

GST 106

STUDY SKILLS



NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA

GST 106: Study Skills

National Open University of Nigeria

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COURSE DEVELOPMENT

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Course Guide

Introduction

GST 106: Study Skills is compulsory for all 100 level students across the National Open University and Distance Learning Programmes. Although the course has zero (0) credit units, you must take it seriously. You have to pass it, in order for you to graduate.

Aims and objectives

The aim of the course is to equip you with enough study skills that will enable you to face your academic activities at the university effectively and with confidence. The course wants to achieve this broad-based aim by:

- 1 giving you the skills you need for study;
- 2 training you on how to study;
- 3 exposing you to the use of the library; and
- 4 preparing you for examinations.

Course objectives

The following objectives are designed for the course:

On completion of *GST 106: Study Skills*, you should be able to:

- 1 practise the skills used for studying efficiently;
- 2 apply the study techniques to be taught in different study situations;
- 3 familiarise yourself with the library and utilise the library effectively;
- 4 apply the skills of studying for examinations very efficiently;
- 5 state how to revise for examination;
- 6 possess and utilise the skills needed for studying for essay type examinations; and
- 7 acquire and utilise the skills for studying for multiple-choice and simple answer type examinations.

Course requirement

In this course, you will be required to go through seven (7) units and practise the exercises provided in each of the units. At the end of every unit, you will be required to complete a tutor marked assignment, which will be given to your tutor to mark.

Continuous assessment counts greatly in deciding whether you fail or pass the course.

At the end of the course, you are required to write a final examination, which must

be passed. You have ten (10) weeks to complete the course.

Course materials

For this course, the major materials needed are:

- 1 course guide;
- 2 study units, which are seven (7) in all, and constituting one module;

- 3 textbooks recommended at the end of the unit; and
- 4 assignment file where all the unit assignments are kept.

Study units

There are seven study units in this course. These are:

- Unit 1: Skills for studying
- Unit 2: How to study
- Unit 3: Use of library
- Unit 4: Preparing for examinations
- Unit 5: Revising for examinations
- Unit 6: Studying for different kinds of examination: essay-type examination
- Unit 7: Studying for multiple-choice and short-answer examinations

Strategies for studying the course

The course is structured in such a way that you can study largely on your own and enjoy what you are studying. In addition, tutorials and group interactions are incorporated into the course at the study centre.

Summary

This course is very important and should be taken seriously, even though it carries no credit unit. If you know how to study very well, one can say that the bulk of your problems in the Open University is solved.

Unit 1

Skills for studying

Table of contents

1.1	Introduction
1.2	Objectives
1.3	What is studying?
1.4	Study skills
1.5	Summary
1.6	Conclusion
1.7	Tutor-marked assignment
	References

1.1 Introduction

The Open University is designed for you to study at a distance. In most cases, you will be studying on your own and in your own spare time. You will be working through specially prepared materials on your own. At the moment, you may not be used to this kind of system. That is why this unit is prepared for you. In the unit, you will be exposed to certain skills that you need to study on your own.

1.2 Objectives

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- i define studying;
- ii identify study skills, and
- iii describe what each study skill demands.

1.3 What is studying?

This is seemingly a simple question but, it is not all that simple. Some people assume that merely sitting down to read for long hours is a sign of studying.

This is not necessarily so. You may sit with a book before you and are not really studying. Studying suggests learning and so to learn there must be concentration and diligence.

Exercise 1.1

List some of the problems you face most in learning and cross-check them with the ones presented below:

- i lack of concentration
- ii slow reading
- iii reading and not understanding
- iv too many things to read
- v clumsy and congested time-table
- vi reading but not able to put things down properly during examination.
- vii inability to take down notes
- viii inability to follow the lectures given in cassette tapes, etc.

Are your points similar to those listed above? If so it means that you have similar problems expressed by many students. These problems can be overcome through studying. You have to follow certain steps and use the right methods to learn.

1.4 Study skills

If we go by the problems listed above as the difficulties we have in studying, it is obvious that we need certain skills for studying. Some of these skills will be treated in this section. But before we treat the skills, can you think about some of these skills?

Exercise 1.2

Think about some of the skills that are essential for study purposes. List them on a piece of paper and crosscheck your list with the one given below.

Now that you have finished listing the skills you think are needed for studying, you can turn to the discussion here. Some of the skills we will discuss briefly are *listening, note taking, writing and reading*. These are called **interactive learning skills**. Let's take these skills one by one. The first is listening.

I. Listening skills

Listening is an important component of learning. Many of the things that are taught are things you listened to. Some of these are:

- i listening to the lecturers speaking
- ii listening to cassette tapes
- iii listening to video tapes
- iv listening to CD-ROM
- v listening to films, radios, TV, etc.

Thus, in your study, you need to listen to things that will make you learn.

Listening-comprehension is a whole course that you will come in contact with in *Use of English and Communication Skills*. Therefore, we are not going to dwell on it heavily in this unit. But you need these tips. You need concentration while listening. You need to be involved in certain activities, while listening. You need to follow the speaker or the medium of transmission of message, while listening. Just as you listen to learn, so also you should learn to listen.

Exercise 1.3

Try to listen to an audio recording of some of the cassettes in your *Use of English and Communication Skills* and assess your listening capacity.

Can you listen well? Can you concentrate properly? Are you comprehending what you are listening to? These are the skills of listening.

II. Reading

One of the most important skills of studying skills is reading. Reading occupies a central place in studying. This is because most of the information we need is stored in books. Thus, to be able to retrieve information that will be learnt, you have to acquire efficient reading ability.

Exercise 1.4

What are the components of reading skills? List some of them.

Reading skills involve mainly reading to learn. As you must have noticed in your attempt to list reading components, to be able to read to learn:

- i you must be in control of the material you are reading;
- ii you must be able to understand and comprehend the material;
- iii you must be able to read with the speed required to complete the volume of things you have to learn;
- iv you must be able to read between the lines and beyond the lines;
- v you must be able to apply what you are reading to relevant learning situations;
- vi you must be able to read and create new ideas from what you are reading.

Reading is an important study skill and component of learning. If you read efficiently, you will learn. Without reading, you cannot learn many things. In studying therefore;

- i you must read very well;
- ii you must read with concentration;
- iii you must read where there are less distractions;
- iv you must read and ensure you are learning; and
- v you must read and be able to recall what you are learning.

III. Writing

If you read and you are unable to put what you read down for the people to know that you have read, then no reading is done. Reading and writing are thus interrelated skills.

Exercise 1.5

What are the writing skills you need while studying? List some of them.

Writing involves the ability to put things down in a clear, precise, coherent and effective manner. You must learn to write well, especially during examinations. Of course, you learn to write well by imitating good writers. And you can only come in contact with good writers by reading widely.

IV. Note taking

This is the last study skill we will discuss in this unit. You should be capable of taking notes whenever you are reading. In fact, the more you shorten what you are reading, the more you can get them into your brain. Note taking and making help to shorten a large volume of what you are reading. Therefore, you need the skill of note taking and note making. When studying,

- i put notes down;
 - ii use abbreviations to shorten notes;
 - iii be consistent in note taking;
 - iv let your notes be neat;
- More than all these, read your notes constantly and revise them.

1.5 Summary

In this unit you learnt some skills that are very important for studying. These are:

- 1 note taking;
- 2 note making;
- 3 reading;
- 4 writing and
- 5 listening.

1.6 Conclusion

In this unit, we have exposed you to some study skills in rudimentary names. Many of these skills you will learn more in your Use of English and Communication Skills course. The effort here is to show you that these skills are important in studying and learning. We hope you will use these skills as you study in your course.

1.7 Tutor-marked assignment

Discuss the skills that are needed for study and show how you can apply these in real life situations.

References

- Akins, A. and J. McKean (1983) *Text To Note*, Edward Arnold, London.
- Anderson, A and T. Lynch (1988) *Listening*; Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- James, K., R.R. Jordan and A.J. Matthews (1988) *Listening-Comprehension and Note Taking Course*, Collins ELT, London.
- Olaofe, I.A. (1993) *Communicate English*, Tamaza Publishing Co., Zaria.
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Unit 2

How to study

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2.4	Have the right environment
2.5	Have the right equipment
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2.8	Conclusion
2.9	Tutor-marked assignment
	References

2.1 Introduction

‘How do I study?’ ‘I study but cannot make it.’ ‘I find reading difficult.’ ‘To hell with study.’ These are some of the statements made by students like you. But studying can be a very interesting and rewarding exercise, if done well. In this unit you are introduced to this very important topic: *How to study*. Surely, you will benefit a lot from the unit. Study it very well.

2.2 Objectives

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- i state how to study;
- ii state the requirements of study activities; and
- iii demonstrate what to do while studying.

