have more than 10 groups, make more). To save you time during class, make individual bags for each group. Each bag should have nine different letters. You may also choose to print extra sets for students who will want to try the game at home.
- For all activities, get small rewards to give winners. Suggestions include: school cafeteria “gift certificates,” shiny “state” quarters, funky pairs of shoelaces, joke shop items, simple magic tricks, mini “travel” games, decks of cards, bouncy balls, key rings, wiggle pens, temporary tattoos, candy, gum. (NOTE: Check school policy before giving out temporary tattoos, candy or food items in the classroom.)
- Write the **BIG IDEA** and agenda on the board.

IMPLEMENTATION OPTIONS

DO NOW:

(You may choose to present the Warm Up activity as a written Do Now. Present the questions on the board or overhead, and have students write only their answers on index cards.)

Questions:

1. List the types of notes that you learned in this unit. Which type was your favorite?
2. List two test-taking strategies that you learned in this unit.

3. List two healthy activities that help reduce your stress.
4. What does each letter in the acronym L-P-E-T stand for? How is this useful in making a daily schedule?

[Give the students three minutes to answer these questions. Let them know that they can look back at their notes from previous lessons in this unit. Call on students to volunteer their answers. Then explain that today they will be rewarded for their hard work with games and challenges that let them win prizes, poke fun at the stress of school, and use their imaginations.]

You may not have time to complete all of the activities in this lesson. Choose the ones that you think your students would like the best, and save the others for the end of the lesson in case you have extra time. You may also wish to assign **Activity IV, “The Quick Fix,”** as homework.

Word to the Wise:

Brisk reporting of scores is essential to keeping students focused. Ask groups to raise their hands if they have five or more points, 10 or more points, etc, and have only the top teams report.

ACTIVITY STEPS

I. Warm Up: Relax! It's For Fun! (5 minutes)

1. [Congratulate the students on successfully reaching the end of the unit, and ask them to briefly recall some of the study skills they covered. They should mention (or you should help them remember) learning strategies for taking notes, planning ahead, making schedules, taking tests, and managing stress. Today they will be rewarded for their hard work with games and challenges that let them win prizes, poke fun at the stress of school, and use their imaginations.]

II. Word to the Wise (10 minutes)

1. [Organize students into groups of three. Groups can sit together around a desk or on the floor. Give one person in each group a pencil and piece of paper, and ask them to be the group's reporter.]
2. [Explain that the game is a little like Scrabble, and a little like Boggle. It's called "Word to the Wise," and the idea is to pick alphabet letters out of the bag, and come up with one word that begins with each letter.]
3. [Give each group a baggie with nine letters. As you are passing out the bags, explain that there are two rules. **One:** the words must be somehow related to what they learned in the Study Skills Unit. **Two:** the words must be real, or "legal." Creative use of words is encouraged, but you can't make up words. Give this example: "If your letter is "O", it's okay to use "oxygen," because you breathe it during yoga, and we talked in class about yoga being a stress-buster. But if you get a "P," you can't make up the word "pretzelizing," no matter how much you think it describes a yoga pose. Remind students that they are to think up words beginning with these letters. Unlike Scrabble and Boggle, they aren't using the letters to spell out words.]
4. [Tell students that all words will be read out loud at the end of the game, so they must be prepared to justify any creative choices. Points will be added up in the following fashion: the first team to finish gets five extra points—provided their words are all legal. Then everyone tallies up the number of letters in their legal words—and the team with the most points wins. Small words get one point, words of over five letters get two points, and illegal words get no points.]
5. [Instruct the recorders to write down the words for each letter as the group decides, so there are no squabbles later. Then say, "Go!" and let the students play. Give them up to six minutes, but if all groups finish before then, stop the game and add up the points.]

- [Give small rewards to the team that wins.]

