

## Create a Study Stadium

R. N. Whitehead

**Y**oung people are naturally drawn to serious places. Why not take advantage of this natural situation and build a “study stadium” – a very special work environment that supports and encourages best efforts and success? A student's mind will literally shift gears upon entering it. It will be easier to get into the “study mode”.

Don't construct the kind of place you would like to study in. Build a place where your kid feels energized and comfortable. It should be a safe environment where your child spends time learning. It shouldn't be the same place they watch TV, store junk, or hang out with their friends. A study stadium has the singular purpose of supporting your child's *best work*. Don't send mixed signals by adding other functions.

Build a corner of the world that belongs to your young person—a place that is singularly focused on their access to knowledge. A study stadium should be quiet and private. It should be an environment where there are few distractions, away from the sights and sounds of television, radio, and other people. Your young person needs to be surrounded by firm reminders that their learning is a high priority. Whether you find this place in a corner of a bedroom, the basement, or even the garage is not important. What is important is the message it sends your kid, and that message is “Here's a place to do your best work!”

A study stadium doesn't require a rosewood desk, super-fast computer or the latest reference library. In fact, much of the furniture and many of the resource books can be gleaned from secondhand shops, garage sales, and the basements of family and friends. The emphasis should be on function, not flash.

The study stadium should have a desk or table at proper height and a comfortable chair. Try to find a good gooseneck or adjustable lamp and fill the tray with 'learning stuff' - pens, pencils, felt tips, crayons, correction fluid, ruler, stapler, hole punch, glue, extra paper, highlight pens, eraser and paper clips (good for fiddling with when the brain is stuck). A good dictionary, a single volume encyclopedia and a thesaurus can sit on one corner of the desk and a globe on the other. Bookshelves are essential to neatly store texts, reference material and study notes.

The final piece deserves its own paragraph – a good Agenda. No one ever gets anywhere worthwhile without knowing where and how he or she will get there. Planning and organization are essential to success, and agendas help to keep everything in one place.



Don't worry if your child is too young to use some of these items. It's good that they become familiar with the tools of education. Who knows how much learning results from fooling around with things we aren't formally prepared to use?

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