

## Applying Context Talents in Academics

*These insights and action ideas can help you apply Context talents to achieve in various aspects of your academic life.*

### General Academic Life

- Associate with individuals and groups that specialize in the study of specific events, personalities, and periods in history.
- Create a historical frame of reference for whatever you study. Research political, natural, military, and religious events of that period. Delve into the lives of contemporary leaders, scientists, artists, explorers, and philosophers.
- Supplement required reading for classes by locating other credible sources of information. Don't let your thinking be limited to the professor's syllabus.
- Understand that you are attracted to institutions of learning with a rich history and a long tradition.
- Seek opportunities to study with reputable, recognized, and knowledgeable historians who also are master teachers.
- Attend lecture series in which leading figures of your time speak about their experiences in global leadership, diplomacy, military affairs, business, science, or the arts. Prepare questions to pose during the Q&A sessions or book signings.

### Study Techniques

- Hypothesize your own theories for specific historic events. Rely on public records, surveys, correspondence, and legislation to develop a study brief.
- Consider your own history of test taking. Identify your best performances. Spot patterns. Prepare for today's examinations by replicating study techniques that have worked for you in the past.
- Overcome obstacles placed in your path by a professor by conferring with former students of this individual. Ask questions to learn from the experiences of individuals who excelled.
- Complement your reading and research assignments with additional sources of information, such as recorded speeches, transcripts of court proceedings, or vintage interviews with key figures and their contemporaries.
- Record interviews with individuals who lived through significant periods of history, such as the Great Depression, wars, terrorist attacks, political scandals, and boom times.
- Find photographs, paintings, drawings, blueprints, news film, videos, costumes, recipes, historical reproductions, almanacs, and costumes to bring a historic epoch to life.

### Relationships

- Help people understand that knowing about their past experiences -- personal and academic -- will help you feel comfortable working with them on projects and in study groups.

- Decipher your methods for building a historical basis for your relationships with specific family members, friends, teammates, classmates, instructors, and coworkers.
- Ask professors about themselves on the first day of class. Inquire into their influences as children and their academic backgrounds. Read their master's theses, doctoral dissertations, books, articles, lectures, and speeches.
- Attend class reunions. Reminisce about your school days with former classmates, faculty, and administrators. Pose questions to discover what individuals have done with their lives since graduation.

### **Class Selection**

- Choose classes taught by professors who examine cause-and-effect relationships between the actions of historic figures and the consequences they produce. Avoid history courses that require nothing beyond rote memorization of facts, names, and dates.
- Enroll in classes that allow students to study original documents and artifacts. Review the syllabus for information about field trips to museums, battlefields, archives, and theatrical productions based on historic events.
- Register for courses such as comparative religion, geography, economics, science, philosophy, and the arts to better understand the root causes of today's wars, alliances, financial policies, treaties, and trade agreements.
- Opt for classes in which you can write papers, make presentations, re-create past events, or impersonate historic figures to fulfill course requirements.

### **Extracurricular Activities**

- Join a genealogy society or club. Trace your own or someone else's family tree.
- Serve as the historian of your fraternity, sorority, honor society, or campus organizations.
- Collect and archive memorabilia from events throughout the years. Volunteer to work with the campus historian to gain hands-on experience.
- Form a book club whose members read and then discuss autobiographies, biographies, history books, or even historic fiction.