III. Who Durnit? (10 minutes)

- [Keep the same groups of three, and have each student open his handbook to **Student Handbook page 39, Suspect's Daily Planner.**]
- [Tell students this next game is called "Who Durnit?," and it's a mystery contest. Each group of students is a team of investigators trying to crack a case, and the first group to succeed, wins. The case is a robbery. Someone locked the cafeteria and took the key. And until the key is found, there will be no lunch ever again. So it's up to them to find the culprit.]
- [Pick up **Facilitator Resource 2, Who Durnit? Suspect Statements**, and wave it at the class. Tell students that the police have apprehended three suspects, and each has given a statement. Write the three suspects' names on the board. You are going to read the statements, which describe everything the suspects did during the day, and how long each activity lasted. Based on the suspects' testimony, it will be clear one of them is lying. However, there's one little problem. The suspects did not tell their stories in the right order of what they did during the day. So each investigator, which means each student, must take notes on their **Student Handbook page 39, Suspect's Daily Planner** as you read the suspects' statements. Explain to the students that this is a note-taking and listening activity. The entire point of this exercise is to practice taking good notes, as a police officer might while interviewing a suspect.

Each student will record the statements for only one of the suspects, so they should take a minute to decide which suspect each team member will follow (or you may wish to use an engagement strategy to assign students to suspects). Then each team will work together and share their notes to reconstruct the suspects' days. One of the suspect's schedules will not make sense...and that is how they'll know who durnit!]

- [Make sure every student has his/her pencil and **Student Handbook page 39, Suspect's Daily Planner** ready.]
- [Inform students that you will be reading all of the suspects' statements twice. Read aloud the three suspects' statements on **Facilitator Resource 2, Who Durnit? Suspect Statements**, alternating reading one clue from each set of statements. This will keep all students engaged, because they will be listening for their suspect's next clue. Read the first time at a normal pace, making sure to clearly identify the times for each activity. Speak at a much slower pace for the second reading. If you believe

your students will have difficulty with this activity, show them how to record the first statement or two.]

6. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** You have five minutes to solve the case. Anyone who correctly identifies the subject will win. When you think you have it, raise your hand, and I will come over to your group. You will privately tell me how you came up with the answer, and I'll tell you if you're right. Then you can read or organize your notes for the next class, until time is up. I'll give out prizes at the end.
7. [Let students work on the problem, and enforce the five-minute time limit. Give awards to everyone who figures out that Peter Cheet couldn't have been at two places at the same time...so he is the culprit who dunnit.]

IV. The Quick Fix (15 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Study skills are hard to learn. There's a lot to remember. Like — *“take notes, don't freak out about tests, organize your locker, etcetera, etcetera.”* Wouldn't it be great if there was an easier way... a quick fix that would just do it all for you? Well, you're going to have the chance to invent one, right now!
2. [Tell students they are now inventors, hired by the students of the world, to make things easier for seventh graders. In their groups, their task is to come up with an idea for a product that will make studying a snap. Just like a toothbrush makes brushing your teeth a snap—the bristles fit in the grooves, you can fit the thing in your mouth, the toothpaste stays right on the tippy points of the brush. Now, it's their turn to invent something that will help seventh-graders organize, take tests, and make schedules without the kids themselves having to do a thing.]
3. [Tell students their invention can be a gizmo, a gadget, a robot, a kit, a personal servant, a genie—whatever. It must come with a list or description of what it can do, and instructions on how to use it. It is OK to focus on just one of the topics learned in the unit, or your group can create a product that solves them all. And it's OK to look back through your notes to get ideas or details from previous lessons.]
4. [Each group will have 10 minutes to create their product, and then all groups will present their ideas to the class. They can describe their invention in a paragraph, which they read; or they can draw a picture, which they show and explain; or they can advertise the product in a TV commercial; or they can use the product in an acted-out scene, showing how it works.]

5. [To give the students an example of one idea, refer them to **Student Handbook page 40, The Quick Fix Watch**. Then tell them to start inventing! Check on the groups as they work, to make sure everyone is helping, and to make suggestions if anyone’s stumped.]
6. [After eight to 10 minutes, ask the students to stop. Have each group present their Quick Fix product to the class. Choose the cleverest product, and “buy” it from the group with rewards.]

V. Wrap Up (5 minutes)

1. [Thank your students for a fun class, and confirm that they are now study skill experts. Briefly tell them what to expect in their next unit, and assure them that what they learned in this unit will help them in the next!]

