

Brownlow Fold Primary School

Mindset for Success



How do the very best athletes, musicians, writers and students get good at what they do?

Is there a common thread that runs through all of them?

Researchers have been pondering this for decades, and it turns out that really successful people all share one common secret: their use of self-regulation.

Self-regulation: Self-regulation is the ability to manage one's thoughts, feelings, and actions in the quest of a goal. Researchers recently explored the habits of successful athletes, musicians, writers and students to see how they self-regulate their learning. So, what are these self-regulation strategies and how can you successfully apply them to improve your learning?

Goal Setting: Goal setting encourages you to create targets that you would like to achieve in a given time frame. This promotes success as it enhances motivation by giving you something to aim for in the short-term whilst in pursuit of a bigger, overarching goal.

Imagery: Self-regulated learning often involves creating a vivid image of what you are trying to achieve and visualising how you are going to achieve it. Creating this image can help you to focus on the most effective solutions to your problems, as well as plan for any obstacles that might come your way.

Time management: Time management skills can be developed in two ways. The first is to break down tasks into manageable steps and set short, regular deadlines. The second is for you to identify similar tasks you have carried out previously. This ensures that you more accurately estimate how long a task will take to complete and allocate your time accordingly.

Self-monitoring and self-consequences: This involves observing and tracking one's own performance and outcomes. Self-monitoring can be improved by being combined with self-consequences, where you look to reward yourself based on accomplishments. For example, writer Ernest Hemingway stated that he would reward himself with a day off for pleasurable activities when he was a day in front of his set schedule. Similarly, as a self-regulated pupil you may reward yourself with your favourite television show, or a period of time on your phone once you have learnt a specific amount of information.

Environmental structuring: Creating an effective setting for learning is key. For example, as a self-regulated pupil you may choose to study in a secluded area in the library or a certain place in your room with limited distractions. Given that the mere presence of a mobile phone has been found to reduce concentration and performance, this makes good sense, as out of sight is literally out of mind.

Help seeking: Help seeking is where you look to select specific resources that will assist your learning. Other people can help provide advice, motivation and even increase work ethic. This is one of the reasons why it is so good to have a good team around you.

The fact that successful individuals use the above techniques highlights the importance. By having a clear strategy and a challenging but realistic goals, alongside the correct environment and people to ask for help, success can be achievable for all.