

Dear Future AP Biology Student,

You're about to embark on a challenging yet fulfilling journey. It's important that you understand what you're getting into, as well as some helpful tips to help you succeed in this class. I won't sugarcoat it for you: This class is one of the hardest courses you'll take in high school, and trust me when I say this class definitely isn't for everyone. However, for those of you who are willing to put in the work and persevere, this class will be much easier.

For my first tip, I want to emphasize how important reading the textbook is. The AP exam consists mostly of questions that ask you to apply broad concepts to specific examples. This is where the textbook comes in handy. The textbook provides you with the specific examples you need to conceptualize the broader topics. This way, when the AP exam brings up random topics like sickle cell anemia or inbreeding, you'll be prepared to answer the questions.

Similarly, this is also why it's important to *pay attention in class*. Trust me when I say that the conversations you have with Mr. Tadlock can be both intellectually stimulating and informative. While it may seem tangential when he starts talking about a specific example of something or some new research that has come up in recent years, these topics will help you have a better, more complex understanding of the material. Let's be honest, even an elementary school kid can memorize the biology textbook or vocab words, but an AP biology student needs to have a complex understanding of the topics in order to apply them on the AP exam, especially with the FRQ. So make sure you're paying attention in class and don't doze off!

Lastly, just like with any AP class, you need to master your self-studying skills. I would say that about a good 25% of the exam material isn't gone over in class. This is why it's up to you to go back and study the topics you didn't get to in class. Furthermore, if this is your first AP

class, then you need to develop and master your self-studying skills. Everyone's studying schedule and method varies, so find what works for you.

What I would say is pretty universal however is to allot some time each week (or each day once the exam starts approaching) to study AP bio. Note that this *does not* include homework time. This is extra time outside of class and outside of homework that you set for yourself to review the topics you've gone over or even teach yourself the new topics in preparation for the AP exam. Try your best to lock in when you're teaching yourself new topics. What worked for me in the weeks leading up to the AP exam is that I placed my phone (my #1 distraction) in a completely different room and took 10 minute breaks every 60 minutes. In these 60 minute increments I alternated between watching videos, reviewing textbook notes (aka learning objectives), studying flashcards, and taking practice tests.

Some helpful resources I used were (1) the AP daily videos, (2) the Princeton review AP bio prep book, (3) khan academy, (4) amoeba sisters on youtube, and (5) the knowt.com flashcards.

Well, I hope these tips were helpful! I know it's easy for me to just say "it'll work out in the end," but you just have to trust in your ability to work hard and persevere. Here's a quote from the novel *The Alchemist*, "When you want something, all the universe conspires in helping you achieve it." Keep this quote in mind as you navigate this class.

Good luck!