

# AFTERNOON LOG

## **DIRECTIONS FOR USE OF THE AFTERNOON LOG:**

### **Method:**

1. When student arrives home, arrange assignments from assignment notebook in the order that (s)he wants to work through them in the top portion of the Afternoon Log.
2. List any extra-curricular activities at the end of the top portion.
3. Write in estimated times for each assignment or activity—remember to include commute time for activities in the estimate.
4. Take a break
5. Start homework—work in 15 to 20 minute increments with a 5-minute break after each increment of work.
6. List actual start and end times for each assignment and activity on the second part of the Afternoon Log.
7. List all breaks (start and end times), all activities (start and end times) and assignments (start and end times), including test preparation (i.e. flash cards, study guides, book notes and study aids).
8. List all entries chronologically.

### **Possible discussion topics:**

1. Was the estimated time close to the actual time—why or why not?
2. Did you stick to the order you chose at the top of the page—why or why not?
3. Was there any wasted time—what were you doing at that time?
4. Was there any unaccounted time—what were you doing at that time?
5. Did you have to break up assignments because they took longer than 15 or 20 minutes to complete—what were they? Did it help? Did you go back to that assignment at the end of the break or switch to a different one and come back to it later—why or why not? Did it help?

6. Did you group any assignments together to total 15 or 20 minutes—what were they and why?
7. Why did you choose the order you chose? Do you like doing a specific thing first, or last?
8. What do you think we could do to get the estimated time closer to the actual time?
9. Did you remember to move a test notification forward in your assignment notebook so that you could study for it everyday up to the test date?

### **WHY USE THE AFTERNOON LOG?**

The afternoon log is a tool to help students hone in on the skills needed for time management, organization, accountability and higher order/critical thinking. As the student begins to order his/her work load and realize the amount of actual time a particular activity will take compared to the estimated time, (s)he will start the progression into developing good study habits.

The student will work on organization by playing with the order of a set of tasks—making the tasks fit into 15 or 20 minute-increments. This has three benefits. One is the obvious: staying focused for shorter periods is easier than longer periods, creating more accurate work the first time around and less wasted time re-doing work that has been done incorrectly because of lack of concentration. The second is that the student will learn how to order his/her homework into 20-minute segments—maybe Spanish and Religion together take 20 minutes, then (s)he could get both those subjects completed in that time. The student will start learning time management skills. The third benefit is that the student feels (s)he is accomplishing more work and able to cross it off the afternoon log when the work is “chunked” into pieces rather than viewing it as a whole. If a subject is not completed within the 20 minutes and the student is finding it a challenging task, when (s)he returns from his/her break, (s)he could start another subject, finish the rest of his/her homework and then come back to the one that is a struggle, developing critical thinking skills to work through a problem. Maybe (s)he could come back to the one that is a struggle after taking a longer break, snack or even dinner. This will help the student lower

his/her frustration with that subject—a frustration that might bleed into the rest of his/her homework time, affecting focus.

At the end of the day, or on a weekend, opening up a discussion with your student about the use of the afternoon log will help guide him/her into an effective approach for studying and completing tasks. Please feel free to use and augment the discussion topics listed in order to tailor the discussion to meet the needs of your student. The afternoon log should be used to help your student gain confidence, independence and ultimately realize that (s)he has it within his/her power to be academically successful: a positive approach to developing accountability.