

31st Annual Conference on the First-Year Experience

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## *The Study Skills Handbook*

– A new approach to active learning for  
first-year students and beyond

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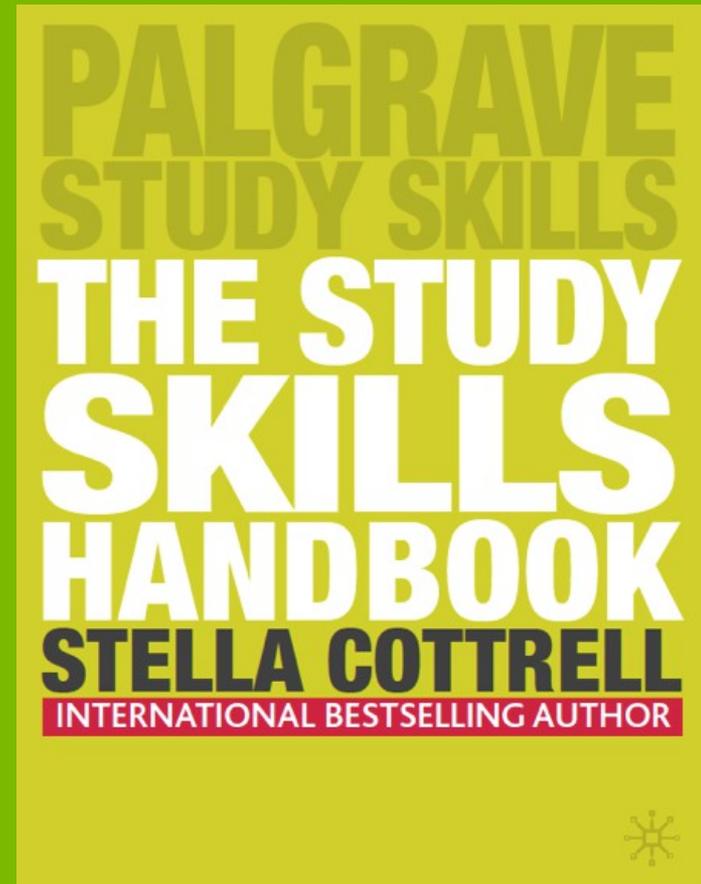
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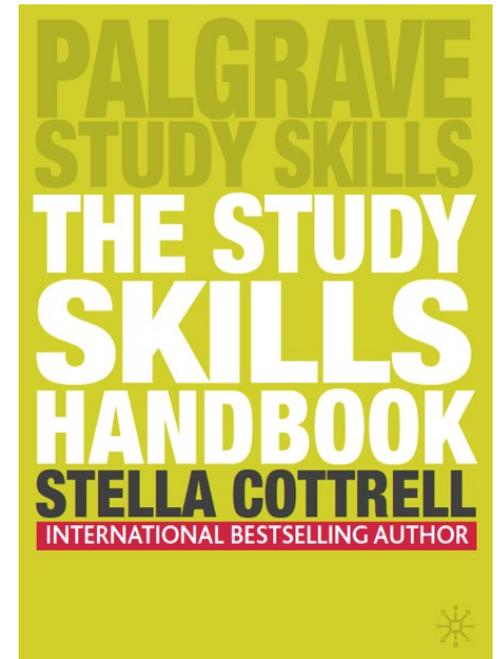
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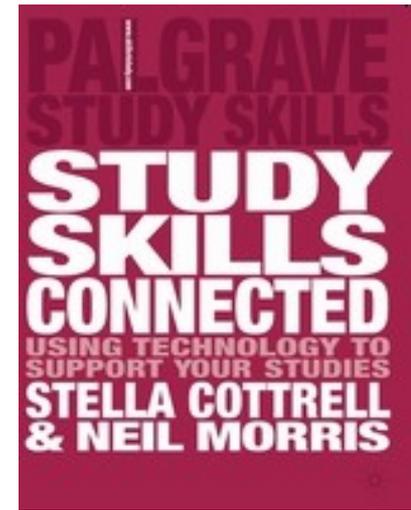
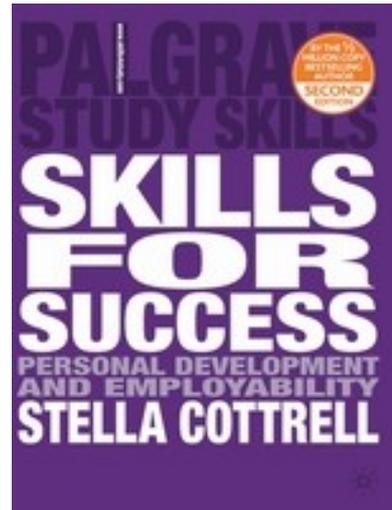
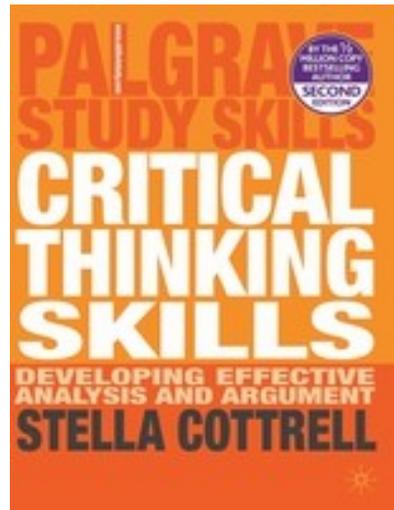
# Overview

