

Ten Tips to Incoming Freshman (from somebody who has been in your shoes):

- 1) **Select courses that you enjoy.** As the years progress, you'll have the opportunity to be more selective with your courses. Balance academic rigor with areas of interest. Aspiring artists applying to SCAD... think about AP Art History. Future bridge builders at Georgia Tech... maybe AP Physics is for you. You're privileged to be enrolled in a school with such a diversity of courses—take advantage of it!
- 2) **Don't be afraid to make new friends.** There are many people who share the same interests as you and are seeking those who share that interest. Sometimes you may have nothing in common but the desire to make friends! Remember, there are plenty of teens out there in this same situation.
- 3) **Join an interesting club or sport.** High school is the time to try new things, and luckily our school has so much to offer! There are so many clubs to choose from, like the Environmental Club, Key Club, Spanish club, Debate Team, and so many more! Our school also offers a wide variety of sports, including some freshman levels! So if you've always wanted to try out golf or audition for a musical, now's your time to try! Joining a club or sport is also a great way to meet people!
- 4) **Your teachers are there to help you.** This has probably already been drilled into your head many times, and I'm going to drill it even deeper. Personal approaches are best if you find that you need to discuss something with a teacher, which is a completely normal occurrence. Do not argue with the teacher during class—about homework, about a misgraded test, or even about a disciplinary action! You'll find that teachers will be more willing to help you (and more likely to see your side of the argument) if you take the time to approach them in a setting that doesn't disrupt a class of 20 other students.
- 5) **Don't be afraid to ask questions.** If you don't comprehend the material, ask your teacher! Chances are, there are others who also don't get it and are silently asking the same question. They'll be glad someone spoke up! If you are having great difficulty, you can also set up a time before or after school to meet with your teacher. Every teacher has a scheduled time for help sessions before or after school, or a way to ask for one.
- 6) **Upperclassmen really aren't so bad.** They may look super intimidating, but they were in your same position years ago. They understand how you feel. You can always go to one of them if you have a question about anything. Plus, they can make pretty great friends (especially the ones who can drive, when you find yourself needing a ride).
- 7) **Seminar is not simply a study hall!** Yes, seminar can sometimes serve as that last-minute rush to finish your math homework. But, it's more than that... if you learn to use it right. Take an SAT Prep Class (equivalent courses through private tutoring companies can cost hundreds of dollars) or get some help in your history course. When your SAT score boosts 100 points or your history grade increases by a letter grade, you'll be glad you picked it!
- 8) **Doing the homework really benefits you.** Sure, sometimes it may seem like busy work, but it's only making you better! You need to devote a significant amount of time on your homework. Plus, if you do, you will get better grades and relieve a lot of stress. Most teachers make homework 10-20% of your grade—so completing it could bring your grade up two whole letter grades!
- 9) **Don't neglect your grades.** When you're a senior applying to colleges, grades from all four years of high school are important. If you start off strong, it will be easy to maintain a good average. But if you start off with poor grades, it will be harder to pull up your grades.
- 10) **Have fun!** I cannot stress this enough! High school is supposed to be one of your greatest moments in life! Live it and love it to the fullest every day!

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