2.3 Be in the right frame of mind

Before you study, you should be in the right frame of mind. You should be calm. Nothing should be worrying you. Psychologically, you should not be under tension, you must be emotionally stable, free from shock of any kind and be highly motivated to study. Socially, you should clear all the social problems of the home, children (if any) or parental care that may stand against proper concentration. Studying demands concentration and you must give this.

Exercise 2.1

The list below contains things that may prevent you from adequate concentration during study. Tick (X) against those that affect you.

- 1 dictionaries ☐
- 2 good diet ☐

- | | | |
|----|------------------------|--------------------------|
| 3 | children's problems | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4 | house bills | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5 | noisy environment | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6 | pen and pencil | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7 | family problems | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8 | headache | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9 | university environment | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10 | high life | <input type="checkbox"/> |

What we are trying to establish here is that nothing antagonistic should bother us or prevent us from getting ready to study. We must be in the right frame of mind when we want to study.

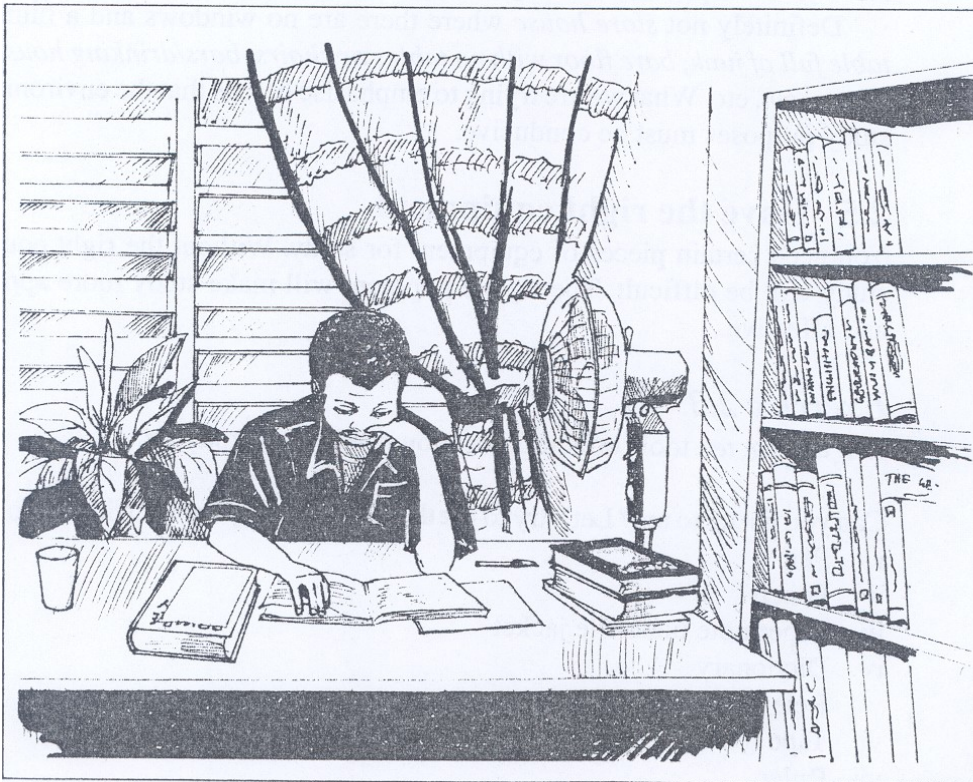


Fig. 2.1 A student studying in a conducive environment

2.4 Have the right environment

The environment where study takes place must be conducive. It must be clean, well organised, pleasant and noiseless.

Exercise 2.2

Tick (✓) against those of the following environments that are conducive to study.

Your bed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Storehouse	<input type="checkbox"/>
Table full of junk	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bare floor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Air-conditioned office	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bar/drinking house	<input type="checkbox"/>
Main road	<input type="checkbox"/>
Workplace	<input type="checkbox"/>
Factory	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quite classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>
Video show room	<input type="checkbox"/>

Have you completed this assignment? Which environments did you tick?

Definitely not *store house* where there are no windows and a funny door, *table full of junk*, *bare floor with no tables or chairs*, *bars/drinking house*, *video showroom*, etc. What we are trying to emphasise here is that the environment for study purposes must be conducive.

2.5 Have the right equipment

You need certain pieces of equipment for study. Without the right equipment, study will be difficult. The right equipment will make study more appropriate and effective.

Exercise 2.3

List at least *ten* tools or equipment you need when studying.

Can you list up to ten? Let's try to list these. Compare your list with the following:

- i Pen
- ii Pencil
- iii Paper/note book/file jacket
- iv Dictionary
- v Relevant textbooks
- vi Tape recorder/cassette
- vii Ruler
- viii Calculator
- ix Computer equipment (if you can afford one)
- x Table and desk
- xi Book shelf

Do you already have all these? If you do not, you may need to buy some of these. For example, it is important you have a notebook for each course. Some people find it easy to file notes in a folder. Careless people cannot do this. If disorganised, files can pose a big problem while studying because notes may not be in proper order; some notes may be missing or misplaced. If you know you cannot keep files, why don't you simply buy a notebook?

A dictionary is the students' best companion. You need a dictionary when studying. A dictionary will supply you with:

- i meanings of new words;
- ii spelling of words;
- iii parts of speech (whether Noun, Verb, Adjectives) of words;
- iv the way the word is pronounced;
- v origin of the words;
- vi and many more things.

Of course, students need textbooks. Primary textbooks that are available to you as a distance learner are your study units. The study units for National Open University and Distance Learning of Nigeria have the following components:

- i *Table of contents*: what is in the unit.
- ii *Introduction*: what the unit is about.
- iii *Objectives*: goals of the course.
- iv *Main content of the course*: lessons that are given in form of headings and sub-headings.
- v *Conclusion* which gives the overall focus or point of the unit.
- vi *Summary* which gives the gist of what is covered in the unit.
- vii *Tutor-marked assignment* which gives you an assignment to be completed on the unit. This assignment is to be marked by your tutor.
- viii *References* which gives you a list of books for further reading and resources you can consult in libraries, internet and at study centres.
- ix Key or answers to all activities or exercises given in the unit.

All courses are accompanied with **Course Guides** which state all that you need to know about the course such as:

- i Course duration
- ii Course aims and objectives
- iii Credit units
- iv Course structure
- v Materials needed
- vi Mode of assessment

Exercise 2.4

Think and list what you should do while studying.

2.6 What to do while studying

Study time should be a busy time. Study time should also be an active time.

What should you be doing while studying?

- i *Read* and understand what you are to study.
- ii *Form* useful notes.
- iii *Underline* important points.
- iv *Do* some practice activities, tasks or exercises to ensure that learning is taking place.
- v *Assess* yourself periodically by doing what you are learning to do.
- vi *Relax* in between study period to refresh your brain: this you can do by walking around, chat a bit, take a tea break, etc.

- vii *Always* be active when studying do many things—writing, listening, reading, speaking to yourself, listing, drawing, labelling, etc; activities keep you awake.
- viii *Know* what you have learnt and what you have not learnt: do not keep on reading what you have learnt as if you have not learnt it.

Exercise 2.5

Read the passage below as if you are studying it. Practise all of the things that we have listed as things to do when you are studying. Then give an account of the result of studying the passage.

Multimedia and the practice of distance education

Using media for communication

No matter how good a learning resource is, for example a CD-ROM complete with all information, explanations, illustrations and activities, students need personal contact with a teacher to provide the kind of support available in a classroom.

Contact can be made by fax, telephone, teleconferencing, videoconferencing, e-mail and the Internet. Formal links using teleconferencing and videoconferencing can be arranged where specific times are programmed for groups to get together. This is very effective for tutorial work, and can be supported by materials faxed between teacher and students. For example, a rural office practice course uses standard print materials containing weekly assignments, which are then discussed at regular
Videoconferencing tutorials led by the teacher.

The practice of distance education

Distance education encompasses many different ways of delivering education and training to students. The term *strategy* is used to describe the particular combination of teaching, delivery, assessment and communication components used to produce an effective instructional and support process. Distance education is a resource-based instructional methodology; its effectiveness depends heavily on the quality of the learning resources that are used and on the appropriateness of the delivery media. The specific choice of media elements for a distance education strategy has less to do with the technology and media options which are available, and more to do with the nature of the learning task which is involved

The educational structure of the materials, or the instructional process, is the most critical issue. This is best worked through with the assistance of an instructional designer, who will help the teacher analyse the learning task and select a form of media appropriate to the programme's educational objectives. This ensures that the strategy used and the resources developed will enable students to gain the required skills, knowledge and experience efficiently and effectively.

Planning a distance education strategy

The process recommended here applies to the development of any distance education strategy whether it incorporates print, audio, video, computer-based or online components.

The best approach is to:

- i gather together the materials currently used to support the teaching of the programme;
- ii examine them and compare them with the curriculum or learning objectives of the programme.

