

## In Their Own Words...

### Tips and Thoughts from Former AP Chem Students

A few successful former AP Chemistry students were asked a series of questions to help future students get an insight into what it takes to be successful in the class. The following are excerpts from some of their responses:

**In your own words, please explain WHY you think you were so successful in AP Chem?**

*"...because I studied hard."*

*"I had a firm grasp on what was learned in honors chemistry... I did all of my homework. This may seem stupid, but it did two things. It got me the points if/when it was checked, and it truly introduced me to the different types of questions I could be asked on a quiz/exam/AP test."*

*"...I overprepared for the quizzes (If time permitted....lol) and that, I think, is the reason I did well. I continue to review even if I knew the material!"*

*"I made sure to write down anything and everything that was discussed in class that either wasn't already in the notes or I felt I needed extra reminders for... I feel that the secret to this class is covering your bases and not leaving yourself any room to be caught off guard with things you didn't know or weren't prepared for... It's important to stay ahead in this class; if you fall behind it's very difficult to get caught back up."*

*"I completed all practice worksheets and used them as an opportunity to familiarize myself with the material and think about \*why\* the concepts were true and \*why\* they made sense... being an active listener in class & an active participator in labs definitely helped."*

**How did you go about preparing for quizzes and exams?**

*"I went through the notes, and focused on slides I highlighted because of importance or because I hadn't had a firm grasp on the topic yet. I also went through the homework sheets just to refresh my mind on how questions would be asked..."*

*"I made a Quizlet IF the notes included a lot of vocab. Also, along with vocab, I wrote down the steps as to how to attack a specific problem. ALSO, I review my labs!!!!... ALSO REVIEW YOUR WARM UPS!!! AND DO THEM!!"*

*"To prepare for quizzes, I made review sheets, which helped me organize the notes in my mind. I also looked over all practice worksheets to study the problems I got wrong in order to determine what mistakes I was making & why I was making them (finding my weaknesses). For exams, I would look over my review sheets and complete the AP Practice Problems."*

## **Why did you decide to take the AP Chemistry class in the first place?**

*"I took AP Chem to give me background information and a jumpstart for when I take chem in college."*

*"I seemed to do well in Honors chemistry, which of course doesn't mean much, however that was the seed for my thought process. More importantly than doing well, chemistry is just interesting to me. I truly enjoy the subject and learning new things about it. Because I enjoy the subject, it made me want to do well, and it made the class not boring..."*

*"I was above average in honors chemistry, but not "exceptional." So, I was of course nervous of taking the class. However, I know that I'm a hard worker... For someone who is on the fence for taking the course, I think they should be reflective as to how much time they want to put in."*

*"Take AP Chemistry if you want to really learn about chemistry — if you want to know why 90% of the world is the way that you see it... Why take AP Chemistry if you've already taken Honors Chemistry? Honors teaches you about the elements and some very basic calculations with chemical reaction equations. If you go the extra mile to learn in-depth about the AP topics, you will end up learning nearly 10x as much material as you learned in honors. Honors Chemistry tells you about the elements and the proportions in which they react. AP Chemistry tells you what reacts, how it reacts, when it reacts, and, most importantly, why it reacts."*

*"I had a lot of fun in Honors Chemistry, so choosing AP Chem was pretty much a no-brainer. It wasn't like a lot of the other classes I had taken—instead of lecturing, doing problems, more lecturing, more problems . . . we were able to learn, then physically SEE & interact with the knowledge we learned in labs or in demos or in the real world. Also, I used to be dead-set on entering the medical field, and chemistry is a must-have for anyone deciding to pursue that kind of career."*

## **How does AP Chemistry compare to other AP courses you have taken?**

*"This is the hardest course I have taken at Liberty thus far."*

*"It's the most challenging AP course I have yet to take. Granted, I have a better grade in this class than the other three AP courses I have taken... AP chemistry is more challenging, but I put in the work because I enjoy it. The work load in this class is honestly what I expected. Not too overwhelming, but not a minuscule amount. I never felt like I was given assignments that I wouldn't be able to finish properly within the time frame that it was due."*

*"AP Chemistry has been my most rigorous AP course, but it's definitely the course that I've learned the most in..."*

*"If I had to describe the AP Chem course curriculum in one word, I would say comprehensive. I know that I still have a lot of studying to do yet, but I have never left an AP class feeling more prepared for the AP exam... I'm honestly amazed by 1) just how much ground we covered over the past three marking periods and 2) the fact that I actually feel good about my prospects for this exam."*

**What specific things influenced your decision to take this AP exam?**

*"...because I want to join the high five club. Once my name is on there, it will be there forever..."*

*"I want to show colleges that I have mastered a year of college chemistry..."*

*"A lot of colleges accept AP Chemistry as a college credit, and having those extra scores to see where you stand on a national level is a huge plus."*

**Share any plans for how/when you will go about preparing for the actual AP exam in May.**

*"Study the material that I don't understand, take practice tests, review with other students, etc."*

*"...I will pull up practice tests from two to three different sources (as sometimes certain sources tend to make them too easy or too hard) and take them, taking note of the specific topics I struggle with or don't remember and reviewing them by going back through my old notes or finding refresher videos online. I repeat this process until I feel comfortable enough for the exam."*

*"...I'm going to review two units per week with (mainly) the notes, using my Princeton Review book and review sheets as guides. Then, I'll do as many practice exams as I can manage/get my hands on."*

**Is there anything else you would like to share with future students?**

*"Don't take AP Chem unless you KNOW that it is your strong suit and/or you LOVE CHEMISTRY."*

*"Tell them to not be scared of the rumors of the class. Sure it's hard, but it is my favorite class I have taken throughout my education career."*

*"Put in the effort. Don't be dumb and throw away your lab. Actually do the warm ups THEN review the warm ups. Make sure you use Mr. Little to your advantage... you have access to his help 24 / 7. Having the ability to message him in Remind is such a helpful tool, and I get so much clarification before the test."*

*"Don't let the stress of this course get to you. There is no need to isolate yourself or freak out about the state that you're in in this class because everyone else is there with you. Ask for help and communicate with people, but don't let stuff sit for too long... Make your notes as extensive as possible and pay close attention to everything that is said in class, as the most seemingly insignificant thing said in passing during the notes could end up being the thing that decides if you get an A or a B on an exam. Let yourself enjoy the fun parts of the class, make jokes about it and make friends in your lab groups, as it makes the hard work you have to put into it worth it."*