SKILLS CHECKLIST

[Direct students’ attention to **Portfolio page 20, Grade 7 Skills Checklist**. Have students complete the skills checklist questions for Study Skills.]

Study Skills

I can ...

Take notes in my classes.	<input type="checkbox"/> not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/> very well
Keep track of my homework assignments.	<input type="checkbox"/> not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/> very well
Manage my time, make lists and prioritize.	<input type="checkbox"/> not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/> very well
Understand ways to manage stress and use them.	<input type="checkbox"/> not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/> very well
Identify and practice strategies to prepare for tests.	<input type="checkbox"/> not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/> very well

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Suggest the students play “Word to the Wise” with their friends at home, and give anyone who’s interested extra copies of the owl sheets.

DO NOW: Study Skills Challenge

Directions: You will have four minutes to read the questions below and write your responses. You may look back at your Student Handbook pages to answer these questions.

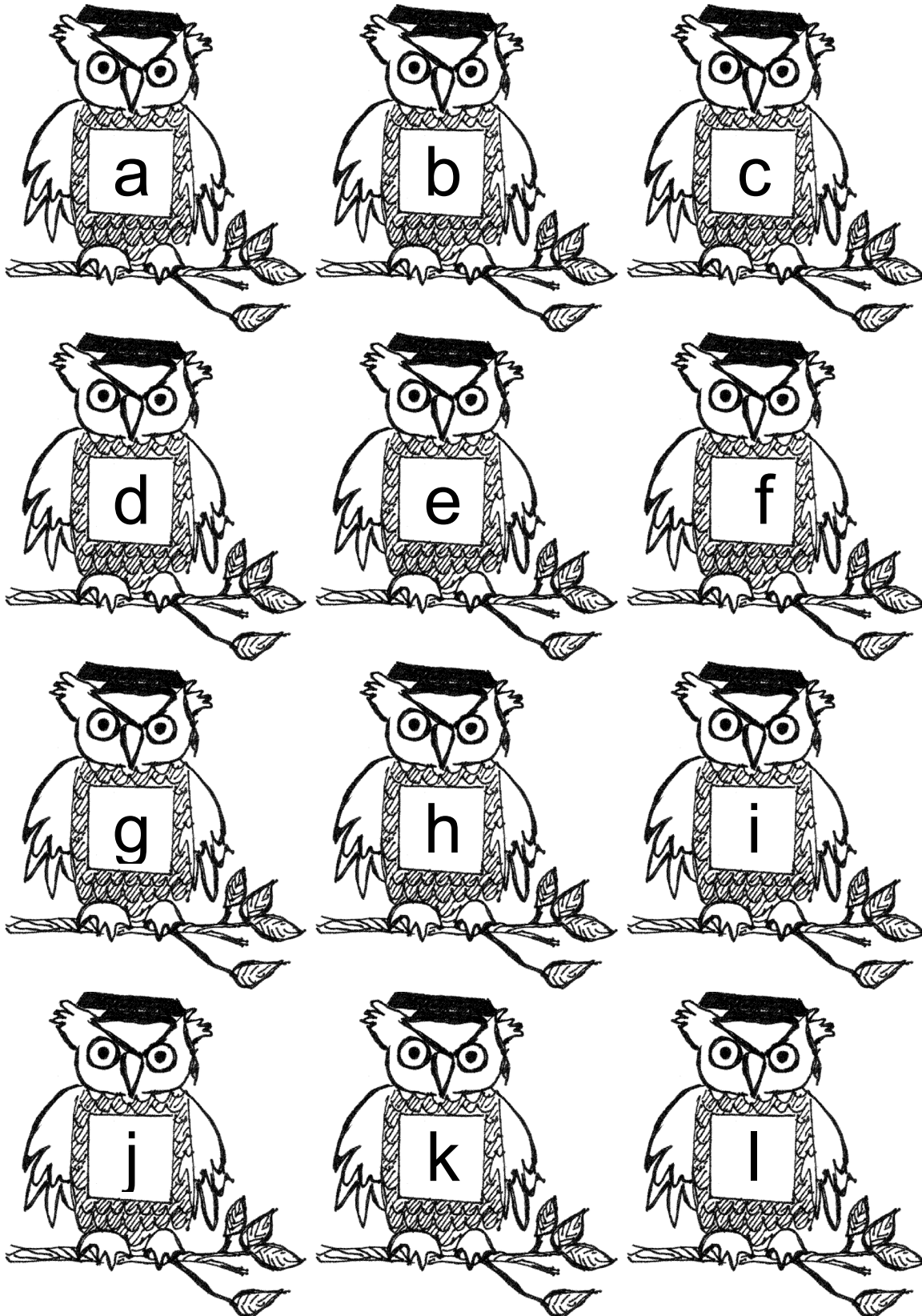
Questions:

