“The only way to make sense out of change is to plunge into it, move with it, and join the dance.”

~Alan Watts

Welcome! This fall has been full of changes at Clarion, especially with the TRIO programs, and it appears that there will be even more to come! Upward Bound offices will be moving to the second floor of Ralston in January 2015. Phone numbers will remain the same. Staff information is listed below:

Rhonda McMillen-Toth, Director, TRIO Ed. Talent Search and Upward Bound
Joni Kifer, TRIO Secretary, Ed. Talent Search, Upward Bound and Student Support Services
Connie Bradley, Outreach Coordinator, TRIO Ed. Talent Search, Venango Campus
Tami Doverspike, Outreach Coordinator, TRIO Ed. Talent Search, Clarion Campus
Lisa DeFranco, Outreach Coordinator, TRIO Ed. Talent Search, Clarion Campus
Shintrika Hudson, Academic Counselor, TRIO Upward Bound, Clarion Campus
Tim Griffin, Academic Counselor, TRIO Upward Bound, Clarion Campus

If you have any questions or are in need of assistance with study skills, college planning, financial aid, college applications, SAT prep, or other information related to your pursuit of postsecondary education, please give us a call at 814-393-2071 or 1-888-533-6487 (ETS) or 814-393-2342 or 1-888-894-2665 (UB). If we haven’t met yet, I hope to see you at UB campus day or an ETS program!

~Rhonda

Study Skills Sites

- How to Study — http://www.howtostudy.org/
- Study Guides and Strategies — http://www.studygs.net/
- Study Skills and How to Learn — Michigan State, http://fod.msu.edu/oir/teaching-students-study-skillshow-learn
- Academic Counseling and Support — University of St. Thomas, http://www.stthomas.edu/academiccounseling/current/
- Test Taking Tips (and Reducing Anxiety) — http://www.testtakingtips.com/
- Basics of Effective Learning — Bucks County Community College, http://faculty.bucks.edu/specpop/Actfrm.htm
- Study Skills Information — Virginia Tech, http://www.ucc.vt.edu/academic_support_students/study_skills_information/index.html
- Recommended Sites for Study Skills — https://www.conted.ox.ac.uk/students/PDFFiles/Study%20Skills/WebistesforStudySkills.pdf
SAT Gets a Redesign

SAT changes begin March 2016, while the PSAT will be modified in October 2015. Why the overhaul? The changes are to better evaluate students’ preparedness for the rigors of college and allow students to demonstrate their critical thinking and analysis skills.

Seven Key Changes

Scoring
* No wrong answer penalty
* Score is out of 1600: 800 for math and 800 for evidence-based reading and writing
* Sub-scores and insight scores will be available
* The essay will be optional and scored separately

Structure
* One evidence-based reading and writing test
  65 minutes for 52 reading questions and 35 minutes for 44 language and writing questions
* One math test
  55 minutes for 37 questions with a calculator and 25 minutes for 20 questions without a calculator
* One essay 50 minutes (optional)
* Four answer choices for multiple choice questions instead of five

Timing
* Three hours or three hours and 50 minutes with the essay

Administration
* The exam will be available in print and digitally (in certain locations). There are fewer questions with a greater focus on in-depth analysis of content and evidence.

Essay
* Optional
* Fifty minutes to analyze a 650-750 word source document and draft an essay that explains how the author builds his argument. It is designed to test reading, analysis, and writing skills.
* Facts matter
* Three readers: Each reader scores the essay between two and eight. All three scores are totaled equally between six and 24.

Math
* Concentrates on real world problem-solving and data analysis using informative graphics (linear equations; complex equations or functions; and ratios, percentages, and proportional reasoning)
* 37 questions solved with a calculator and 20 questions solved without a calculator
* Multiple choice, grid-ins, and one enhanced grid-in question

Evidence Based Reading and Writing
* Reading no longer has sentence completion questions
* Tests the understanding of passages from US and world literature, history/social studies, and science
* Reading passages are 500-700 words
* Writing and language portion tests “Expression of Ideas” and “Standard English Conventions” through 400-450 word passages related to civics, history, social studies, humanities, and science

The College Board has partnered with Kahn Academy to provide free online test preparation for the SAT. Low-income students will be given college application fee waivers allowing them to apply to up to four schools for free.

