

Georgia's Tips

I have been thinking about Year 6 students making the transition to high school. I know for many of us with a learning difference, this change can seem so very overwhelming. I also know that we are all unique, and what works for one of us won't necessarily work for everyone, but I have come up with a list of tips that I used in my first year of high school. Perhaps some of these ideas might help you.

Transition Meeting

One of the most important things that happened for me, is that my parents and I met up with the learning support team at my future high school at the end of Year 6.

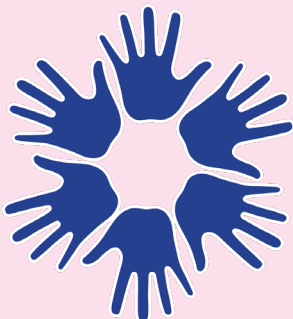
This gave us time to get to know each other and prepare a list of everything extra (on top of my formal accommodations) that would help me in class. Everything was then summarised and emailed to my teachers at the start of Year 7.

This made the transition for me, my teachers and the learning support team much easier.

Communication is key! And, perhaps my biggest tip for success in high school.



Georgia Ryan, 2020 Youth Ambassador



Build Your Team

Don't be afraid to tell your teachers what works for you.

Teachers are awesome and want to help.

Speak to your teachers/learning support team or maybe email them if this feels more comfortable for you.

Georgia's Tips

Be Organised

- **Have lots and lots and lots of highlighters and post-it notes.** I have found that highlighting things and writing myself lots of notes and sticking them everywhere really does help me to remember things. I have lots of sets at home and at school.
- When I first found out I had dyslexia my parents got me an Apple watch. Not only did this have a spelling app on it but I could **set up reminders where notifications pop up during the day to remind me of different things.** Even simple things like handing in permission notes or remembering when I had a lunchtime meeting/rehearsal/training session or checking my class room numbers became easier. I know this is an expensive option that not everyone can afford but it really was an enormous help to me in the first year of high school.
- **Colour code your timetable with a different colour for each subject.** I then covered all my notebooks in the corresponding colour. This helps me to easily find them in my locker.
- My school also has **a daily noticeboard unique to every student** where we log in each morning and it has our own personal timetable and any other school notices, upcoming dates and events, as well as due dates and exam dates. **Check out if your new school has something similar available.**
- Be super organised at home too! See my home help tips.

My **BIGGEST TIP OF ALL** especially for those of us that struggle with being organised and remembering things is: as soon as I get an assessment or exam notification, I take a photo and text it home so it can be added to my calendar straight away.

This way nothing is missed or forgotten. There are also programs that help you break down an assessment into manageable steps. One of these programs is Studiosity.

Georgia



HANDY HINT: I used a **key lock for my locker** rather than a combination lock as I always had trouble trying to remember the combination number.

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Get Technical

- Classes also seem to move a lot quicker in high school, so **Microsoft Lens is a great help**. This allows you to take photos of the white/black board and email them to yourself. You can even open it in Word and add to or edit it.
- At my High School all our textbooks are digital, which means I can **use the speech-to-text function, turning my textbooks automatically into audiobooks**. Having all your textbooks as digital books on your device also means you have a lot fewer books to carry around.
- My school also organised subscriptions to **Grammarly, Read & Write and Microsoft 360**. For me, personally I like to use Google at school and Microsoft 360 at home. Grammarly is my preferred spelling and grammar checker.
- I also **use the speech-to-text and Apple voice memo app on my phone** if the teacher is saying something important that I want to remember or refer back to later, especially when they are discussing assessment requirements.
- **Mindmaps are an amazing way to organise information**. One of my favourites is Poplet.
- For my **English novels, my school offered them to me in audio form** but if this isn't a possibility check out your local library for audio book options as chances are, if they don't have it in, they are more than happy to source it for you.

Here are some links to the technology I've mentioned above:

- [Vision Australia](#)
- [Microsoft Lens](#)
- [Poplet](#)
- [Grammarly](#)
- [Read & Write](#)
- [Studiosity](#)



HANDY HINT: Vision Australia library has an amazing range of resources and textbooks available and it is free to join for anyone with dyslexia.

Local libraries are the coolest and have lots of amazing resources such as VR, study rooms, 3D printing and at my local library there is even a recording studio that is free to use to record podcasts or songs, edit movies and use recording booths, etc.

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Home Help

- **Have a dedicated work/homework space.** This helps with distractions and noise, although I still listen to music as I find it easier to concentrate when listening to music!
- **Have a calendar and school timetable** hanging next to your desk. I also have a white board with the upcoming events/reminders/due dates, which I updated weekly.
- **Get into the habit of charging your device each night** right next to your school diary. That way you remember to pack both the next day.
- I also have a **designated place for my school diary and lunchbox.** This helped me get into the habit of packing and unpacking each day in the same order so I don't forget anything!

School Success

- **Sit as close to the front of the classroom.** I find if the distractions are behind me that it doesn't bother me as much. I can also hear the teacher a lot better too!
- **Ask your teachers if they can prepare handouts of the main notes covered in class.** This helps me to concentrate on what was being discussed rather than trying to copy huge amounts of work down.
- **Ask the learning support team if they can email exam details a few days before.** This gives me the details of which room and what I need to bring. This way I am always prepared and don't have to explain to my class teacher on the day, I just go straight to my own room.

I hope you find some of these tips as useful as I have transitioning to high school.

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Enjoy the ride!

Any big change can seem daunting and the transition to high school may seem incredibly scary but just remember, every other kid is probably thinking the same thing!

I suggest you try **EVERYTHING!** Some things might turn out not to be your thing but you will have had some fun trying and will make lots of friends.

Remember dyslexia really is only such a small part of who we are, so **concentrate on the things that bring you happiness and success and enjoy the ride!**

