

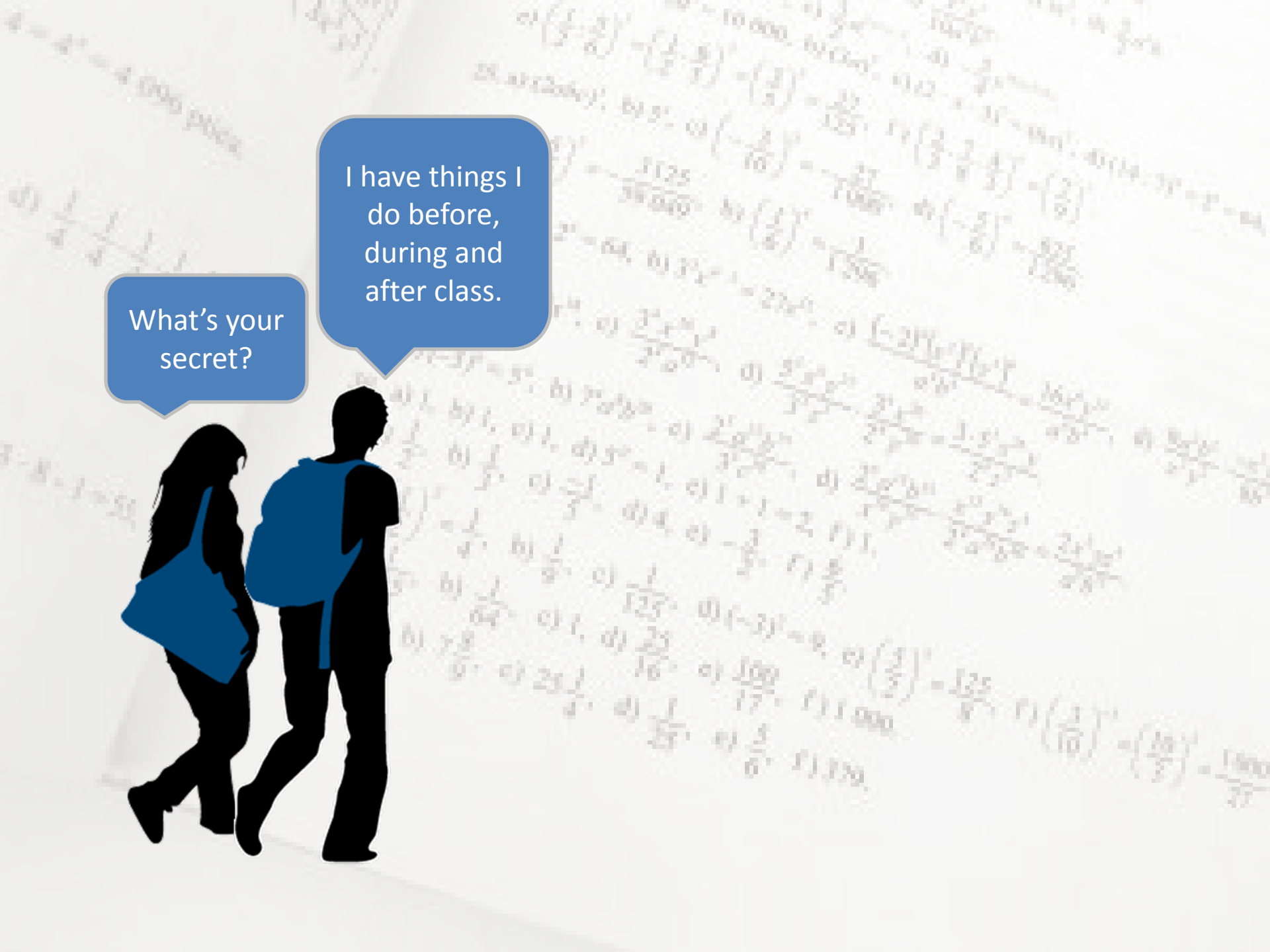
Study Skills for Math

Judging from our
test scores, you're
better at math
than I am.

Maybe I have
a better
study
strategy.



