

The Thinking Cap

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Alexandra in Tutorland

alexandra's musings



Thank you, spacibo, gracias!

My friend emailed me recently to say that she'd acquired our summer beach pass (woohoo!). After several minutes of jumping up and down and considering when I would make my first trip to the land of sand, I realized that while summer is almost here, I still have some unfinished business to take care of. So before I head off with my SPF 70 and beach read, I want to take this opportunity to *thank you!* We've had another fun, successful, and memorable year at Thinking Caps Tutoring. I am incredibly thankful for our amazing TCT team of energetic and inspiring individuals: your enthusiasm and commitment makes it possible for us to encourage the love of learning that is the hallmark of Thinking Caps. I also want to give a shout out to Rebecca Putter, TCT Austin director, whose dedication to our mission has given us the exciting opportunity to work with students and families in Texas.

I am also grateful to all those who have entrusted TCT with the exceptional opportunity to help shape young minds. I thank you for all of your support and encouragement in spreading the word about our work. Finally, and most importantly, I would like to thank all of our awesome students. You guys are inspiring, hardworking, incredible, and the true motivation for all of us at TCT. We're so proud of everything you've accomplished and cannot wait to see your future successes!

As we head off for the summer, please don't hesitate to check-in. We'll have our feet in the sand and our noses in textbooks. As always, we'll be offering our fun, interactive summer programs in New York, the Hamptons, and Austin, TX. We look forward to seeing you this summer and next year.

Have a great summer and remember to keep your Thinking Caps on!

Send your questions to:

info@thinkingcapstutoring.com

Sense and Sensibility

you ask, we answer

Question: I am worried about next year. I will have a lot of homework and I need to start thinking about the SATs; any suggestions?

Answer: Many high school students will be in the same position come September. The key to dealing with a packed schedule and extra homework is planning ahead. Think about when you are going to take the SATs and understand that the weeks leading up to the exam will be super hectic. Try to get a jump start on long term assignments and budget your limited free time. Unfortunately, you might not have time for much fun stuff right before the SAT, but plan to have a little break the weekend after the test.

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Great Expectations

ü ThinkingCapsSummer programs begin in June. We will be in NYC, the Hamptons, and Austin, TX

ü Check us out on Facebook!

ü Watch us on KVUE Austin for great summer study tips

ü Join our PageTurners book club.





Much Ado About Learning

our tips and helpful hints

Not your typical reading list. Books that have inspired us.

My favorite book is *America Is in the Heart* by Carlos Bulosan. Though it does not stray from the specific experiences of the author's life in the Philippines and America, this book defines America in broad, heart-breaking strokes, as a land of violence, opportunity, and social responsibility.

—Michael Lau

Since I'm a total nerd at heart, my favorite book of all time is, *A Tale of Two Cities*. Dickens is an amazing writer I admire, and this story has everything you could want: vivacious characters, exciting action, sincere romance, political intrigue,... and of course, TONS of great vocabulary words. When I was assigned this book to read for class in high school, the teacher insisted that we read each section with a dictionary ready at hand, just in case. It's a great read and it never disappoints me no matter how many times I come back to it!!

—Ana McGann

One of my favorites that I first read in high school is *White Noise* by Don DeLillo. It opened my eyes to the absurdity of the world. It confirmed my suspicion, as a teenager, that everything was not as well-ordered and sensible as adults pretended it to be. The book is both hilarious and ominous. It's a send-up of pop culture and a very prescient warning too.

—Amanda Shapiro

Invisible Man tells the story of a young man's search for his own identity, and it is a story that I think all young people can, in some way, relate to. Plus it has some beautiful descriptions of New York City!

—Nina Stoller-Lindsey



Adventures of an Austinite

keep Austin learning



The lazy days of summer are finally here! Before you dip off to the pool to soak up the rays, we wanted to thank y'all for helping to make our inaugural year in Austin a success!

We have spent the last several months dedicated to spreading our mission of building more confident and independent learners. Throughout the process, we have been consistently delighted by the quality of educators and professionals in the community.

Now, before you load up on the sunscreen and change gears into "vacation mode," it is important to remember the importance of keeping your mind active and engaged this summer. Breaks are imperative and well deserved, but a complete vacation from the books might erase all of those hard earned skills you learned

last year. So, at TCT ATX, we have come up with several fun activities to keep your brain ticking this summer. Check it out:

For fun tips and tricks on how to prevent summer brain drain, take a look at our conversation with **KVUE**:

- * <http://www.kvue.com/news/Preventing-summer-brain-drain-for-your-children-122142839.html>

Summer Enrichment Courses (individual or small-group lessons):

- * Summer π
- * The Write Stuff
- * Study Skills Homeroom
- * Mad Science

And since the new school year isn't too far away, here is a sneak preview at our upcoming fall events:

- * Homework Heroes: an after-school study hall in collaboration with the JCC
- * Our SAT and ACT Guide will be published with McGraw-Hill
- * We'll be around town holding informative workshops for parents and students. Check back with us for our workshop guide this fall and come say hello!

Have a wonderful summer and cheers to Austin, for a wonderful year and many, many more to come!





A Tale of One Tutor

lessons we learned along the way

Getting my feet wet.

When I was a senior in my Texas public high school, many classmates were stoked about going to popular, nearby universities. UT, A&M, UNT, and Tech were top choices for many of my peers, but I wanted to explore new depths and venture out. After winning several scholarships and essay contests, I applied strictly to schools on the East Coast. I chose NYU because New York has indescribable energy that lured me in. Freshman move-in day was the first time I had ever been to the City, and I was overwhelmed. But being the independent person that I am, it took me about a week to figure out how to get anywhere in the city by walking or by subway. Everyone seemed new and different, which I liked. I always had interests outside of the norms, especially in music.

If you're a student in grade school and you're reading this, it is okay to do different things. If studying in a dismal, quiet room is getting too dreary, don't be afraid to try something radical and alternative. My favorite way to study is to put on some records and sing along for hours as I drill information into my head. I'm not suggesting that this will work for you, only that you try new study environments until you find a setting that will make doing homework actually something to look forward to.



It is also great if you can get creative with school projects. In 11th grade I had to take a philosophy class taught by one of the football coaches. He would always just give us busy work, and every few weeks he would assign us a PowerPoint. I thought that was the lamest thing ever, and so I used Garageband to make raps from scratch about the subject matter for all the projects, and then wrote lyrics to them. Whenever the students had to present their PowerPoint's, I would just take my laptop up to the front of the room and play my song. As you get older, and especially in college, your teachers will really respect and appreciate your creativity, so don't be afraid to unleash it as long as you stay within the topic.

The bottom line is, don't be afraid to take great leaps, explore new options, and try creative alternatives. Whether it's deciding where to go to college or finding an effective study routine, try and venture out from the conventional standard from time to time and see where it takes you. You might learn something about yourself. And for a student growing up, new experiences are essential.

—Max Savage

Cat's Cradle

tantalizing brain ticklers

You are in a cold house in the winter. It is dark. You have one match. There is a candle and there is a wood burning stove. Which do you light first?

What comes once in a minute, twice in a moment, but never in a thousand years?

A man while looking at a photograph said, "Brothers and sisters have I none. That man's father is my father's son." Who was the person in the photograph?

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.