When this has been done the resource gaps, that is the places in the programme where essential information, instruction, illustration or explanation are missing, should be evident. This will give the teacher a clear picture of the kinds of resources required to make the distance education strategy work. All this point, decisions about media selection can be made based on the above considerations.

The resource development process

The key to the success of any distance education programme is the quality of the learning resources used. It's important to search for existing resources before developing new materials; resource development for distance education courses has been a flourishing activity in many countries for years and a huge body of material already exists in almost every vocational area. A library search will identify many resources, but a closer examination may reveal the resources support a different curriculum, or use a different instructional approach.

This paper assumes that *some* learning resources will have to be developed by the teacher or institution offering a distance education programme.

(Source: *The Use of Multi-media in Distance Education*, The commonwealth of learning).

Is your assessment positive? If you put into practice what we have suggested, I think your performance in studying the passage will be positive.

Last Word!

When are you to study?

When you are fully ready.

Where to study?

In a convenient and conducive environment.

Consistency?

Yes! You have to be consistent in terms of the place you have chosen for study. Your body gets used to a particular place and environment.

How many hours?

As long as you want. But know when you are not taking in anything. It is not how long but how well. Full concentration, high absorption rate, dedication, etc. determine how successful you will be during your study.

How do I know I'm successful?

Evaluate yourself. Recall what you have learnt. Practise to do what you set out to do after the study. Set realistic goals and success will be yours.

2.7 Summary

In this unit you have learnt:

- 1 how to prepare for study; and
- 2 what to do while studying.

At the end of the unit, some questions that many people raise about how to study were briefly answered. You are required to put into practice all the suggestions given in the unit.

2.8 Conclusion

Indeed, this is a very important unit. Many have failed in examinations not because they are not intelligent, but because they do not know how to study.

Our suggestions in this unit will help you to study well. If you put into practice all the suggestions given in this unit, you will surely be successful in your academic life.

2.9 Tutor-marked assignment

Relate the experience you had about studying before going through the unit on *How to study* and your experience of studying after reading the unit. What changes have the unit made on you?

References

- Adkins, A., and J. McKean (1983) *Text To Note*, Edward Arnold, London.
- Anderson, A. and T. Lynch (1988) *Listening*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- James, K., R.R. Jordan and A.J. Matthews (1988) *Listening-Comprehension and Note Taking Course*, Collins ELT, London.
- Olaofe, I.A. (1993) *Communicate English*, Tamaza Publishing Co., Zaria.
- Olaofe, I.A. (1993) *English and Communication Skills for Academic Purposes*, Tamaza Publishing Co., Zaria.

Unit 3

Use of the library

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3.4	Borrowing a book
3.5	Other services offered in a library
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3.1 Introduction

The use of the library is vital to study activities. This is because the library is a storehouse of information. You need the library to survive in all academic activities. Without proper use of the library, you may be starved of information. In this unit, you are to learn about the library: the lending services and other relevant academic services it renders.

3.2 Objectives

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- i determine the use of a library;
- ii list the services offered in a library;
- iii borrow a book from the library;
- iv consult the library for reference and other useful materials.

3.3 Why do you use the library?

The use that you make of a library can be divided into three broad headings. You go to a library to borrow books. You can go to a library to consult reference materials. You can go to a library for general study.

3.4 Borrowing a book

Let us assume that you have been given the author and title of a certain book, which has been assigned to you to read. You would like to borrow it from the library, because it may take you sometime to read it. The first thing you do when you get to a library is to check whether or not the book is in stock and be sure it

is available for lending. The next thing is to locate that book where it is in the library. To locate a book in the library, you should take the following steps.

1 **Consult the right card catalogues.**

For example, if you know the name of the author of the book, you should consult author or name catalogue. Author or name catalogue consists of the name of the author on cards arranged in alphabetic order according to the author's surname, institution or editor, by which the book is best known.

Sample card

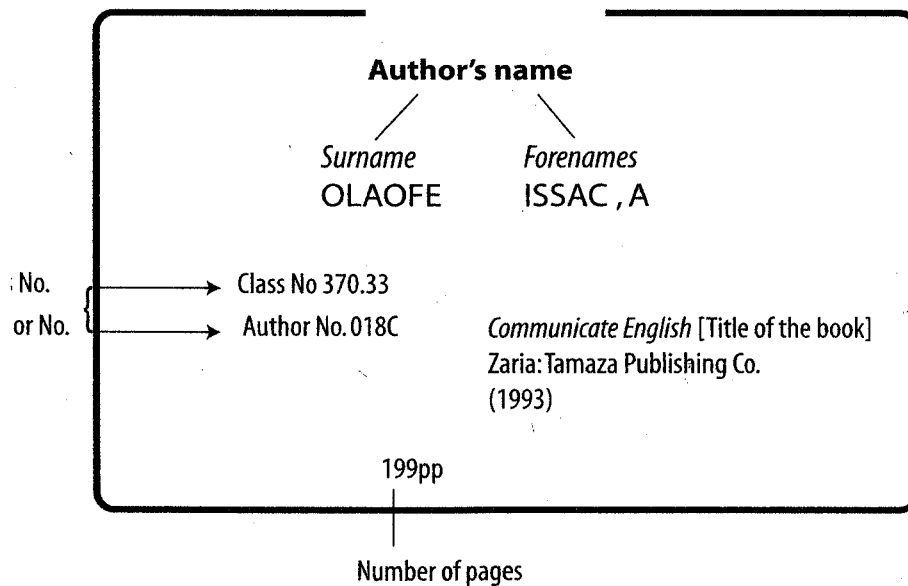


Fig. 3.1

Exercise 3.1

- 1 What is the title of the book?
- 2 What is its year of publication?
- 3 Who is the author of the book?
- 4 The book has _____ pages
- 5 Why is the author's surname very important on this card?

Is this exercise difficult for you? I hope it is not difficult. By going through the author or name card catalogue, you will discover that the title of the book you are looking for is *Communicate English* and that the year of publication is 1993. Since the card could only be traced by the author's surname, you must know the author's surname and the other names, before you can find the book. The author's surname is *Olaofe* and the other names are *Isaac, A.* Part of the information supplied in the author's card catalogue is the number of pages of the book, which in this case is *199 pages*. The card also supplies you with the publisher of the book: *Tamaza Publishing Co* and place of publication, which is

Zaria. The class mark or number of the book identifies the book and usually consists of two parts. Each part is printed on a separate line. The first part is the class number, which tells you the subject area of the book. In the example presented in Figure 3.1, the class mark is 375.33.

The Dewey Decimal System used by many libraries classifies books in terms of the knowledge they present in the respective subject areas. Every subject has a number and the number after the decimal point refers to a particular branch of that subject. The numbers selected range from 000 to 999 but there are an indefinite class number of sub-divisions within these categories (James, *et. al.* 1979).

Exercise 3.2

Use the numbers below to determine the subject area of the book: *Communicate English*

- a presented on the card catalogue in Fig.3.1

300 Social Sciences

370 Education

737.33 Language Education

375 Curriculum

375.33 Economics

- b What is the number beneath the class number on the card catalogue in Fig. 3.1? If you have done the job well you will discover that the book *Communicate English* belongs to 370.33 class number which is under *education* as the broad subject area and *Language Education* as the subdivision under *education*. Beneath the class number is another number. This is the author's number. The capital O (see Fig.3.1) represents the first letter of the *author's surname* (Olaofe). The following number is specially assigned to the particular author's name. The small letter (c) after the number is the first letter of the title of the book (*Communicate English*).

O = Olaofe, the first letter of the author's surname.

18 = assigned to the author. The author's number directs you to the exact shelf.

C = the first letter of the title of the book.

375.33 = the class number which tells you the general area in the library to go in order to find the book.

If you know only the title of the book and not the author's name, another card catalogue arranged according to book titles is also available in the library. The titles of books are arranged in alphabetical order. If you can locate the title of the book, you will automatically get other information about the book, especially the publisher, the date published, the surname and the other names of the author.

Also the class mark of the book will be indicated.

Exercise 3.2

If you enter a library and you want a book on psychology that will be good for an assignment given to you, what will you do to borrow the book from the library? List the steps to follow to borrow the book. Have you completed this exercise? If you have done so, compare your steps with the one presented in the box below.

Get a book from a library

Steps to follow:

- 1 *Enter* the library by showing your identity card at the gate.
- 2 *Go* to the chart which gives a list of Dewey Decimal classification by subject.
- 3 Locate the class number for education – it may be 370.
- 4 Check the sub-class number for psychology which will be under education.
- 5 *Go* to the book title catalogue for psychology and check the titles of books in this subject area.
- 6 *Locate* the relevant books that can be useful for your assignment.
- 7 *Copy* the class numbers of these books and go to the appropriate shelves for the books.
- 8 Take the books to the counter and fill in appropriate forms or borrowing slips.
- 9 Give the form to the library attendant and get the books stamped. The stamp indicates the date the books should be returned.
- 10 If any of the books is already out on loan, it is possible for you to reserve it when it is returned.