The Learning Experience Project
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The image features two black silhouettes of a woman and a man walking away from the viewer on a light-colored path. The woman is on the left, carrying a blue bag, and the man is on the right, carrying a blue backpack. The background is filled with faint, light blue mathematical formulas and equations, such as $(\frac{1}{2})^2 = \frac{1}{4}$, $(\frac{3}{4})^2 = \frac{9}{16}$, and $(\frac{1}{10})^2 = \frac{1}{100}$, arranged in a grid-like pattern. Two blue speech bubbles are positioned above the figures. The first speech bubble, on the left, contains the text "What's your secret?". The second speech bubble, on the right, contains the text "I have things I do before, during and after class.".

What's your secret?

I have things I do before, during and after class.

Pre-Read

For example, before class, if I have time, I pre-read the textbook. I put question marks beside anything I don't understand, and I write short notes in the margins.



During Class

Then in class, I pay attention to the lecture and try to find answers or an explanation for the things I don't understand in the textbook.



During Class

And I don't worry about writing down everything the teacher says. Instead, I make notes so that I understand. If something's unclear, I ask questions during class.



Preparing for Tests

So, how do you prepare for tests?

I don't cram the night before. I study 3 or 4 times a week for an hour or two and do practice questions—different kinds and levels.



Preparing for Tests

Different kinds and levels of questions?

Yeah, easy, middle, hard. The easy problems are to warm up, the middle problems give me a general sense and the hard ones give a deeper view of the concepts and test my ability to apply knowledge. The middle and hard ones will probably be on the test.



Preparing for Tests

Oh, and I set a time limit for each. If I spend an hour and still don't get the problem, I take a break. Either I come back to it later, or I ask for help.



Summarize

The other things I do to prepare are summarize the material and explain the concepts in my own words.



Summarize

I might make a chart or diagram.
After I finish a chapter in
Integrated Calculus, for example, I
summarize the techniques to solve
integration. And, to put things in
my own words, I rewrite or restate
the definitions or explanations.



Review

So you pre-read your textbook, jot down notes and question marks in the text then focus in class on what you don't understand?

And I practice and participate in class because it helps me understand better. I don't just memorize.