- Stella Cottrell
- Who is this book for?
- *The Study Skills Handbook*
  - Unique approach
  - Personalized, learner-centered learning
  - Active, participatory learning
  - Visual learning
  - Reflective learning
  - Core skills
  - Online materials
- Why should I use this book?
- What next?



# Stella Cottrell

- Current role and background
- Other titles
- Aims and motivation



# Who is this book for?

- First-year students on academic skills courses
- Struggling students
- Conscientious students
- Adult and returning students
- International students
- Visual learners
- Dyslexic students

*Everyone*

*et*



# The Study Skills Handbook

US reviewer feedback:

*"One of the most comprehensive study skills resources ever published. The attention to the visual design is unmatched."*

Cora Dzubak

Penn State York

*"If you need a truly comprehensive study skills book, The Study Skills Handbook is the one!"*

Todd Campbell

North Georgia College  
State University

*"Complete guide to being a successful student"*

Arthur Ford

Hunter College, CUNY

*"Most study skills books say the same thing. This book has many topics I hadn't read about in other books."*

Anonymous

*"A book on study skills in college which appears to be written for actual, real-life college students!"*

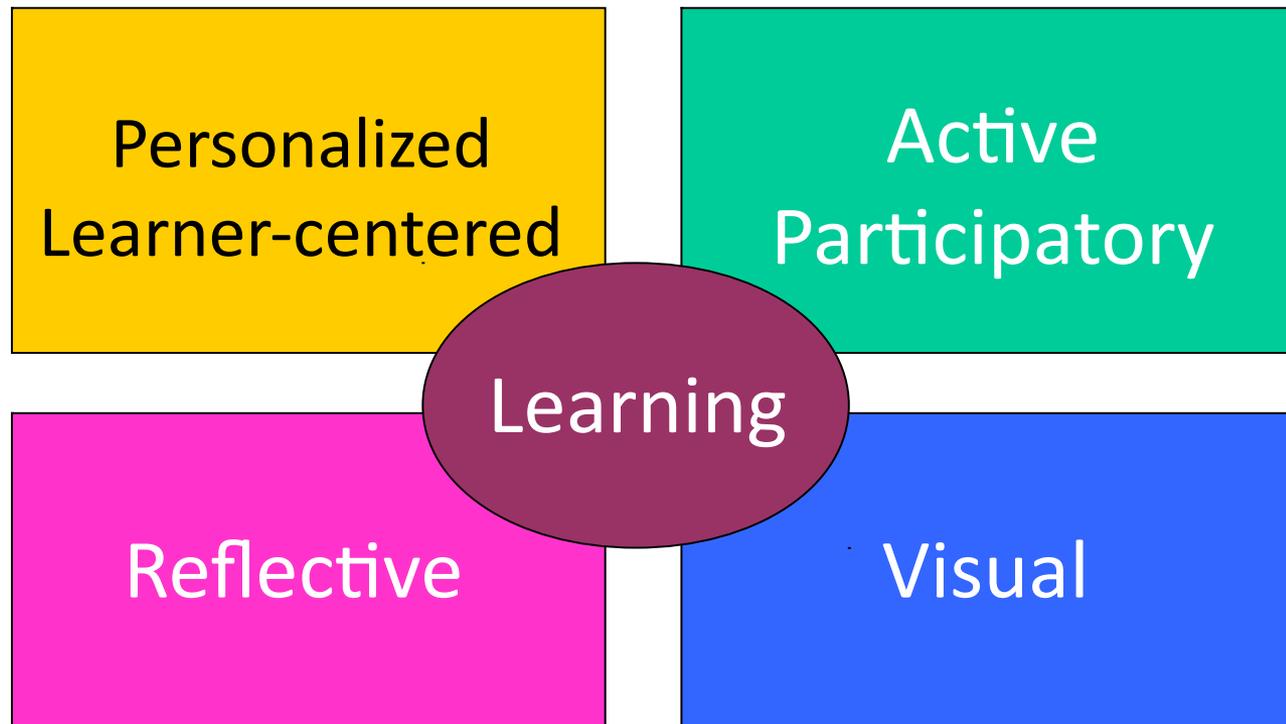
*"This book not only 'shows' but allows students to 'do'."*

