

9 tips for transitioning teens from middle school to high school

By [Barbara Dianis](#) on June 3rd, 2014 | [Comments \(0\)](#)

Middle school has come to an end for many students as they graduate from eighth grade and anticipate moving on to high school. Transitioning from middle school to high school can be an exciting yet daunting time for teens. Middle-school students transitioning to high school typically require some upgrades on study habits, organizational methods and test-taking skills to help them perform at the high-school level. As middle-school students learn to become high-school students, there are some key educational and organizational techniques, which can help make the transition smoother and more successful. It is never too early to begin to implement some scholastic changes.

Here's a list of top tips that have helped my students transition from middle school to high school.

1. Pre-plan and prepare students for an increased study and homework schedule to fit the increasing rate, volume and complexity of the high-school level curriculum. Teens benefit from adding at least an additional 30 to 45 minutes to the time they dedicate to their homework and studies. Numerous teens are unsure how much extra time should be devoted to high-school studies. Teachers can help their students determine an appropriate plan for their class.
2. At the beginning of the school year during parent night, teachers may want to explain to parents the types of long-term assignments they will be assigning and how to help their student stay on track. Early high-school students benefit from having a parent help them organize and implement a plan to help them break down research papers, projects and speeches into manageable parts. Early high-school students can initially become overwhelmed by the more complex long-term assignment. Therefore, they may need some teacher assistance during the first few months of high school implementing this important skill of breaking the whole into step-by-step procedures.
3. High-school classes generally assign teens assignments that require more steps to complete. The written directions can be far more challenging for early high-school students to decipher and understand all the more sophisticated steps. Teens benefit from highlighting each individual step and numbering them. As each step is completed the teen should check it off. Teachers can teach this technique to help teens self-check their work to ensure all the steps have been completed.
4. Teachers may wish to suggest that parents check their teens' grades, homework and assignments online to monitor their progress. Parents who consistently check their teen's grades online are demonstrating to their son or daughter that they care about their education.

5. Organizational and executive management skills generally increase during the transition from middle-school to high-school level studies. Teachers may want to check their students' notebooks to make sure the students are remaining organized. Teachers may wish to advise their students' parents to oversee their teen's organizational and executive management skills until they become accustomed to keeping themselves organized.
6. Transitioning teens benefit from rereading assigned material two or three times for focusing on information they may have missed the first time. Teachers may want to emphasize that the repetition of information also allows students to review testable information and key learning concepts.
7. In the initial weeks of school, teachers can encourage students to study and review each school day during a unit until concepts are mastered. Students can improve their brain function by preparing for tests over several days. This helps give their brain time to transfer knowledge from the short-term memory to the long-term memory.
8. Drill and practice testable material in several ways: orally, in written form and by drawing pictures to trigger the memory.
9. If a student appears unmotivated, remember understanding affects motivation and motivation affects understanding. Therefore, if a student appears scholastically unmotivated, then their understanding of the course should be considered. The student may benefit from the addition of educational solutions to progress academically and become motivated to learn.

High-school level curricula will accelerate at a faster pace than curricula at the middle-school level, and some students will find they are struggling academically for the first time in their educational history. Teens who learn to enjoy learning and apply educational solutions when they face academic challenges can be academically successful. Homework and study time can be fun, rewarding and effective. Students who struggle in school can learn new methods to help them meet the new curriculum expectations, restore their scholastic self-esteem and enjoy their high-school years.

Barbara Dianis, *overcame dyslexia in her own life using self-taught educational strategies, test-taking solutions and study techniques. She has counseled parents for 21 years, teaching them to assist their student in implementing effective learning techniques during homework and study time. She also has operated an educational-tutoring business for the past 20 years, serving thousands of students with dyslexia, ADD, ADHD and learning differences. She is the author of “**Grade Transformer for the Modern Student: Early High School Edition.**”*