3.5 Other services offered in a library

The library is not only for lending out books. There are other areas of the library that offer other services. These areas are briefly explained below.

1 Reference section

The reference section of the library stores books, such as dictionaries, encyclopaedias, thesaurus, year books, abstracts, research documents, directories, etc. that are not to be loaned out. They are strictly to be consulted.

Exercise 3.3

Which of the following services are offered in the reference section of a library? Tick (✓) as appropriate.

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1 Lending a book out. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 Consulting a book. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3 Storing books that are difficult to replace. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4 Finding out information in encyclopaedias. | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- | | | |
|----|--|--------------------------|
| 5 | Keeping a single copy book. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6 | Keeping a book that is out of print. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7 | Storing bibliographies (list of books or published materials in each subject). | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8 | Keeping dictionaries of every subject. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9 | Keeping abstracts of research materials already published. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10 | Keeping <i>Who is who</i> . | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11 | Keeping of a subject area that can be borrowed. | <input type="checkbox"/> |

You must have finished this exercise by now. If your responses are accurate, you will have the following as the services rendered in a reference section of a library:

- i Consulting a book.
- ii Storing books that are difficult to replace.
- iii Finding information in encyclopaedias.
- iv Storing a single copy books for consultation.
- v Keeping out of print books.
- vi Storing bibliographies of published materials.
- vii Keeping dictionaries of every subject.
- viii Keeping abstracts (summaries) of research materials published.
- ix Keeping special publications like *Who is who*.

From the above, we see that the reference section of a library is an important area that you must always visit whenever you enter a library.

2 Serials section

This section stores recent journals that are in every field. If you want any new information, the place you have to go is the serials section of a library. Serials section is a branch of a reference library. Documents are consulted and not on loan in this section.

3 Media section

This section of the library harbours films, video-tapes, audio-tapes, internet, E-mail, etc.

4 Africana section

This section keeps any material that is African based. All journals, books, abstracts, newspapers, magazines, etc. published on Africa are housed in Africana section of the library.

5 New arrivals

Some libraries have a section for displaying books that have just arrived.

6 Study areas

Often you may go to the library not to consult or borrow books. Libraries offer seating spaces for study purposes. Since libraries are supposed to be noiseless zones, they are conducive for reading and study purposes.

Exercise 3.4

If you want the following services, where will you go to in a library?

- 1 Borrow a book _____
- 2 Starting on a new topic _____
- 3 Finding a solution to a difficult topic _____
- 4 Overview of a topic _____
- 5 Doing a dissertation or a piece of research _____
- 6 Recent research summaries _____
- 7 Just to consult a book for a general information _____
- 8 African poetry _____

Let us discuss this exercise. Do not turn to the discussion until you have completed the exercise. Check the box below for clues to the exercise.

Services of a library	
Where to go!	
➔ Borrowing a book	➔ Go to the lending section.
➔ Starting a new topic	➔ Go to reference section; bibliographies in that section or encyclopaedia or current content.
➔ Finding a solution to a difficult topic	➔ Go to: encyclopaedias; bibliographies; abstracts; dictionaries related to the topic.
➔ Overview of a topic	➔ Go to: abstract; specialised bibliographies
➔ Doing a dissertation or research	➔ Go to journals in serials section.
➔ Recent research summaries	➔ Go to serials section; abstracts; bibliographies.
➔ Consult a book for General information	➔ Go to encyclopaedias; current contents of the area.
➔ African poetry	➔ Go to Africana section.

3.6 Summary

In this unit, you have learnt about

- 1 how to use the library;
- 2 the services that are offered in the library;
- 3 that libraries are for lending out useful and relevant books, for consulting reference works and for getting recent information.
- 4 For effective study, use the library.

3.7 Conclusion

The library is very important. You should make constant use of it. A lot of information stored in the library can be of great benefit to you.

3.8 Tutor-marked assignment

Relate the importance of library to active study skills. How do you use the library for study?

References

- Adkins, A. and I. McKean (1983) *Text to Note*, Edward Arnold, London.
- James, K., R.R. Jordan and A.J. Matthews (1988) *Listening – Comprehension and Note Taking Course*, Collins ELT, London.

Unit 4

Preparing for examinations I

Table of contents

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Objectives
- 4.3 Why examinations?
- 4.4 Secrets of success in examinations
- 4.5 The examination day
- 4.6 Summary
- 4.7 Conclusion
- 4.8 Tutor-marked assignment

4.1 Introduction

One of the most important reasons why we study is to pass examinations. Examinations cannot be tackled successfully without active study activities. Many see examinations as a necessary evil that must be faced squarely. This unit assists you to be less stressful about examinations. It works from the introductory part that answers the question: why examinations? And moves to secrets of success in examinations. The last section of the unit suggests what to do on the examination day.

4.2 Objectives

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- i state reasons for examinations;
- ii explain the secrets of success in examinations;
- iii practice how to study for examinations; and
- iv state what you should do on the examination day.

4.3 Why examinations?

You always hear that examination is not the best test of student's ability. To some extent it may be so. But, indeed examination is a necessary evil you must face at one time or the other. We do not find the experience of examination enjoyable because it is the time we have to work hard. You will only pass examinations if you adopt the right methods and techniques for dealing with examinations. If you adopt the wrong method, the reverse will be the case. The following are the reasons why we write examinations.

- i to assess whether or not what we have learnt is properly learnt;
 - ii to act as feedback to the student and the teacher;
 - iii to show who is more qualified in terms of competition and certification, the best gets the best certificate;
 - iv to prepare students for future career and vocation;
 - v to prepare students for stress and tense conditions which are very common in life;
 - vi to act as a guide to you to work hard.
- There are many more reasons. Only these far will be taken here.

Exercise 5.1

Tick () which of the following you consider as the reasons for your writing examinations:

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| i for pride | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ii to show off | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| iii to get feedback on your success | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| iv to get a certificate | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| v in preparation for future employment | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| vi for fun | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| vii to punish yourself | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| viii to find out whether you are the best | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ix to pass and be happy | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Your answers may vary from that of another person. In most cases, students will want to write examinations for certificates, to pass and be happy, for competitive reasons, etc. Whatsoever the reason for your writing examinations, success is basic to all examinations.

4.4 Secrets of success in examinations

In this section, let us discuss some of the secrets of success in examinations.

1 Start early

To pass examinations you have to start studying very early. In fact your first day of lecture should be your first day of preparing for examinations. You should read for the lectures before the lecture and read after the lecture. Put down major points in your jotter in preparation for revision later.

2 Work hard

Nothing is achieved without hard work. Do not play with your time. Work consistently hard. Many students pile up their work till the last minute. This is not the best way to prepare for examinations.

3 Read widely

Do not just depend on what is in your study pack. Read widely. Read some of the textbooks recommended for you. Listen to the audio-recordings and video-recordings of the lecturers prepared for you.

4 Reduce what to study

You cannot read and understand all that will be given in notes, handouts or textbooks. You need to learn the skills of note taking and note making. The

more you summarise and reduce what to learn the better your focus and understanding of the materials to learn for examinations.

5 **Revise**

Revise for all examinations before the exam. Examination time is not the time to read new things or attempt to learn new things. Examination time is the time to revise and put back to memory what you have learnt before.

6 **Be familiar with the exam pattern**

You need to be familiar with the format, the demands and the content of the examination you are preparing for. Get in touch with past question papers.

Look for questions that are always set, the one that are rarely set and the ones that are not set at all. Study in order of importance of the topics.

7 **Be organised**

Plan your work. Be fully organised during examinations. Be calm. Work according to your plan of study.

Exercise 5.2

How do you feel before an examination? Tick the ones that are applicable to you

stressful and tense	<input type="checkbox"/>
confident	<input type="checkbox"/>
ashamed	<input type="checkbox"/>
depressed	<input type="checkbox"/>
worried	<input type="checkbox"/>
anxious	<input type="checkbox"/>
happy	<input type="checkbox"/>
memory loss	<input type="checkbox"/>
fearful	<input type="checkbox"/>
challenged	<input type="checkbox"/>
discouraged	<input type="checkbox"/>

Have you completed this exercise? Your feelings about examinations will decide your path to success. If you always feel **confident**, **happy** and **challenged** then you are positively disposed to examinations and that is a good attitude. But many students are negatively disposed to examinations: they feel **discouraged**, **depressed**, **worried**, **memory loss**, **fearful**, etc. You should always feel positive about examinations. Feel that you can make it. Since others before made it, why not me?

