

# Middle School



Real life tips to apply to your middle school daily life.

How to get the grades you want

-AND-

keep the stress level down.

- 1) Jitters
- 2) Organization
- 3) Study Skills
- 4) Lockers
- 5) How to make friends
- 6) Hygiene
- 7) Gym
- 8) Bullying
- 9) New Skills

# Jitters

All 5<sup>th</sup> graders anticipate what middle school will be like. New experiences are naturally both exciting and anxiety producing and what you are feeling is normal. If some of the nervous feelings are a little too intense, here are couple tips to alleviate some of those jitters. Once school starts, a lot of those intense feelings will subside and a sense of pride will come once you notice you are conquering middle school....which I know you will.

## TOURS

First, taking a couple school tours helps alleviate some of the jitters because you are taking some of the "newness" away. Walking the halls, opening lockers, knowing where things are is really helpful.

If possible, try and take two tours:

- 1) Take a group one with the school.
- 2) Take a separate one where you can take your time.  
Bring a lock and try opening a locker without distractions.

## MENTOR

If you could hang out with someone who has mastered middle school, you can ask any personal questions you have. If possible, a private, casual, school tour with your mentor, i.e. no parents this time, would be nothing less than awesome. Do you have any friends with siblings who just finished middle school or are in 8<sup>th</sup> grade? The middle school guidance counselors are really awesome. If you don't know anyone, they probably know of a cool 8<sup>th</sup> grader who could give you a private tour and really knows the school and the teachers. Just need to ask nicely and wait for a time that works for everyone. Your parents can call the guidance counselors, but it is still best that you hang out with your mentor without your parents. It's a confidence building thing!

# Organization

It is so helpful to stay organized. Why? Six classes, lunch, lockers, tons of people and lots of distractions, it is easy to get disorganized. If you start the day organized, it is easier and less stressful to stay organized.

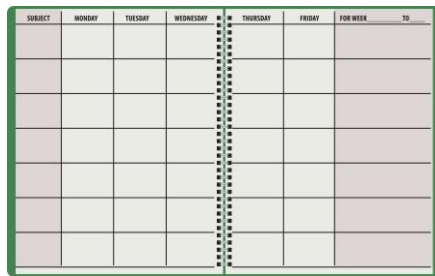
Preparing for the morning the night before is a huge stress reliever. Prepare everything from backpack, lunch, after school activities and even the clothes and shoes you are going to wear.

During the day, take a few seconds and organize your stuff. Make sure you put it in the right place. It is so stress relieving to find "that" paper when you need it, then to search frantically for it when its time to move on.

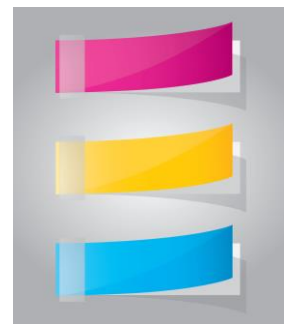
Supplies that can help to keep you organized....



Zippered binder  
Loose papers won't fall out!



Weekly subject planner  
Keep track of school  
and extra curricular  
activities



Reusable sticky tabs  
Locate the current  
week super fast.



Clear plastic sheets  
for schedule,  
important loose papers

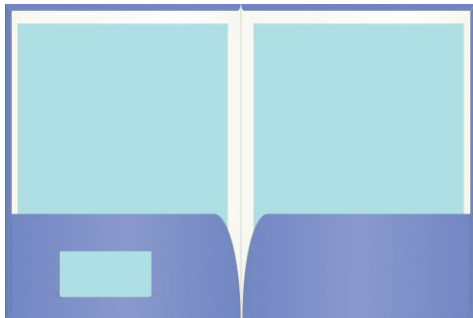


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Zippered pencil case



Flash drive, pencil sharpeners  
Refillable lead/hand sanitizer/  
House keys on a key chain



Colored, tabbed insert folders



Drawstring bag for gym

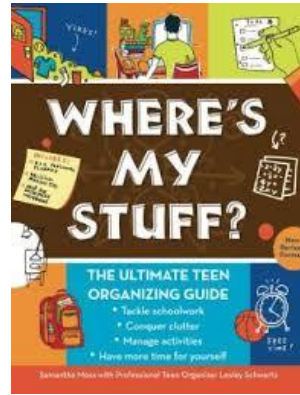
All separate colors for:  
Homeroom  
Each subject - you can see the color faster than reading  
Electives

Left Fold for paper to take home  
Right Fold for completed work to be turned in.

Easy to tweak for specific teacher requirements



Use your bedroom door to:  
Hang up your backpack,  
Gym bag  
Special projects due  
Use temporary hooks; so, you can tweak later.



Check out this book!  
Great ideas for organizing  
not just for school...

# Study Skills

## Some cool tips:

### Flash cards

Make them; so, they work for YOU!

Draw a picture that helps you remember the facts. If you can't think of one, use google images. Use that picture to draw on your test paper to help recall the information. The simpler the picture the better...Stick people versus Vincent Van Gogh...Funny versus complicated. Wait for the teacher to start the test and then draw it on your paper.

