

# The Thinking Cap

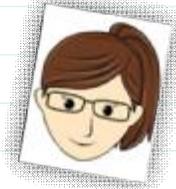
Fall 2010

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## Alexandra in Tutorland

[alexandra's musings](#)

**Edit, Revise, Repeat.**



September is under way, and we at Thinking Caps have spent the last few weeks getting ready for an incredible school year. I hope that you've had a chance to check out my suggestions on how to start off the school year on the right foot, [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#), but I'm going to take a break from talking about back to school and how to get in that groove. Instead, I'm going to focus on a topic that usually makes everyone moan and groan: editing and checking work. Before you roll your eyes and think, "another lecture," I hope that you would *please* give me a chance.

Here is why: I have spent the last four months editing! No, I am not exaggerating and I shudder at the memories. About a week after we finished the last chapter of [Tutor in a Book](#) (Adams 2010), my co-author Ana and I started editing. We did a read through, we did a re-read through with a red pen, we made lots of changes, we sent the changes to the editor, we received comments, we did more reading, then more editing, and then we did the cycle over and over again for four months. Of course, we were editing a whole book, so our process was much longer than that of editing an essay or checking over homework assignments. However, we still went through the same editing process that is imperative to being successful in school. By the end of our editing exercises, neither Ana nor I wanted to look at our draft again, but several weeks later, with fresh eyes, we opened up the document and compared it to our original: We were shocked. *How* could we have thought that the first draft was good enough to call finished? As we looked over the tweaks and changes, we truly realized of the importance of editing. Now, we have our finished book, and although we don't look back on the days of red-ink fondly, we're happy to know that our final draft is something we are proud of. I won't pretend that editing is always fun, quick, and easy, but I can promise that checking over finished work enhances cohesion and picks up on those little errors that might otherwise get glossed over.

And so, as you start handing in your first assignments and taking your first tests, take it from someone who *really* has been there: an extra review before handing your work in will yield results that you can feel good about. Now, go get yourself a red pen!

**Send your questions to:**

[info@thinkingcapstutoring.com](mailto:info@thinkingcapstutoring.com)

## Sense and Sensibility

[you ask, we answer](#)

**Q:** I make a lot of mistakes in math because sometimes my notebook gets messy, but I have a hard time keeping it in order. What should I do?

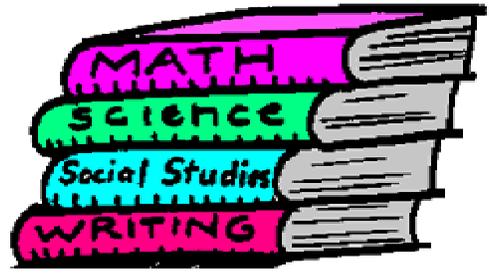
**A:** One way to help keep the numbers lined up and handwriting easy enough to read is to use a quadrille notebook. It is a good idea to buy the type that has bigger squares because that'll leave enough room to write in the numbers. By keeping everything in order you'll make less mistakes and it will be easier to check your work when you're done!

### Inside this Issue

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- The (academic) Odyssey
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### Great Expectations

- ü Check out Alexandra's tips on study skills [CBS News](#)
- ü The Thinking Caps Study Skills Manual [Tutor in a Book](#) is in [bookstores](#) now!
- ü We're holding workshops around the City. Check our [schedule](#) for upcoming events.
- ü Good Luck to our Fall test takers!



## Much Ado About Learning

### our tips and helpful hints

**Setting personal goals is a great way to start the new school year. Here's what we're working on!**

Every day I try to learn something new about someone or something. Sometimes it is in the traditional way through books and lectures but other times it's what I learn about a cherished friend or if I am lucky, about myself. I think it's this attitude that helps keep me going every day because learning something new keeps life exciting.

—Anita Keshavan

It's easy to get stressed out when you're trying to balance school, work, friends and family; that's why my goal for the new year is to make sure to take time to relax, whether it's having a cup of tea or taking a walk or lounging around with a favorite book or magazine.

—Ali Cardia

My new years goal is to manage my time effectively, so that I have time to do my work, see my friends, get enough sleep, do fun activities and still have enough extra time so that I don't feel stressed out and leave anything behind!

