

2 Key Rules To Better Grades: Keep Up And Understand Before You Memorize

By The Reading Laboratory
Written for NEA

There's no need to consider physics and chemistry separately because the method of physics is the same as that of chemistry and their subject matter is the same. You might ask then, what difference is there between physics and chemistry?

As a matter of fact, there really isn't any. Chemical reactions can now be understood in terms of molecular and atomic reactions. For instance, a common chemical reaction is when an acid and a base neutralize each other. We know from modern physics that electrons and protons are atomic particles that balance each other, that complement each other. When an atom has an equal number of electrons and protons, it's in balance, or it's stable. But the atoms of an acid have an excess of electrons, while a base has an excess of protons. When they neutralize each other, all that really happens is that the excess electrons in the acid balance with the excess protons in the base.

So actually the study of chemistry is just one branch of the larger science, physics. (It's still useful to retain the different names, however. For instance, it's useful to you when you pick your courses. For the purposes of this article, however, we'll use the word physics to include chemistry.)

When you study physics, realize it is a science which attempts to explain the physical universe by constructing as few laws as possible. Ever since the ancient Greeks, scientists have been trying to find the one law that would explain everything that we observe. It's good to keep this in mind as you wade through a physics course. Although you may feel buried under a mountain of laws, if you think long enough, you'll see that they can all be understood in terms of a few basic concepts of mass, velocity and force. If you always keep these three concepts right in front of you when you study, say, the laws of motion, you'll have no trouble understanding why Newton formulated his laws as he did.

And if you get into the habit

of trying to find the why behind each physical law, you'll have learned to get the most out of a physics course. Physics will be a lot less work, too, because it'll be interesting. Don't work

up a sweat memorizing the formula for Boyle's Law; you'll just forget it anyway. Spend your sweat to understand what Boyle's law means, and you'll probably be able to figure out

the formula. If you still want to memorize the formula, it'll be easy to memorize because it'll make sense.

Physics is a logical science, a building process. As a rule, you

need to know everything in the first chapter before you can get much out of the second. So it's really foolish to let yourself fall too far behind your study schedule. It's not as

easy to catch up as it is in some other subjects.

To sum up: Don't get confused by a pile of laws. Think about them, understand them

and try to break them down into a few simple concepts like mass, velocity and force. Don't memorize until you understand. That's usually fall behind.

(If you can't understand something, ask your teacher for help.) Keep up with the course; don't let your studying fall behind.

Friday, October 25, 1963

(Next: The best ways to study mathematics.)

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PORTLAND (UPI) — The Townsend Organization favors a gross income tax for Oregon, publicity chairman Dr. Irene Waldo said Wednesday.

"The Townsend Organization is deeply disturbed over the possibility of cuts in the welfare program and high taxes already in effect, and the continued increase in taxes," she said.

Dr. Waldo added that a Townsend area convention held here recently asked the state legislature to investigate gross income taxes now in effect in Indiana and Hawaii.

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PTA Carnival

DUNSMUIR — The Dunsmuir Elementary School PTA will sponsor a fall carnival in the school auditorium on the evening of Friday, Nov. 15. Simple games of skill and fun booths will be featured for family enjoyment, according to Mrs. Richard Roth, carnival chairman. Carnival proceeds will be used to finance PTA projects for the school and community this year.

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