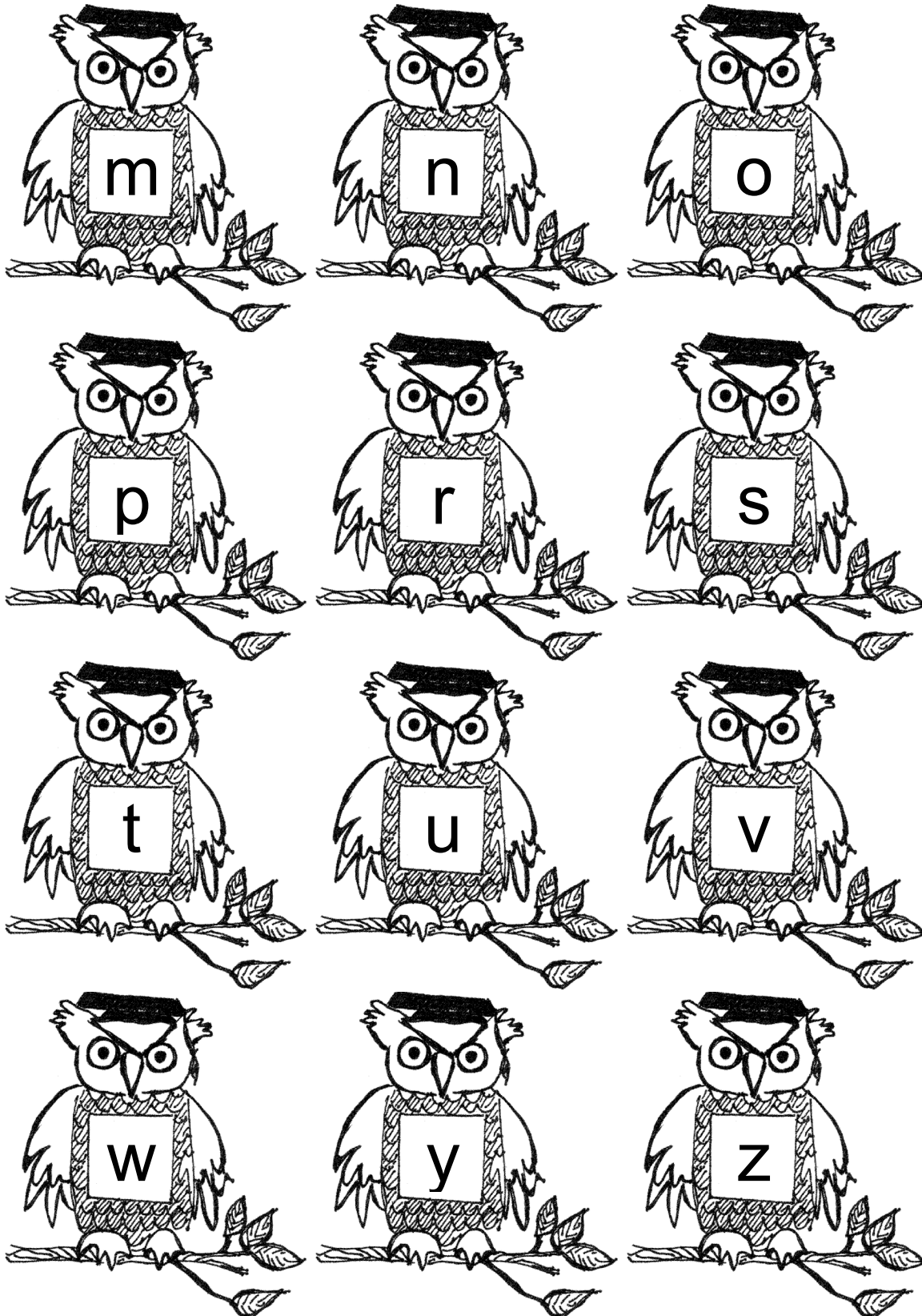
1. List the types of notes that you learned in this unit. Which type was your favorite?