Perhaps the worst of the negative attitudes is **stress**. Many students feel stressed even long before examinations. Be courageous. Start early. Be confident. Move on with confidence. Believe you can do it.

EXPRESSIONS TO DRIVE AWAY STRESS!

- I can do it..
- It is done before and will be done now..
- Relax God is in control

- Why panic, no cause for alarm
- Do your best and leave the rest...
- I can do all things through the Almighty God
- I will make it.

Exercise 5.3

Suggest many other expressions you can use to give yourself **positive** and **nonstressful** attitude to examination.

Confidence is very crucial to preparing for examination. You must believe that you can make it. You must also face the course with great determination.

Many fail even before the examination day.

4.5 The examination day

The examination day is perhaps the most important day. You need to be well composed, confident and determined to succeed. Here are some suggestions you may wish to consider on the examination day.

- 1 Be sure of the hour of the examination. Do not sleep off.
- 2 Be sure of the place of examination. Check the venue a day to the examination date in case of any change of venue.
- 3 Revise the facts quickly some hours to the examination.
- 4 Read the examination questions very well. Follow all instructions including the number of questions to answer.
- 5 Divide your time very well. Do not spend time on one or two questions at the expense of other questions.
- 6 Read over your work before submission.
- 7 Be sure you write the particulars of yourself as demanded by the examination regulations. Some examinations require you to write your name, your examination number, etc. Some demand that you write examination number only. Write this first. You may forget to do so later on.
- 8 Answer the question in a clear, correct and well-structured language. Be well organised in your presentation.
- 9 Neatness, legible handwriting and well-collated examination papers are necessary and should be done.

4.6 Summary

In this unit, you have been exposed to how to prepare for examination. You learnt:

- 1 why examinations;
- 2 secrets of success in examinations;
- 3 what to do on examinations day.

4.7 Conclusion

At one part or the other, you will have to write examinations in your course.

This unit prepares you for this exercise. If you follow the suggestions presented in this unit, examinations will not be a stressful thing. It will be a pleasure.

One of the major reasons for studying is to pass examinations. This unit has been able to suggest ways to face examination ordeal better.

4.8 Tutor-marked assignment

What are examinations? Why do we have to write examinations? How can we succeed in examinations?

Unit 5

Preparing for examinations II: Revision

Table of contents

5.1	Introduction
5.2	Objectives
5.3.1	Who is qualified to revise for an examination
5.3.2	Read widely
5.3.3	Revision
5.3.4	Titbits on revision
5.4	Summary
5.5	Conclusion
5.6	Tutor-marked assignment
	References

5.1 Introduction

This unit treats a very important aspect of preparing for examinations. This is revising for examinations. Here you will go through specific practice exercises that will train you in the art of revising for examinations. Remember, nobody can train you enough on how to revise. You have to train yourself. The more training you have, the better.

5.2 Objectives

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- i state the steps to follow in revising for examinations;
- ii show how to revise for examinations; and
- iii demonstrate the art of revising for examinations.

5.3.1 Who is qualified to revise for an examination?

Let us start with this very simple question. Who is qualified to revise for an examination?

- i Anyone who has attended all lectures or regular study centre sessions.
- ii Anyone who took down notes.
- iii Anyone who has something to revise.
- iv Anyone who has studied all the study units.
- v Anyone who is hardworking.

5.3.2 Read widely

You cannot revise for any examination unless you have what to revise. Many students do not know the difference between reading for exams and revising for exams. To read for examinations means to read your notes, study guides, units, textbooks, relevant journals, etc. In reading for examinations, you come in contact with the facts newly. You are learning the facts for the first time. As you read, you also study the points. In fact, you read by jotting down points in a note form.

There are many activities you can do when reading your lecture notes for the first or second time. Below are some of them:

- 1 You have to skim-read the lecture notes or the textbook to determine what is relevant to be read.
- 2 You may underline (if the reading materials are yours) important points as you read. By underlining the important points you are actively participating in the reading process. If you just read and do not perform certain activities as you read, you may fall asleep or be tired quickly. You must be active as you read.
- 3 You must stay active and alert throughout the study/reading time. You should not let any important point or word drift past you. Look out for the most important points and underline them.
- 4 You may form notes as you go along. To form notes as taught under the *Use of English and Communication Skills*, you must have headings and subheadings, be consistent in your numbering, put only points down, use abbreviations where necessary, use colouring, underlining, etc where needed.

The notes should always take the form of a summary.

Exercise 5.1

Read the article below titled ‘A good teacher seeks as many ways as possible to present information and ideas to students to stimulate their thinking’.

This paper discusses the theory and practice of distance education and explains the main issues involved in planning, developing and using media resources for distance education.

Introduction

In the past century, off-campus instruction has undergone considerable changes, not the least of which has been its name: correspondence became external studies, distance education, open learning and then flexible delivery. A constant objective throughout its history, however, has been concern with opening up educational opportunities.

This paper discusses the theory and practice of distance education and explains the main issues involved in planning, developing and using media resources for distance education. It

is directed at managers of distance education operations and others who have a professional interest in the subject.

The term distance education is generally given to a form of education and training delivery in which students are remote from the institution and rarely, if ever, attend formal teaching sessions. Some informal sessions may be scheduled by phone, and a compulsory residential seminar is some times specified, particularly where practical skills are being developed and assessed. Distance education is delivered through the use of various learning resources, and supported by teachers using a variety of means of communication. The resources and means of communication are the media components.

The word media, plural of medium, is from the latin word for middle and describes that which stands between the receiver and the source of the message. It is commonly used to describe ways to convey information and entertainment. The term multi media often describes highly sophisticated technology, such as CD-ROM and Internet web sites; which incorporate text, sound, vision and animation. In general, we understand technology to embrace things like radio, TV, video, telephone, fax machines and computers. Not all media involve technology, of course.

Books and newspapers don't conjure up images of technology, although a good deal of technology goes into their creation. In this paper, multi media refers to any communication method that conveys information, or that allows interaction between teachers and students.

The golden rule is that the message a teacher wishes to convey is considerably more important than the means used to convey it. In the world of education and training, technology is a servant and not a master; the media isn't the message, only the means.

The theory of distance education

A good teacher seeks as many ways as possible to present information and ideas to students and to stimulate their thinking. Good teaching practice includes providing opportunities for students to be active learners, taking into account individual differences in learning style and providing encouragement for students to seek solutions independently. Elements of good teaching and learning practice include:

- i the actual teaching, including explanations, examples, illustrations, and learning support in the form of professional advice, comment and
- ii the students' work, including reading, research, discussion groups and all course-required practical activities.

- lii the assessment procedures which will need review and may need to be changed to meet the needs of a distance education programme.

The challenge of distance education is to develop an instructional process which incorporates good teaching and learning strategies, and which provides remote students with a quality of instruction as close as possible to that enjoyed by those attending classes.

Changing roles for teachers and students

In general, teachers often fear that if they are separated from their students the result will be a dramatic drop in effective learning. However, if much of the teaching content is delivered outside of the traditional classroom, teachers are going to find greater flexibility in the use of their time. More emphasis can be placed on activities like counselling, tutoring and remedial work, as well as on student support activities that can significantly improve the quality of the teaching process. Time can also be spent planning and producing learning resources.

A distance education programme can be very challenging for students. Those who have only experienced classroom-based instruction will often struggle with the absence of other students and teachers. These students will need to be taught how to work more independently, how to organise their study time, and how to discipline themselves to study through domestic pressures and other influences. They need to be contacted and counselled on study and learning issues from the start so that a relationship can be established between student and teacher. Students should be offered help to plan study programmes and be contacted regularly to help them maintain commitment. High dropout rates are endemic in distance education programmes, and every effort must be made to encourage students to persevere.

On the other hand, there is a freedom about distance education, which can be very appealing. Students can design their study programme to suit their lifestyle. There is also a great deal of satisfaction to be gained from succeeding on their own, but these benefits won't come without considerable and continuous support from their training institution.

Vocational student support

Many vocational students are studying subjects related to current employment. Workplace trainers may be able to provide counsel and guidance, and more experienced employees can act as mentors. Local professional or business people can provide useful support, and local schools may be recruited to provide access to equipment or other resources. The training institution can help set up semi-formal arrangements for their students, with local specialists acting as tutors or carrying out skill assessments on students who demonstrate competence on the job or in the community. The use of such approaches often depends on the

enthusiasm of distance education teachers in seeking possibilities, and in setting up appropriate structures.

Educational media

Distance education uses various media to deliver learning information and to link students and teachers. Some media can be used for both purposes, but they generally fall into two categories:

- i those who can be used to convey subject content, such as print materials, video tapes, audio tapes, television, computer-based courseware, and CDROM.
- ii those which permit communication between teachers and students, such as fax, radio, teleconferencing, videoconferencing and the Internet.