—Sophia Lerdahl

I make a timeline of important deadlines for all of my major assignments at the beginning of each semester. That way, I can plan ahead and anticipate how much time you'll need to spend on each assignment.

—Mai Wang

I set the goal of reading one play per week. By checking the plays out of a local library, I kept myself on a timeline because I only had the books for several weeks before they had to be returned.

—Robert Stevenson



## The (academic) Odyssey

### review of education news



#### Adjusting to the new school year.

The start of a new school year brings up a variety of emotions for most students. While some cannot contain their excitement about fresh looseleaf paper and new teachers, others dread the beginning of group projects and school uniforms. Many students experience a mixture of feelings that change as the school year progresses.

There are cases where a rough adjustment is verbalized: "I have sooooo much more work than last year. It's hard to fall asleep because I can't stop thinking about how many chapters I still have to read." In other cases, behavior tells us something is troubling but we only have a vague sense about what that is. For example, a girl who used to love English class suddenly finds herself dreading it and coming up with ways not to go.

For both students above, relief might be found by considering why this particular transition is being experienced in this specific way. This can be accomplished by spending some time reflecting on this question alone, but it is usually best done through discussion with others- be it a friend, parent, professional, or combination of these.

The young man above who talks about trouble sleeping might come to realize that starting at his new school, he is no longer the smartest kid in the class. He pressures himself to work harder to regain that position. He might need support around accepting his new status among peers and teachers. The girl who finds herself avoiding english may discover that her english teacher reminds her of her 4th grade teacher whose patronizing tone always made her feel inadequate. She suffered silently that whole year. This student might benefit from talking about how awful 4th grade was and figuring out how to cope differently this time around.

Periods of transition can be difficult for all of us. How well we manage them depends on our past experiences, our internal resources, and our ability to seek out and receive support.

—Robyn Lerner

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# A Tale of One Tutor

## lessons we learned along the way

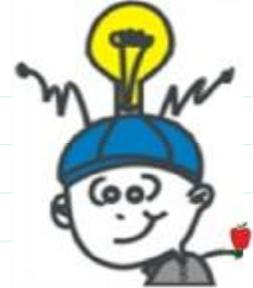
### **The New York City classroom.**

No matter where you are born, where you go, how long you have been here or even what language you speak, living in New York City undoubtedly shapes who you are; it's something in the air, besides the smog. Growing up, I knew that how and where I was learning was a special place, but I didn't quite understand why. It is difficult to comprehend your surroundings when you are in the middle of them, but once I moved on to college, I was utterly taken aback by my luck. We have all complained about tourists flocking to our museums or parks and the traffic that they bring, but until you are on the outside looking in, it's

hard to understand the international, cultural and historical lessons we learn here.

When I was in high school, most academic classes finished by 3:30 pm, but most students stayed well past five o'clock to continue with electives which ranged from art, to writing to debate, and to community service. What's even more amazing is that most of us were lucky enough to be taught by others who grew up in the City and benefited from the same innovative lessons. So for those of you who love a good math equation, what would that be? Creativity squared?

The product is students who have a real investment in what they are studying. And you should!



Nothing should stop you from only taking your favorite class for four years in high school when after school programs are available. There are 24 hours in the day and as we know, New York is the city that never sleeps.

Use New York to your advantage. It's a 24-hour lesson in the best way possible. I can guarantee you that if you let each of its lessons engage you, you will succeed and astound all the way down your future roads.

—Terrill Caplan



# Cat's Cradle

## tantalizing brain ticklers

### **Word nerd.**

Can you find the words?

b  
P  
C  
T

Which word of four letters can be added to the front of the following words to create other English words?

CARD BOX CODE BAG HASTE

M  
Y

What is the word coiled inside this circle?

N  
O G  
R E  
T R  
S

V  
A  
D  
G

What is the following word when it is unscrambled?

H C P R A A T E U

**Thinking Caps Tutoring** is an innovative, after-school educational company that helps students acquire the skills and confidence needed to succeed in school, college, and beyond. TCT, through an individualized, descriptive screening process, matches students with student tutors best capable of overcoming a child's weak points and emphasizing strengths. Services provided at TCT include subject tutoring, skills coaching, homework support, standardized test prep and more.

For more information about TCT or any of the programs, please call us at 917.779.8183 or send an email to [info@thinkingcapstutoring.com](mailto:info@thinkingcapstutoring.com).

