We’ve all been there. You’re holding your first-term progress report in your shaking hands, knowing that you’re in trouble because of your English mark, and your Math mark, and probably your Science mark too. Your parents are going to be livid when they see that 56% right in the middle of your report card, and you wish that you would've done better on those assignments you just passed (or failed, there’s no judgement here), but fear not! I am here to help you amidst this time of worry and anxiety. Here are some tips and tricks on how to flip that 56% to a 65% at least.

1. **Ask as many questions as you can in your class!**

You know that one kid in class that asks literally every single question *ever,* and sometimes makes you wonder how they made it into high school? Well, they got 17% higher than you did on that quiz in period C. How, you may ask? They made sure that they understood what was going on! They made sure they knew that a simile and metaphor are *not* the same thing, that logarithmic and exponential functions *are* inverses of each other, and that the mitochondria *is* the powerhouse of the cell! Doing this will make sure that you know what’s going on too, and then you can both have way better marks than the guy that falls asleep four out of five times a week.

**2. Go for extra help!**

I can personally tell you that extra help has saved me from bombing every assignment and test I’ve ever had in pre-calculus. Going to your teacher to plan a time to go through things you don’t understand is a less intimidating way to do better in a subject than asking all your questions in front of all the smart kids, plus it shows initiative to your teacher (and initiative is something they can talk about in a reference letter in the future, hint hint). Not only that, but you might get a tip on what will be on the next quiz or test so you can prepare yourself more. If you do show up to get extra help on a regular basis too, you’ll have a better chance of being allowed a retest on the off-chance you do bomb it (it just happens sometimes, no matter who you are).  The majority of teachers are super cool and you’ll get to know them better over time if you seek them often- they’re more than just educated robots that spit equations and grades out at us!

**3. Teach it, don’t preach it!**

Explaining a concept to someone (or to yourself, if you have no-one like me) helps you understand it better because you have to put it in your own words, and you’re getting feedback from someone over which part sounds confusing or if you're missing something - so pull up your sister, your uncle, mom, cat, or stuffed animal, and teach away.

**4. Use the feedback your teachers give you!**

This new rating system teachers are trying out in some classes is useful for a reason! Knowing your strengths and weaknesses in a subject not only tells you what you need to work on, but what you should be looking at the most come test and exam time. It might seem rude that your teacher says that you “really need to work on transition sentences,” however if you listen to them, you might realize that it’s true. I know for a fact that I am not good at my sentence fluency, one sentence will have eleven commas to bind it together, and the next sentence will have seven words. Being able to pick up on that stuff helps let you know how to do better in a class, and it’s a useful skill that you’re going to use all your life.

**5. Show up for class!**

This one may seem obvious, yet very few people try never to miss a day of school. The more you show up, the less information you miss, plus it gives you more time outside of school cause you’ll be able to do most things in class. If all else fails, miss five days or less and you’ll get the 10% incentive on your exam, and that can boost your grade from barely passing to being mediocre in a subject. That’s all a person can ask for, right?

There’s so many other ways to bump up your grade, too- these are just the tips that I use that work for me. Through trial and error, you’ll end up finding strategies that work best for you, and you can be the smartest kid in your class from then on. You’ve got this! Good luck!