Lesson 2, Reading 2
The Pomodoro Technique

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1 Before reading

Read the reading guide in Lesson 2, Reading 1 if you have not read yet.

2 Reading

Reading guides and requirements:

- The below article contains approximately 600 words, less than half of the reading 1. Students should carefully choose an appropriate reading technique from the five ones that are discussed last week to cope with it.

- Students should spend at most 20 minutes to read and capture the main idea of the article.

- Students have to answer the related questions in section 3.

The Pomodoro Technique Explained

The Pomodoro Technique is a popular time-management method invented by Italian Francesco Cirillo. He wrote, "*I discovered that you could learn how to improve your effectiveness and be better able to estimate how long a task will take to complete by recording how you utilize your time.*"

The technique is popular, perhaps because it's portable and easy to learn.

- Pick one project or task you want to focus on.

- Set a timer for 25-30 minutes, and get to work.

- When the buzzer sounds, take a two-to-three-minute break.

- Repeat.

- After four sessions, take a longer break.

- Record each session with a tick or X in your notebook

The Pomodoro Technique is useful if you get distracted while working on a project or want to understand how long a task takes. It's ideal for many types of work including writing, coding, design, and study. The technique also works if you have a lot of repetitive work to get through, such as wading through a busy inbox.

A 25-minute Pomodoro session is long enough to get a little work done but not so long that it feels painful or overwhelming. Unlike trying to work without a break for hours, it's relatively easy to stack small sessions on top of each other. Four Pomodoro sessions can represent a productive morning. It's surprising how much you can accomplish in short bursts of focused work. After that, it's time for lunch or even a nap.

How Effective Is The Pomodoro Technique®?

I read about the Pomodoro Technique in 2012. I use it to write first drafts of articles and other work tasks I was procrastinating about.

I've found the Pomodoro Technique works best early in the morning when I'm fresh and want to focus. When I start a 25-minute Pomodoro session, I know I can't check email, social media or the news. It's kind of like brain training. Obviously, your work style will vary.

Sometimes, I go hardcore and disable my internet access during a Pomodoro session. As I have a Mac, I use the app Be Focused Pro. I also use the apps Freedom and Rescue-Time to disable my internet access and track my blocks of focused work. Sometimes, I wear noise-canceling headphones and listen to ambient music on repeat during a session. That said, fancy apps and equipment are an extra step. All you need is a timer, pen, and notepad for tracking sessions.

I increased my Pomodoro sessions to 30 minutes, as I prefer a round number. Some advocates aim for 60-minute blocks of focused work. You can go the other way too. If 25 minutes feels too long, try 15 or a random amount of time like 18 minutes. Remember, the goal is to cultivate blocks of focused work.

You don't need to stack four Pomodoro sessions on top of each other like the technique prescribes, although it helps. One or two Pomodoro sessions a day sets a tone whereby you feel more focused and productive, even if you're not up against a self-imposed timer.

Adapting to short bursts or sprints of work takes practice. Don't avoid tracking Pomodoro sessions either as what gets measured gets managed.

This technique can help anyone who feels distracted or overwhelmed to focus on what matters. Considering the onslaught of distractions we all face at work, that's a superpower.

3   Questions

Write down the answers for the following questions. Students can use both English and Vietnamese for the answers.

1. Who did invent the Pomodoro technique?

2. Where can you apply the Pomodoro technique?

3. What items do you need to start applying Pomodoro technique?

4. What is a Pomodoro session?

5. What are the benefits of Pomodoro technique?