Use color. If there is something that is hard for you to remember, blue is the memory color!

Talk it out. Saying it out loud helps to lock it into memory. Many people need to look at them and say them to lock them into memory. Repeat until you can feel that it is locked in. Might take 5 times, might take 10, but trust me you will feel it when you know it.

### Choices

You have to make a choice. Do you want to get the best grades you can? You might have to turn off your electronics. You can reward yourself on Friday night or Saturday morning, but during the week, you have choices to make.

Chewing gum and peppermint helps you focus. Taking breaks and running around the house boosts your focus capabilities too!

If you choose to take a break, set a timer or make a personal time limit or "at the next commercial"; so, you can "get back to it" refreshed, open minded and focused.

### Study buddy

Sometimes you can find a study buddy. Makes studying more fun. Also, many people absorb the information when they speak it. A verbal processor says the information and that helps to lock it into memory. You can even try to "talk it" in your head. That helps with recall during a test and eliminates the need for another person if schedules don't allow a study buddy to come over.

## Help/Ideas -

No one expects you to know everything. If you already knew everything, then you would be in high school. Teachers and Guidance counselors are a great resource. Look out; you might just learn something you didn't already know.

A teacher is always more than willing to help. It is a two way street. You have to do your part and they will do their part.

Oh, no...ask your parents. Sometimes they might have a story about what you are learning that would apply to what you are learning to real life which makes it even easier to "get". They may also know a way that they learned the material that might be useful to you. Don't expect them to know it though. They are old, you know. 😊

Think of any real life application of the information or make up a story or acronym that makes sense to you. You know, like "weird is weird" because it doesn't follow the spelling rules of i before e.

# Lockers



All locks have the same pattern,

- 1) On the 3<sup>rd</sup> rotation to the RIGHT, stop at the number
- 2) On the 2<sup>nd</sup> rotation to the LEFT, stop at the number
- 3) Rotate to the RIGHT and stop at the number.

Practice, practice, practice...make it fun, try to beat your time...have someone interrupt you, make a fun challenge by having someone nudge you while you practice to simulate being in a crowded hallway where everyone is trying to get to their lock at the same time. Winner takes all!! Now, head to the school & try it out there before school starts if you can.



# How to make friends

Remember to be nice, give eye contact, smile and be friendly.

Everyone meets new people and the first friend you meet will probably not be your best friend, but they have other friends & it's like a pattern. Before you know it, you know a ton of people.

If you are shy, but enjoy a certain TV show or NFL team or anything high interest for you. See if they make t-shirts, pins, key chains or folders and someone may come up to you and comment on it. Easy ice breaker to meet people who like something you like and fun too.

Assess the effort you are making. If you don't say hi, why would you expect the new person to say hi? Try saying hi first and see what happens. You'll be glad you did. Your new best friend might be too shy. Why wouldn't you want to be a leader?

Join a club that interests you. You will find others that have interest in that club too. Another easy one to try, right?

Check out the bus or car line...you might see someone in your neighborhood or from some of your classes.

# Hygiene

Just saying, you'll probably need to plan to take more showers, use deodorant and wash your face.

It won't take much; clean clothes, face cloth and a couple more showers than you are used to.

Your parents might buy you some acne solution, but that is just another few seconds a day and would not be all the time.

Done...Check!

# Gym

Everyone worries about gym. In 6<sup>th</sup> grade, many schools have gym the last class of the day. Cool, you only have to change clothes once. You can wear your gym clothes to the car line or bus if you like. You can wear your gym clothes to school that done and never change. Your choice!

Check out the changing room. Find out where you would feel comfortable changing. If you face your locker and practice changing quickly at home, the worries will lessen. You can even pull your shirt down while you change. Just practice at home, you will find out what works for you.

Remember, depending on the weather and your gym class schedule, you might be able to wear your gym clothes TO school and not change at all if your gym class is at the end of the day.

Consider this! What if, you think that everyone is watching you while you change, but they are really thinking about how everyone is watching them while they change?

# Bullying

Don't pay attention to gossip. Everyone likes to get roped into the drama. Make a choice! Think about how you would feel if someone was saying that about you. You can stop the spread of rumors. Tell your parents, your dog or the guidance counselor if you need to tell someone...just don't spread gossip at school...it's just not cool.

# New Skills

All people were not born with eternal knowledge. You do not know everything you need to know. All you need to know is that you always have choices and learning how to solve problems is a skill that you will use throughout your life, not just in middle school. Empathy is a skill where you remove yourself from the situation and think about how the other person may feel.

Just in case you didn't know, Guidance counselors teach some skills that your parents were never taught. If you are ever confused, unsure, stressing or fearful, talk to your guidance counselor, they are an amazing resource. Keep in mind, you might be the one who needs to change and learn something new, but then again you may not. Most problems are based upon communication, perception and unwilling to speak the truth and make amends. Why not be open to a new way to communicate? Might help you become class president.....