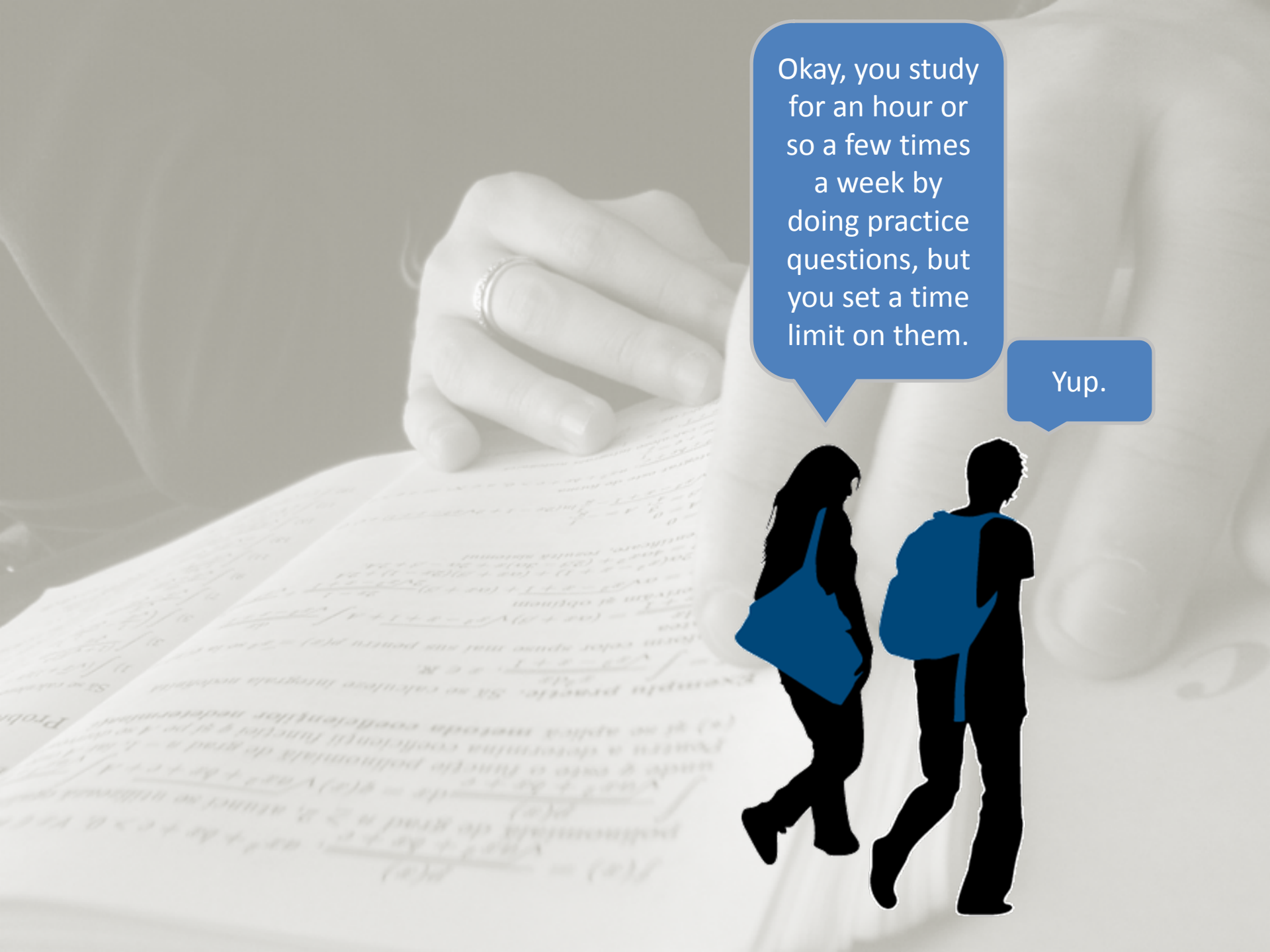


Review

Memorization isn't
as good as
understanding.

Yeah. I'll go over the
similarities and
differences between
terms, say limit,
continuous, and
derivable function, and
review examples to get a
better understanding.



A close-up, grayscale photograph of a hand with a ring writing in a notebook. The notebook is filled with handwritten mathematical formulas and text. The background is a soft-focus image of a person's hand holding a pen.

Okay, you study for an hour or so a few times a week by doing practice questions, but you set a time limit on them.

Yup.



Ask for Help

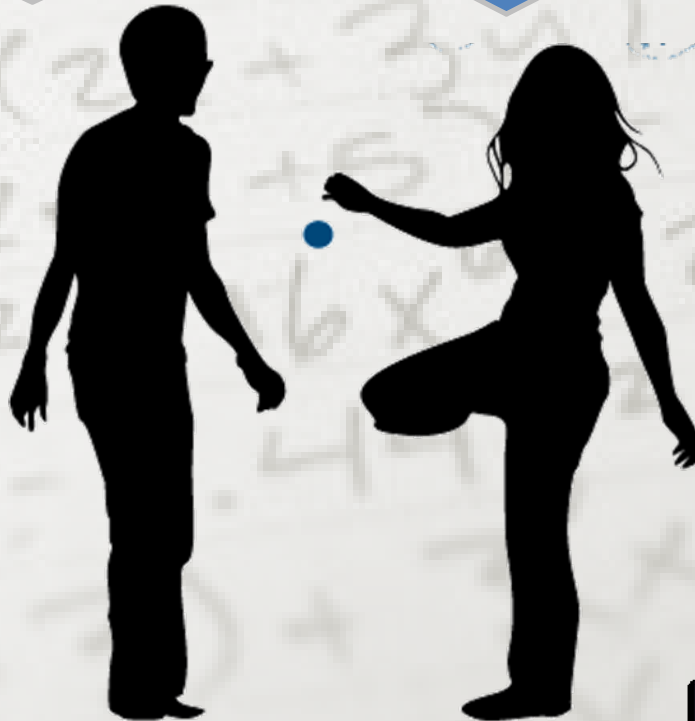
Also, you summarize, make charts and diagrams, put concepts in your own words, and make sure you understand the terms.

Plus, if I'm confused, I ask for help. Sometimes, I'll ask the instructor, or someone in my class, or a friend. I know people who go to the Learning Centre for math help. I'll even check the Internet for help.



Sure, no problem.

Maybe we can study together sometime, so I can see your strategy in action?



Content: Xiaomeng Jiang, Student
Images: <http://istockphoto.com>
and <http://www.sxc.hu/>