Anonymous



# Unique Approach

- “Each person has their own unique formula for academic success”



# Personalized, Learner-Centered Learning

- No 'one-size-fits-all'
- Students are unique in how they learn
- The book allows them to identify methods that work for them
- Empowering

Ability to work out when, how and where you learn best

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*On second thoughts  
maybe I do work better  
indoors, in the daytime.*



# Active, Participatory Learning

## SELF-EVALUATION

### What do I want from college?

Our imaginations are extremely powerful. Just try not to think about something, such as whether you left the stove on, and you quickly discover how easy it is for your imagination to see your home burnt to the ground! If you give your imagination any leads, it will act on them.

Imagine yourself five years from now, thinking back on what you achieved in college. From your chair in the future, rate the following desirable outcomes (1, 2, 3, etc.) in their order of importance to you then.

You can use this capacity of the imagination in many ways to help your study. Try using the following questionnaire to consider what, in five years' time, you would like to be saying to yourself about what you achieved in college. You may then find that your orientation towards your work and to different activities on campus starts to change, as your imagination goes to work.

You may also like to come back to this at different times in the future, to see if your thinking about what really counts for you has changed.

- I made good friends
- I got a good degree
- I made full use of college facilities
- I developed new interests
- I developed skills which helped me find a good job
- I learned to work better with other people
- I learned to express myself better
- I really enjoyed myself
- I found out more about who I was as a person
- I learned to think and reason better
- I developed my creativity
- I took care of my health and well-being
- I took on positions of responsibility
- I learned to manage myself as an effective adult
- I stretched myself intellectually
- I learned to manage stressful situations with calm
- I learned how to balance work, friendship and family

What do these priorities suggest to you now about how you could best use your time in college?



# Visual Learning

- Multi-sensory learning
- Memory joggers
- Visual learners
- Dyslexic students

**SELF-EVALUATION**

## Am I a smart reader?

Do you have strategies for approaching your reading? Which of the following do you do?

**Know exactly what you are looking for**

- Have I considered what questions I'm trying to answer?
- Have I considered what information I need?

**Use the syllabus selectively**

- Have I looked at the the list of assigned readings?
- Do I know what I need to read?

**Examine sources for suitability**



- Have I considered each source? Have I considered:
  - if it's on the syllabus?
  - if it's up to date or fairly recent?
  - if it looks readable and manageable?
  - if it has the information I want?



RECOMMENDED READING: *need to read*

1 Jones, E. (1952). pp. 66-80

2 Smith, B. (1998). Chs 4-6

3 Atkins, J. (1952). intro

**Activity**

**Practise finding information quickly**

Try using an index (at the back of the book).

- Select an item to look up.
- Note the page numbers given.
- Using these, find the item in the book as quickly as you can.



How long did this take you? Could you get faster? Did you notice that when you know what you're looking for, your eyes can pick out information on the page more quickly?

**Find information quickly**

- Have I tried using an index?
- Have I got faster with practice?



**Select relevant parts of the book**

- Do I browse the book quickly?
- Do I use the contents page, the index, the headings and the sub-headings for guidance?
- Do I identify which parts of which chapters I need, and put markers in these?



**Select relevant parts of the page**

- Do I read the chapter heading?
- Do I read any sub-headings?
- Do I read the first sentence of each paragraph (which should introduce the topic or idea)?
- Do I look at any diagrams, graphs or charts?
- Do I read any summaries or conclusions?



# Reflective Learning

- Students take responsibility for their learning
- Application of personal skills to academic skills and vice versa
- Relating individual skills development to future career ambitions



# Core skills

Time management

Critical thinking

E-learning

Numeracy

Reading

Note-taking

Referencing

Employability

Test-taking

Memory

Groupwork

Presentations

Writing

Research projects

Dealing with stress



# Online components

<http://us.macmillan.com/TheStudySkillsHandbook>

**Goes live in August**



# Why should I use this book?

Unique approach

Core skills

International bestseller

Visual design

No-nonsense, practical advice

Self-reflection

Interactive

Confidence-building

Relevant, personalized learning

Accessible

Motivational

\$25



# What next?

- 1) Visit our booth (#35)
- 2) Promotional sample chapter:  
<http://us.macmillan.com/series/PalgraveStudySkills>
- 3) Pre-order an examination copy.
- 4) Look out for the book in stores  
and online from



**August  
2012**