Seniors — Mark your calendars
FAFSA Completion Day
Saturday, February 7, 2015
Khan Academy: Free World-Class Education

Khan Academy is an organization on a mission—a not-for-profit organization with the goal of changing education for the better by providing a free world-class education for anyone, anywhere. All of the site’s resources are available to anyone. It doesn’t matter if you are a student, teacher, home-schooler, principal, adult returning to the classroom after 20 years, or a friendly alien just trying to get a leg up in earthly biology. Khan Academy’s materials and resources are available to you completely free of charge. The library of content covers math; science topics such as biology, chemistry, and physics; and even reaches into the humanities with playlists on finance and history. Try it at khanacademy.org.

Reading for Understanding

Textbooks are largely used as school-desk head rests, not as a tool to further understand the topic you are studying. Why should you crack one open? Why is it important to become familiar with the organization of your textbook? Information can be retained better if it is organized or if you can detect a pattern (McWhorter, 2004).

Before you begin to chew through paragraph after paragraph, stop and take a look at the organization of the textbook. Texts are normally divided into chapters, sections, subsections, and paragraphs within the subsections. While supporting information for the main topic comes in the form of examples, descriptions, facts/stats, and citations of research evidence, you should also consider the content for which the book is written. Depending on the subject, reading through a textbook and identifying the organizational pattern is different for math, English, psychology, or history.

Organizational patterns within textbooks normally fall within the following categories: definition, cause-effect, time sequence, problem-solution, comparison-contrast, and enumeration. Once you have identified the pattern, the information becomes more meaningful and you are better at recalling information from the text. In order to further understand organization and patterns of texts, let’s take a look at an example:

Content Area: Math
Pattern/Reading Type: Technical
Focus: Participate while you read

- Take notes on definitions, theorems or key concepts in your notebook. Try to state the material that you read in your own words. If you encounter an unfamiliar term, look it up and make a note of it. For definitions, find examples of the defined objects and examples of objects that do not fit the definition.
- Figure out why each piece of a theorem is necessary or sufficient. When you come to an example or theorem, work through it carefully step by step. Try to understand and follow how the author is progressing through it. After reading it, cover it up and try to work through the details on your own.
- Authors often omit steps. Fill in the gaps to deepen your understanding of the material. When you can work through an example, try to think of other examples that would fit the idea being discussed. Think of other relevant problems and try to solve them.

The moral of this story - pull those textbooks from the bottom of your locker and dust them off. You may need to remove the drool marks as well, but if you can identify the important information within a given text, your understanding of the material will greatly increase.

Vo-cab-u-lar-y

DEFINITIONS:
* list or collection of words and phrases that are usually alphabetically arranged and explained
* a sum or stock of words employed by a language, group, individual, or work, or in a field of knowledge
* a list or collection of terms or codes available for use (as in an indexing system)

SYNONYMS:
Jive, jargon, dialect, language, lingo, terminology

Building vocabulary not only helps you score better on tests, it also helps you be a better speaker, writer and reader. By expanding your vocabulary, you increase your confidence level, helping you build stronger professional relationships.

Reading novels is an enjoyable pastime that improves vocabulary. If it is your goal to build vocabulary while you read, you must be an active reader. Keep a dictionary handy and use it. Dedicate a notebook to keeping a list of the vocabulary words harvested from every novel you read, along with definitions, synonyms and sample sentences. Review your list periodically to keep your new vocabulary fluent.

Many say that some of the best novels you can read to improve your vocabulary are the classics. Although you may not find the horrors of Edgar Allen Poe or the writings of Faulkner to be your favorite reads, by reading classic novels you can not only improve your knowledge of vocabulary definitions, but also your overall comprehension of readings that include higher level vocabulary words.

Here is a list of some classics you can pick up and enjoy, while improving your vocabulary skills:

* To Kill a Mockingbird – Harper Lee
* Romeo & Juliet – William Shakespeare
* The Great Gatsby – F. Scott Fitzgerald
* Of Mice and Men – John Steinbeck
* 1984 – George Orwell
* Night – Elie Wiesel
* Lord of the Flies – William Golding
* Speak – Laurie Halse Anderson
* The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn – Mark Twain
* One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest – Ken Kesey
* The Hobbit – J.R.R Tolkien

Vocabulary.com

TRIO Educational Talent Search, 814-393-2071 and TRIO Upward Bound, 814-393-2342
219 Ralston Hall, Clarion University of PA, 840 Wood St., Clarion, PA 16214