The telephone offers the opportunity for group links via teleconferencing. The most complex and expensive advances in educational media are being made in computer-based technology, particularly interactive CDROM and online course delivery.

Ideas on how to stimulate thinking

As you read the article

- a form useful notes;
- b underline in your notes the most important points using a marker or a pen with another colour.

Do not turn to the discussion that follows until you have completed the exercise.

Now that you have completed the exercise, you can turn to the discussion below. Compare your notes with the one presented here.

Introduction

- 1 The concern to **open up** educational opportunities.
- 2 Distance education students are **remote** - some **tutorial sessions** delivered through the use of various learning experiences supported by teachers.
- 3 Media means that which stands between the **receiver and the source** of the message – multi-media CD-ROM and Internet website, TV, etc.

Theory of distance education

- 1 Elements of **good teaching** - actual teaching - **students work assessment** procedures. Distance education must incorporate all these.

Changing roles of teachers and students

- 1 Not ineffective teaching but **greater flexibility** to use time, e.g. **counselling, tutoring & remedial** - and planning.

- 2 DE can be **challenging**: students to be taught how to work independently study through domestic pressures.
- 3 Students to be offered **help to plan** a study and **persevere** — not dropout.
- 4 Freedom in DE – students can plan programme to suit their lifestyle **satisfaction in succeeding**.

Vocational student support

- 1 Studying subjects related to current employment – work place trainers for **counsel, guidance** and **mentoring** local **professional support** local schools access to equipment semi-formal arrangements with local specialists.

Educational media

- 1 DE uses **various media** for learning and linkage.
 - 2 Those to convey **subject content**: print materials, video and audio tapes TV, computer courseware and CD-ROM
 - 3 Permit communication **between teachers and students** fax, radio, teleconferencing, videoconferencing, Internet and telephone.
- Is your note similar to the above? Which parts did you underline? The ones highlighted represent the key points to be underlined.

5.3.3 Revision

Going by the notes you have formed after a careful reading of the passage, what to revise must have come out very clearly at the end of the notes.

Exercise 5.2

Outline what you think you need to revise for the exam if you have formed the notes presented in the exercise.

Now see if your points of revision are similar to the following:

- 1 Theory of distance education-especially elements of good teaching – students' work-assessment procedures.
- 2 Changing roles of teachers and students – greater flexibility - counselling, tutoring – roles challenging, helping students to plan, persevere, to succeed.
- 3 Vocational support–counselling, guidance, mentoring, local professional support.
- 4 Educational media–various media – some for subject content, etc.

All aspects of your notes that you underlined, identified as very important and useful for the examination need to be constantly revised.

5.3.4 Tit-bits on revision

Below are some useful tit-bits for you as you revise for examination.

Where? Where do you revise your notes? Any place that is convenient for you. The place must be free from noise. You must select a constant place. Be consistent in your study and the place where you study.

When? When do you revise your notes for examination? Anytime. Preferably in the morning hours when your brain is still fresh or in the evening when you are about to sleep. Keep a short form of your notes in your pocket all the time.

Revise them anytime you feel like.

How? Go through the notes as quickly as possible. Close your notebook and try to recollect what you learnt.

Why? Why must you revise your notes? If you do not revise them you will forget. The more you revise the notes, the more you remember the points. Revision ensures success because you can easily recall what you have learnt when the exam comes.

5.4 Summary

In this unit, you have been exposed to:

- i what precedes revision – reading widely;
- ii how to form notes in readiness for revision exercises;
- iii how to revise your notes; and
- iv why it is important that you revise your notes.

5.5 Conclusion

Revision is an important component of study. You remember when you revise. The more you revise your notes, the better you are in tackling examination questions.

5.6 Tutor-marked assignment

How do you revise for examination? Support your answer with concrete evidence

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Unit 6

Studying for different types of examination: essay-type examination

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6.1 Introduction

Many students study for all examinations the same way. They do not know that each examination demands a different mode of studying it. You may study a material thoroughly but because you do not know the demands of the examination, you may fail. You may fail to use the materials appropriately during the examination. It means that you should study according to the type of examination you are writing. That is why this unit is devoted to training you on how to study for essay-type examination.

6.2 Objectives

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- i describe essay-type examination;
- ii enumerate the steps to be taken in studying essay-type examination; and
- iii apply the steps to studying essay-type examination.

6.3.1 Essay-type examination

This is one of the most important types of examination. Essays usually contain many questions. You may be asked to choose from the questions or may not be given any option. In an essay question, you are required to provide facts about the question. Depending on the type of essay, you may be asked to provide your own opinions. Different types of essay questions demand different kinds of answer. Some of the essays may require you to:

- | | | |
|---|-----------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 | <i>Narrate</i> | give the events as they happen |
| 2 | <i>Describe</i> | show the parts of the object or issue |

3	<i>Enumerate</i>	list
4	<i>Outline</i>	present the points in a simple sentence or phrase form
5	<i>Distinguish</i>	make distinctions
6	<i>Compare</i>	show similarities
7	<i>Contrast</i>	show differences
8	<i>Discuss</i>	fully expatiate bringing all views and your own
9	<i>Prove</i>	provide logical evidence
10	<i>Apply</i>	take the situation to another situation
11	<i>Create</i>	build something new
12	<i>Imagine</i>	present the feeling that is unreal, real
13	<i>Design</i>	construct or re-construct
14	<i>Innovate</i>	bring new ideas
15	<i>Draw</i>	<i>inferences</i> use the situation to bring out another view
16	<i>State</i>	present as it is
17	<i>Define</i>	give the meaning
18	<i>Elucidate</i>	expatiate further
19	<i>Explain</i>	make it vivid and clear

Exercise 6.1

Read the passage below titled ‘Selecting and using media with the mind of preparing for an examination on it.

Media components can provide:

- i subject information and the instructional process
- ii sound and vision to explain or demonstrate skills
- iii self-testing opportunities and assessment processes
- iv communication between teachers and students

The purpose of a resource rather than the medium will determine how it is integrated into the distance education process, for example, whether students read, listen, watch or interact with a computer. These uses may also depend on who the students are, where they are, their existing skills levels and their learning styles. For example:

- i if low literacy levels are a factor, audio or video resources will be useful.
- ii if students are very isolated, the telephone will help break down the distance barrier.
- iii if the course requires students to develop physical skills, realistic video demonstrations will be useful.
- iv If an assessment task requires students to chair a meeting or to interview a client, they can record their activity on audio tape.

Since the purpose of using media in training is to improve the quality of the learning process for studies, each medium’s characteristics need to be matched to the skills being addressed.

Print resources are relatively cheap to produce, and convey theory and knowledge very effectively with instructional techniques which help students to learn then test their own understanding. Many processes can be demonstrated, but physical operations or interactions are much less successful in the print medium. Most

distance education courses are delivered via print resources, often supported by other media components.

Audio resources are a cheap and effective means of conveying information. For example:

- i a German language course uses audio tapes to provide vocabulary and conversation exercises.
- ii a community services management course uses audio tape recordings of interviews with managers of service organisations as the basis for student activities.
- iii a communication module on conflict resolution uses an audio tape to present dramatisations and role-plays.

Video resources are expensive to produce but are very useful where practical demonstrations of skills are required. For example:

- i a child care training package includes a video of activities in a child care centre, which brings the subject to life and enables students to respond to real-life situations.
- ii a police training course in modern techniques for fingerprinting uses a video to demonstrate each process.
- iii a course in tour guiding uses a video of an escorted tour around a city to demonstrate presentation techniques, and how to handle 'difficult' tourists.

Video resources, once produced, can be incorporated into interactive CD-ROM and online programmes.

CD-ROM resources, if fully interactive, are very expensive but can be highly effective in certain learning situations. A CD-ROM can contain a vast amount of information in text, audio, video, animation and virtual reality formats, which can be accessed through a complex navigation system. For example:

- i a CD-ROM is used in a mining and environmental education programme for secondary schools, and includes text, audio, video and animation in game-type activities that allow students to explore the issues raised.
- ii an induction programme for the Australian Red Cross Blood Service uses a CD-ROM to illustrate practices and functions using interactive text, graphics, sound, animation and video
- iii a course in hair styling uses a CD-ROM that allows students to try out the appearance of different hairstyles on a series of typical head shapes
- iv High tech equipment and skilled multi media developers are required to create an interactive CD-ROM. Once created the CD-ROM can't be revised or updated easily.

Online resources which use text and basic graphics are relatively cheap compared with CD-ROM production, once you have the technology and an online developer. The most useful aspects of online delivery are its research potential and the

communications features it offers, such as e-mail, bulletin boards and chat facilities. Online information can also be updated very quickly. For example:

- i an online course for English as a Second Language teacher provides a web site containing practical exercises, demonstrations and links to other sites for research purposes.
- ii a print-based tourism training course uses a web site to provide up-to-date industry information, links to tourism sites for research and the facility to e-mail assignments directly to the teacher.
- iii a vocational preparation course in fractions and decimals uses interactive exercises which enables students to key in answers, which are automatically checked and corrected if necessary.

