

The Learning Process Packet—a Model for Student Independence

By Sue Dailey

After facilitating a CRISS Level I training, I worry that teachers don't understand how to implement the CRISS Strategic Learning Plan (CSLP) as a series of continuous steps in the classroom. Although, they experience several CSLPs, they have not had enough practice in deciding which strategies work well at each step.

The students in my study skills class often have the same difficulty. They have learned the CRISS Principles and Philosophy and many learning strategies, but they do not understand how the steps flow together into a continuous process from the time they begin a unit to the time they take the test, write the paper, or complete the project. In the past, I've asked students to journal about each step of the process, but I did that at the end of the unit when each step was no longer fresh in their minds.

I decided to break the steps down into what I call the "Learning Process Packet." Each page in the packet includes a step in the Learning Process (Activating Background Knowledge, Setting Purpose, Active Learning, etc.), a list of possible strategies that could be used for that step, and room to show work and to write a metacognitive journal entry.

I follow the four-step CRISS Instructional Process to teach the students to use the Learning Process Packet (L.P.P.) First, I explain the purpose and format of the L.P.P. Next, I model each step of the L.P.P. using specific strategies selected by me and applied to a reading selection. I think aloud as I transform information and write my journal responses. The second time through the L.P.P., the students choose a strategy for each step of the Learning process. They work in groups, with teacher guidance, to complete the steps and metacognitive journal entries. As students become independent, they complete an L.P.P. in another class, but turn it in to me as part of the assessment for the study skills class. They include their work in the packet, attach any additional work (e.g., notes, transformation, 2-column notes, etc.) and the test or paper with the final grade.

The L.P.P. has proved very useful to help my students become independent learners as they follow a unit of study. It also makes it easier for me, as the teacher, to verify they understand the process. The L.P.P. provides us both with a concrete record of the steps they followed, right up to the final evaluation. They are able to easily go back to look at the work they did in order to evaluate their learning and the areas that need improvement. The L.P.P. can also help teachers plan lessons that apply the CRISS Principles and Strategies in a practical way in their classrooms.

A sample Learning Process Packet and a student example are at the end of this article.



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LEARNING PROCESS PACKET

Name _____

Subject _____

Unit _____

Date _____

Answer all the questions on the following pages documenting your use of strategies through the learning process. Attach all work to this packet.

Total number of points earned _____

Grade _____

ACTIVATING YOUR BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

Strategies: **K-W-L**
 Think-Pair-Share
 Brainstorming
 Mind Streaming
 Pre-Reading Concept Map
 Other: _____

How did you activate your background knowledge? Explain the strategies you used below. How much background do you have and where did it come from? What does this tell you about the learning task ahead of you?

SETTING YOUR PURPOSE

Strategies: **Read the objectives in the chapter**
 Preview the subtitles (Power 2's) and visual aids in the chapter
 Read the questions at the end of the chapter before reading
 Study the assignment sheet
 Listen and write down teacher directions
 Other: _____

Explain what strategies you used to set your purpose for this assignment. Write down any strategies your teacher used to set your purpose. How will this help you complete the assignment?

ACTIVE READING/LEARNING

Strategies: **Power Underlining**
 Sticky Notes
 Note-taking
 Discussing (Read-and-Say-Something, Read and Retell)
 Rewriting notes taken in class
 Other: _____

Explain the strategies you used to be an active reader/learner to collect your information, complete the reading assignment, or complete classroom assignments. How did you organize this information so that it can be accessed easily? Explain what clunks you hit during this process, and how you fixed them.

TRANSFORMATION

Strategies: **Concept Map**
 Concept of Definition Map
 Graphic Organizer
 Picture Map
 Timeline
 Charts or Graphs
 Spool Paper Worksheet
 Two-Column Notes (all varieties)
 Other: _____

Explain how you transformed your information into a new form using one of the strategies listed above. Why did you choose the form you did? How did this process help you to be metacognitive (i.e. you realized when you hit a clunk and you fixed it?) How did this process help you to understand the information? How well do you understand it?

PREPARING FOR EVALUATION

Strategies: QAR's
 2-column notes and self-recitation
 Summarizing
 The writing process (writing draft, editing, revising)
 Pattern Puzzles
 Other: _____

NOTE: Just looking over the text or your notes is not a good preparation strategy and will not count! -- use your transformation device to prepare for evaluation.

Describe the strategies you used to prepare for the test, write the paper, or complete the project. How much time did you spend studying? Did you run into any clunks? If so, how did you fix them? How do you feel you will do on the final evaluation? Predict the grade you think you will get and give your reasons for thinking you will get that grade.

METACOGNITION

Reflect on and describe the learning process you went through. How did these strategies help you to learn the information? At what point did the actual learning take place? How did the strategies help you to be more metacognitive? Which strategies will you continue to use to be a successful learner? What grade did you get on the test/paper/project? Why did you get this grade? What will you improve on next time?