2. List two test-taking strategies that you learned in this unit.

3. List two healthy activities that help reduce your stress.

4. What does each letter in the acronym L-P-E-T stand for? How is this useful in making a daily schedule?





Who Dunit? Suspect Statements

Who Dunit? Suspect Statements

#1 Joey Baloney

2:30–3:00 p.m.	Went to cafeteria for an ice cream sandwich, but it was locked, so went home.
7:00–8:00 a.m.	Woke up, remembered I had a math test, freaked, got dressed.
2:00–2:30 p.m.	Pop quiz in social studies. Made an outline before writing the essay, and went back to check spelling.
1:00–2:00 p.m.	Had lunch in cafeteria, then went outside to flirt with the girls during Recess.
8:00–8:30 a.m.	Walked to school.
9:00 a.m.–12:30 p.m.	Classes.
8:30–9:00 a.m.	Math test. Didn't listen to directions. But did hear stomach growl.
12:30–1:00 p.m.	Study hall, talked with English teacher about overdue essay.

#2 Liza Liyer

6:00–7:00 a.m.	Went to ice skating lesson.
9:00–11:30 a.m.	Classes.
8:30–9:00 a.m.	Made a to-do list in study hall. Buy new shoes was item #1.
12:30–2:30 p.m.	Spanish club meeting to make schedule for bake sale.
8:00–8:30 a.m.	Took bus to school.
11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.	Lunch in cafeteria, then to library to do homework.
7:00–8:00 a.m.	Got dressed, ate breakfast, reviewed for math test.
2:30–3:00 p.m.	Went to cafeteria for fruit cup, but it was locked, so went home.

#3 Peter Cheet

11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.	Lunch in cafeteria, then to art room to paint.
9:30–10:00 a.m.	Study hall, organized notes into an outline for essay.
7:30–8:00 a.m.	Woke, dressed, ate, brushed teeth.
12:30–2:00 p.m.	Helped stock vending machines.
10:00–11:30 a.m.	Science lab.
8:30–9:30 a.m.	Art lecture, took notes in mapping style.
1:00–3:00 p.m.	Took a nap in nurse's office because I felt sick.
8:00–8:30 a.m.	Got ride to school.

SUSPECT'S DAILY PLANNER

Name of Suspect: _____

Time	Activity
6:00 – 6:30 a.m.	
6:30 – 7:00 a.m.	
7:00 – 7:30 a.m.	
7:30 – 8:00 a.m.	
8:00 – 8:30 a.m.	
8:30 – 9:00 a.m.	
9:00 – 9:30 a.m.	
9:30 – 10:00 a.m.	
10:00 – 10:30 a.m.	
10:30 – 11:00 a.m.	
11:00 – 11:30 a.m.	
11:30 – 12:00 p.m.	
12:00 – 12:30 p.m.	
12:30 – 1:00 p.m.	
1:00 – 1:30 p.m.	
1:30 – 2:00 p.m.	
2:00 – 2:30 p.m.	
2:30 – 3:00 p.m.	

THE QUICK FIX WATCH

This watch is exactly what you need to take tests. You wear it on your wrist, and you push the “Start” button the minute your teacher says, “There’s going to be a test next week.” Then it starts bugging you to do the things you’re supposed to do before the test, like make sure you bring home the materials to review, study a little every day, and get a good night’s sleep the night before. And if you don’t do what you’re supposed to, like eat a good breakfast that morning, a siren goes off and won’t stop screaming until you have at least a bagel or something.

During the test, the watch helps but doesn’t cheat. It just reminds you to pay attention to the teacher’s instructions and read directions. It tells you to answer questions you know about first, and go over your answers at the end.

This is the watch that every kid needs, especially to pass math and social studies.