More vocational training courses are now delivered online; students can communicate with teachers, e-mail assignment submissions and contribute to bulletin board discussions.

Distance education programmes are increasingly using combinations of media to deliver training. For example, print materials often cite references to audio and video resources, which can be sent out to students from the library or resource centre on temporary loan. In all of the above examples print materials form a significant part of the delivery method. Other media components can offer supplementary information in a different format, or provide different learning experiences for students which help them learn skills more effectively.

The value and effectiveness of print resources should not be minimised. In spite of the explosion of high tech computer-based communication and of the information super-highway, print will remain the most accessible medium of communication for many years to come. It can be used anywhere, and it is always at hand for reference. Technology-based media suffer from the limitations of the specific technology being used; its accessibility depends on availability, where and when it can be used, and is contingent upon its reliable operation.

Audio and video equipment is relatively common these days, but the computer hardware and software required for CD-ROM and online access is much less common and is very expensive. The question has to be asked: how much more effective are they than less sophisticated media, in terms of value for money and educational effectiveness?

The answer is not simply the more expensive equals more effective. Cost-effectiveness is as important as educational effectiveness in distance education delivery.

Now that you have read the passage form notes to bring out the important points raised in the passage. Then use your notes to prepare for the following essay question:

‘Multi-media systems are diverse in type, use and purpose’. Discuss this statement in relation to distance education.

The above represents a typical examination question. Draw up an outline from what you have read and the notes that you have prepared and use it to answer this question under strict examination situation. Do not turn to the discussion that follows until you have attempted the exercise. Now that you have completed the exercise, let’s discuss the process you took in tackling the question.

Forming notes on the passage

Having formed your notes on the passage, now compare them with the one produced below:

Selecting and using media

Media components

- 1 Can provide subject information and instruction process, sound/vision to explain/demonstrate self testing and communication between teachers and students.
- 2 Purpose how to be integrated into DE e.g. read-write-interact with computer - where, when learning and learning styles.
- 3 Low interactivity – (audio) developing physical skills (video) chair a meeting/interview (audio tape) all to improve the quality of learning.

Print sources

cheap, convey theory and knowledge, test understanding physical operations and interactions less used for most DE.

Audio resources

Cheap, effective for language course, community course interviews, dramatisation.

Video resources

Expensive, useful for practical demonstrations, child care training, police training course, course in tour guiding – can be incorporated into CD-ROM.

CD ROM resources

Expensive if fully interactive – highly effective, vast amount of info: text, audio, video, animation etc. e.g. used in mining and environmental education and induction programmes.

Online resources

Text, graphics - cheap - research potential: E-mail, bulletin boards, chat, online for English courses, vocation, and print-based tourism course.

Combination of all these

DE increasingly using print media + audio + video in study centres or libraries; high-tech computer-based communication-information super highways; print the

most accessible audio and video related materials these days, computer hardware for CD-ROM expensive.

Are the points raised in your notes similar to those outlined above? Note that irrelevancies and words that can be easily provided during the examination have been removed. The notes are consistent—headings and sub-headings clear and spaces left between one heading and the other. The notes are also shorter as abbreviations have been used where necessary and convenient.

It is very important to remember that you are not going to be allowed to come in with your notes during the examination. You must revise the notes many times before the examination.

Having mastered your notes, your outline for answering the essay question should be something like the one presented below. Remember, for any examination, you have barely 30-45 minutes to answer the question. You cannot afford to waste time on outlining. Your outline should be brief and useful. In drawing up the outline, you should consider the demands of the question. Let's analyse the question:

Multi-media systems are
diverse in type use and purpose
]Discuss the statement in relation to **Distance Education**

Exercise 6.2

Answer the following questions briefly:

- 1 How many parts is the question divided?
- 2 What are the key words of the examination question?
- 3 What are you to do?
- 4 What are you not to do?

If you have done the above exercise very well, you will have discovered that the essay question is divided into six sections. These are:

- i diverse
- ii in type
- iii in use
- iv in purpose
- v discuss
- vii in relation to Distance Education

It means therefore that your outline should do what you are asked to do. That is, you should *discuss* not *describe* or *narrate* the statement. Discussion means you should unfold the issue, break it down into its component parts, explain each part, bring your opinions and show that you are a master of the subject.

Cross-check your outline with the one below

My outline

Multimedia-system

Diverse in type: print, audio, video, online CD-ROM, computer etc

Diverse in use print (knowledge, test, theory) audio (interactions, interviews, drama) video (practical demonstration, training, guiding)

CD ROM (vast information, text, audio-video)

Online (graphics, E mail, chat)

Purpose of DE, read, write, train, learning styles, interact, etc.

during exam →
(takes just
3 minutes)

6.3.2 Dos and don'ts of essay writing during examinations

With the outline ready, you are now confident enough to start writing the examination. Do not waste time on outlining during examination. Remember, it is the essay that will be marked not the outline.

Exercise 6.3

What are the *dos* and *don'ts* while answering an essay question? List these and compare your answer with the lists below.

Dos

- 1 Go straight to your point.
- 2 Give the point and support it with proofs.
- 3 Link one point with the other, using linking words like: *First, second, third, most important, less important, on the one hand, on the other hand*, etc.
- 4 Be conscious of time and divide your time well as you treat each point.
- 5 Start with a captivating introduction, go to the first, second, third, etc point and draw a very useful, captivating and well-focused conclusion.
- 6 Mind your language: be brief, clear and direct.

Don'ts

- 1 Do not write irrelevancies.
- 2 Beware of repetitions.
- 3 Do not waste time on one point thus having no time for the other points.
- 4 Do not go astray.
- 5 Don't be disorganised.

6.3.3 Before submission

If you plan your time very well in an essay examination, you will have enough time to go over your work. But in most cases, you are so occupied during the examination that you do not have time to read over your work.

Exercise 6.4

Go through the outline on the examination question posed on multi-media systems etc. – diverse in type, use and purpose again. Imagine that you have finished writing the essay. Jot down what you think you should check carefully before you submit your work.

Let's discuss the exercise.

Last minute reading over your work can be very useful. This is because most of the errors we make in essay writing can be corrected by us if we check our work over. For example, after you have completed the essay on '*multi-media systems*', you may wish to check whether or not you have:

- i answered all the components of the questions;
- ii used the English language correctly;
- iii punctuated all your sentences well;
- iv organised the essay well;
- v presented the essay in a readable fashion; and
- vi presented the facts correctly.

6.4 Summary

In this unit, you learnt the following concepts:

- i the demands of essay-type examination;
- ii the way to study for essay-type examination;
- iii the dos and don'ts of essay writing during examinations; and
- iv the precautions that must be taken when studying for essay-type examinations.

6.5 Conclusion

The essay-type examination described in this unit is a common feature in your programme. This unit has stressed the importance of a systematic plan of study for this kind of examination.

6.6 Tutor-marked assignment

Critically assess the unit on studying for different kinds of examination which discussed how to study for essay-type examination. Bring out the strengths and the weaknesses of this unit.

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- Adkins, A. and J. Mckean (1988) *Text To Note*, Edward Arnold, London.
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Unit 7

Studying for multiple Choice and short-answer examinations

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7.5	Conclusion
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7.1 Introduction

In the previous unit (Unit 6) we discussed the ways of preparing for essay-type examination. In this unit, we will take a look at how you can study for multiple choice and short answer types of examination. As we said earlier on in Unit 6, you study for examinations based on the demands of such examinations. Multiple-choice and short-answer types of examination are no exception.

7.2 Objectives

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- i define clearly what multiple-choice examination is;
- ii prepare for multiple-choice examination;
- iii define what short-answer type of examination is; and
- iv prepare for short-answer type of examination.

7.3.1 What is multiple-choice examination?

Multiple-choice examination is that which requires you to choose from alternatives or options, the correct answer to the question. This kind of

examination is often referred to as discrete examination because it usually tests one concept at a time.

We will now illustrate this type of examination using English Language as the subject.

Exercise 7.1

Read the passage below titled 'Africa: a well defined continent' and answer the multiple-choice questions that follow.

