

What is your educational paradigm?

Why are you in school?

1. To Learn

When your first concern is learning, you practice until you've mastered a concept, even if this means doing additional work. A teacher knows that a student truly values learning when he/she

- frequently asks questions
- requests additional practice
- verbally reflects on the lesson
- shares ideas for activities (not "you should")
- volunteers or enthusiastically participates
- checks their progress (self-assesses) often
- personally uses what they've learned
- shares learning with his/her peers
- celebrates growth, however small
- shows gratitude for opportunities

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2. To Gather Points

When your first concern is earning a grade, you simply do what is required for that grade and may seek to exploit the teacher or others for the sake of points. A teacher knows that a student puts the grade above learning when he/she

- fails to ask questions
- avoids un-scored activities
- avoids difficult assignments
- only wants to know what's required
- wants to know how much x is worth
- watches the clock/lacks interest
- criticizes teacher errors/flaws
- feels defeated by low scores
- blames others or complains
- claims others are more fortunate, privileged, or talented

Why are you in school?

3. To Bide Your Time

If you don't really see any value in either the learning or the grade, you avoid making any effort at all, unless it satisfies the present need. You tend to just wait.

4. To Survive

Life outside of school is so hard and so demanding, so fraught with physical or other challenges, that you're exhausted and use school time to recover, get encouragement, find validation.

5. Other Reasons (?)

Every rule (and set of classifications) has exceptions.

These patterns apply to other aspects of life, ranging from household chores to career to personal relationships. The key is develop a healthy routine and rational outlook. Whatever the case, the deciding factor is YOU. That said, if others offer to help, you should take it—presuming that the offer is not blatantly self-interested and therefore untrustworthy. Some people really do want to help you succeed.