Africa is a very well-defined continent. There is not just a clean-cut boundary with the neighbouring Europe and Asia, its enormous landmass is comparatively left unsegregated by the fracturing influence of the seas. There's little doubt that the arrival of foreign influences immensely subdued the spirit of African unity. For centuries, Africans had to get clearance from distant foreign centres before they could relate to their next-door neighbours. Once impossible, now difficult, a legacy of colonialism is communication and transportation between African states. However, in the face of centuries of entrenched antipathy against continental communication, the emergence of politically independent African states brought with it a slow but steady shift towards a permanent awareness of the importance of communication, and a marked improvement on where it was just 20 years ago. The convenience of air transport and the practicality of sea transport make them indispensable as the credible modes by which the vast continent not only makes physical contacts with itself, but also maintains indubitable links with the outside world. No sooner had the earliest air service operators in the world established themselves than Africa joined in the new glamour mode of transportation. Unlike sea transport, air operation has very few unconquerable constraints and air transport is Africa's best-developed and most popular international mode of transport. Every state and island of Africa has at least one airport or airstrip, and an overwhelming majority of them provide air services of their own and make their landing/take-off facilities available to numerous foreign operators. Within the states, however, the aircraft remains a somewhat exclusive means of passenger transportation, and has been unable to command the mass custom of both passengers and freight. Air transport, nonetheless, has developed astronomically since its inception in Africa over half a century ago.

- 1 By Africa being a well-defined continent, the writer is suggesting
 - A Africa can be defined
 - B Africa is an ill-structured continent
 - C Africa's boundaries are clearly marked
 - D None of the above

- 2 From the passage, we can infer that Africa was once
 - A Large, isolated, infiltrated, united
 - B Large, unisolated, uninfiltrated, united
 - C Large, unisolated, uninfiltrated, disunited
 - D Large, isolated, uninfiltrated, united

- 3 From the passage, we can infer that colonialism is
- A Antipathetic to communication and transportation
 - B Sympathetic to communication and transportation
 - C Indifferent to communication and transportation
 - D None of these

All the questions that follow the passage are multiple-choice questions. Options are given for you to choose one.

7.3.2 How to study for multiple-choice examination

Now that you have answered the questions and know the demands of the passage, think about how you would have studied the passage for examination.

Exercise 7.2

If you were to study the passage for an examination, list what you need to do. After you have completed this exercise, turn to the discussion that follows:

Look for highlighted words

In studying for multiple-choice examination, you need to know the major points of what you are to study. In most of our textbooks, the major point or the main technical term or word is italicised or produced in bold print. For example, in the passage under discussion, some words may be made bold, italicised or underlined to show that they are important.

Africa is a **well-defined** continent. There is just no **clear-cut boundary** with the neighbouring Europe and Asia, its **enormous landmass** is comparatively left **unsegregated** by the fracturing influence of the seas. There is little doubt that the arrival of **foreign influences** immensely subdued the spirit of African **unity**.

If you are studying for multiple-choice examination, your attention should be focused on these words that are bold printed, underlined or italicised. In forming notes or revising for such an examination, all these words should be carved out and their importance or meaning shown.

**Look at the note on
the extract from the passage**

Africa: well-defined, clear-cut
boundary, enormous landmass,
unsegregated, foreign influences

What has been done in the note is to bring out all the words in bold print in the passage. Going by the bold prints, the multiple-choice questions 1 and 2 can easily be answered.

Question 1: requires you to understand the meaning of the word ‘well-defined’ which has been put in bold print. By inference ‘well-defined’ cannot mean ‘ill-structured’ which is the second option. It cannot also mean ‘can be defined’ because it is ‘well-defined’ so the correct option is (C) which means *African boundaries are clearly marked*.

Question 2: requires you to gather all the words made bold in the extract above together. These words are: *enormous landmass*, *unsegregated* and *foreign influence* and *unity*. By focusing on these words, you can guess their meanings as:

Enormous	large
Unsegregated	unisolated
Foreign influence	infiltrated
Unity	united

By focussing on the words that are made bold in the extract of the passage, you can then see (d) as the answer

What are we saying here? In studying for multiple-choice examination make sure you pay attention to the major words, technical terms and points that are highlighted.

Details may not be very necessary in studying for multiple-choice examination questions: But in some courses (e.g. Medicine) where many terms are required to be learnt, details may be important.

Know the material

Since the answer to an objective question is either right or wrong, you must know your material very well. For example, words like *not*, *always*, *constantly*, *frequently*, etc in the material may be used to confuse you, while giving you options. You must pay particular attention to such words. For example, in Question 3 the word *antipathy* in the third paragraph of the passage is very important to getting the clue to the answer. If in the course of studying the passage your attention is not drawn to this word, you will find the answer to the question difficult. Sometimes *details* matter in studying for multiple choice examination.

7.3.3 During a multiple-choice examination

1 *Be careful*: read the questions carefully. Sometimes the words like *not*, *only* *but*, *through*, *off*, etc may make a big difference. You may miss the answer if your attention is not drawn to these words.

2 *Eliminate obviously wrong answers*: Some answers are obviously wrong. Eliminate these first. Then think more deeply on the options (or detractors) that are very close.

3 *Follow the instructions*: Sometimes you may require *shading*, *ticking* (P), or *underlining* the correct answer; if you do not do what you are asked to do, your paper may be disqualified.

7.3.4 Studying for short answer examinations

Short-answer examinations require you to insert a *word*, a *phrase*, a *sentence* in a gap. It may require you to *match*, *complete*, *list*, *outline*, etc. The difference between short-answer examination and the multiple-choice examination is that options are not given in short-answer examination.

Exercise 7.3

How do you study for short-answer examination? Suggest as many ways as possible.

Just as you did in the case of multiple-choice examination, in short-answer examination, you read widely, pay attention to highlighted words, note relevant details and jot down major points in your notebook.

The following are suggestions to consider, while reading for short answer examinations:

- 1 *Cover* all the areas given to you to cover; questions can come from any of the areas.
- 2 *Put* the notes in a short form that you can revise within a short period.
- 3 *Gather* many points together because the more points you gather so also will be your chances of being able to answer the questions.
- 4 *Be exact* as you study for the short-answer examinations. You will be required to fill in the exact word and unless you know it, you will not be able to tackle the question.
- 5 Read the instructions very well and obey them. If the instruction says *fill in* do not tick (P).
- 6 *Revise* your notes as many times as possible. The more you revise the notes, the more they become part and parcel of you.
- 7 *Speed and accuracy* is important. In a short-answer exam, you need to work fast and work accurately.

7.4 Summary

In this unit, you have been exposed to:

- i studying for multiple-choice examinations
- ii studying for short-answer examinations

7.5 Conclusion

Preparing for examinations is an important part of your programme. Whether you want it or not, you will be called upon to write examinations. Nothing works better than to read widely, form useful notes, revise your notes many times and be careful in the examination.

The suggestions presented in the unit are for you to put into practice. If you practise them, you are sure of exam success.

7.6 Tutor-marked assignment

Take a topic in your field that is examinable. Set four objective or multiple-choice questions and four short-answer questions on the topic. Show how you will study for these exam questions. Present your answer in sequential order.

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GST 106: Study Skills

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Unit 1

- 1 Skills needed are listening, reading, writing, speaking, note taking.
- 2 The students must show practically how they have used these skills and how they can use the skills. For a discussion of each skill, award 5 marks each.
 $5 \times 5 = 25$.

For practical demonstration of the use of skills, award 5 marks for each skill.

$$5 \times 5 = 25$$

$$25 + 25 = 50 \text{ marks.}$$

Marking Scheme

Unit 2

- a. The candidate should be able to relate the experience before reading the unit.
15 marks
- b. The candidate should be able to relate his/her experience after reading the unit.
15 marks
- c. The candidate should be able to compare the experience before and after reading the unit.
15 marks
- d. The candidate should be able to come up with positive/negative changes.
15 marks
60 marks

Unit 3

- 1 The library opens room for:
lending, borrowing, viewing, using seats for study, referencing, consulting, etc.
20 marks
- 2 Use all these in study activities – the candidate should be able to show how these are done.
20 marks
40 marks

Unit 4

- a **Why examination?** – for success, for competition, for vocation, to test our knowledge, to assess what we have learnt, etc.
20 marks
- b **What are examinations?** Tests, ordeal, answering questions in a restricted place, etc.
20 marks
- c **How can we succeed?** Read well, study, revise, concentrate, be diligent, etc.
10 marks
50 marks

Unit 5

How to revise your notes has been extensively discussed in this unit.

Markers should turn to the unit for these details.

20 marks

The candidate should be able to support the answer with practical and concrete evidence. That is the real work of the candidate that cannot be called from the unit.

30 marks

50 marks

Unit 6

The candidate should be able to bring out the strengths and the weaknesses of the unit.

Strengths

- a suggested ways of studying essay-type questions
- b usefulness of note taking
- c usefulness of outlining
- d going over work during examination etc.

20 marks

Weaknesses

- a did not consider individual differences

30 marks

50 marks

Unit 7

- 1 The topic that is taken must be examinable.

10 marks

- 2 The options of the multiple-choice questions must be up to four and be discriminating.

10 marks

- 3 The short answer questions must also be reasonable.

10 marks

- 4 The candidate must give at least five to six steps that will be taken to answer the questions.

10 marks

40 marks total

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