



EXAM SUPPORT

GCSEs 2020

Introduction

If you've started reading, that probably means you know GCSEs are important and you want to do as well as possible – you're in the right place.

The purpose of this booklet is to provide you with essential information about how to prepare for your exams and make sure you get the grades you need to go on to what ever future you have chosen next year.

The key messages are:

1. Get organised! If you can't do it on your own, get help. Balance your subjects.
2. Start early – there is lots to do, the earlier you start, the more manageable it is, cramming your revision is stressful and not as effective.
3. Make use of all the things the school provides – we only recommend things that make a big difference!

Contents

- ❖ *How do I organise my revision?*
- ❖ *Where can I get resources to revise for my subjects?*
- ❖ *How do I revise?*
- ❖ *Two different templates for making a revision plan*



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Weekly Revision Timetable – In the holidays (for a more detailed plan if you prefer)

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Where can I get resources to revise for my subjects?

The following pages contain the tips and resources from your teacher about the best, most efficient and effective way to revise. Your teachers have prepared students for exams before with great success, use their knowledge to help you succeed



Subject: Art / Art, Craft and Design

Resources given by school:

- Edexcel Exam Paper
- Artist Research help sheet
- How to annotate sheet
- Deadline timetable

Useful websites:

www.pinterest.com

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/art>

Other useful resources:

- Ask your teacher to see example sketchbooks
- Use YouTube to look at other successful GCSE and A-level art work and watch tutorials.

Top tips when preparing for the Art Exam.

1. Go to the afterschool sessions to get help with your sketchbook work. We are open every day from 3-5pm.
2. Keep up to date with all of the deadlines on your timetable.
3. Take risks, be creative and don't play it safe with your final piece but time yourself when practicing to ensure you can complete it on time.
4. Every page should demonstrate your deeper meaning.
5. Answer all questions on the artist research sheet for research, ESPECIALLY the deeper meaning and personal response ones.
6. Make sure you get to practice your final piece at least twice before the final exam.
7. Your sketchbook must be completely finished before the start of the exam.

Subject: Business

Resources given by school:

- In house revision guide
- Past papers, mark schemes and example answers
- After school revision sessions
- Student made revision pack
- Student made revision cards
- Access to revision materials on Google Classroom

Useful websites:

Exam board: Past papers and specification

<https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse/business-j204-from-2017/>

Revision materials and key term help:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/education/subjects/zpsvr82>

<https://www.tutor2u.net/business/blog/business-studies-revision-quizzes>

<https://www.tutor2u.net/business/blog/gcse-igcse-business-studies-revision-notes-master-listing>

<http://www.beebusinessbee.co.uk/>

Other useful resources:

GCSE OCR Business 9-1 Revision Guide

Top tips when revising Business:

1. Learn key terms and formulae
2. Use past papers to practise key exam skills
3. Complete timed essay questions without your notes!

Subject: Computer Science

Resources given by school:

- Sample questions
- Sample answers
- CGP GCSE OCR Computer Science Exam Practice Workbook

Useful websites:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/examspecs/zmtchbk>
https://www.teach-ict.com/2016/GCSE_Computing/OCR_J276/OCR_J276_home.html
<https://app.senecalearning.com/classroom/course/a1ce4570-6e27-11e8-af4b-35cf52f905c2/section/65ac2e24-3b57-4598-b4dc-01e04eddee1b/session>
<http://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse-computer-science-j276-from-2016/assessment/> (sample assessment material)

Other useful resources:

- CGP GCSE OCR Computer Science The Revision Guide (purchase from Miss West)

Top tips when revising Computer Science:

1. Break the course down into manageable topics e.g. Programming, Computer Hardware, Networks etc that you can effectively revise.
2. Refer back to theory notes in class
3. Revise the key terms, Quizlet is helpful for this.
4. Use the revision workbook to practice exam style questions
5. Practice the longer style questions in the sample papers from the website

Subject: Dance

Resources given by school:

- Use the worksheets that Mrs Faulkner provides for each written task
- Ensure you use the Dance Studio and organize your own rehearsal schedule ready for the Performance Exam
- Use Google Classroom to keep up with work missed and useful research links

Useful websites:

Youtube for examples of other works (see Google Classroom) as well as ideas for aural settings.

Other useful resources:

You can purchase a copy of the revision guide from Amazon
https://www.amazon.co.uk/Revise-Award-Performing-Revision-Guide/dp/129224562X/ref=sr_1_1_sspa?keywords=BTEC+performing+arts+tech+award+revision+guide&qid=1581332680&sr=8-1-spons&psc=1&spLa=ZW5jcnlwdGVkUXVhbGlmaWVyPUEzUTZXTkxYWEtPMDY2JmVuY3J5cHRlZElkPUEwNTU5ODYwM1JIMjcyVjhTWEVOJndpZGdlE5hbWU9c3BfYXRmJmFjdGlvb1JlZGlja1JlZGlzZWNOJmRvTm90TG9nQ2xpY2s9dHJ1ZQ==

Or I have a copy you can use to take notes from if you wish.

Top tips when (revising) Dance

As we have no formal written exam at the end of the topic, spend your time researching and rehearsing!

Subject: Design & Technology Product Design

Number of mock exams in November and length:

One exam which is worth 50% of the final GCSE. It is a 2 hour long exam.

Coursework (Non Examined Assessment) which is 50% of the GCSE.

Topics that may come up in the mock:

D&T and our world – *CAD/CAM, Manufacturing, Sustainability, New and Emerging Technologies*

Electronics – *Inputs/Process/Outputs, Circuits, Microprocessors*

Mechanisms – *Principles of mechanical devices, CAMS, Pulleys, Levers, Gears*

Smart Materials – *Modern Materials, Smart Fibres*

Materials – *Papers & Boards, Natural & Manufactured Timber, Ferrous & Non-Ferrous Metals, Thermoforming & Thermosetting Plastics, Natural & Synthetic Fibres*

Recommended resources to use to revise and where they can be found:

- The revision podcasts on www.sohamdt.com under the YR 11 tab
- The revision powerpoint and booklet on www.sohamdt.com under the YR 11 tab
- All Design & Technology classrooms have class sets of Revision guides which they can use to revise and borrow.
- Students also have their theory books which have all of their theory work in which can be used to revise from.

Useful websites which can be used for revision:

www.sohamdt.com

www.technologystudent.com

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/examspecs/z4nfwty>

Subject: Drama

Resources given by school:

Google Classroom 'Class of 2020 GCSE Drama is continually updated with information and examples. Make sure you have joined this class and downloaded revision materials

Class code: f7sa17

The GCSE Drama revision guide is an excellent way to make sure that you are prepared for C3. We have copies of this available for £3 from the finance office.

Useful websites:

- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/subjects/zbckjxs>
- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zysyvcw/revision/1>

Other useful resources:

- 'An Inspector Calls' set text

Top 5 tips when revising for Drama:

- 1) Read and **act out** moments from 'An Inspector Calls' so that you have *practical experience* of playing the characters across the whole of the play.
- 2) Make specific notes about moments from 'The Woman in Black' to fit onto an A4 page. Include sketches and *specific drama terminology*.
- 3) Research the **historical context** of 'An Inspector Calls' so that you know what the playwright wanted his *audience* to feel and experience.

Subject: English Language

Resources given by school:

- Mock papers
- Sample answers

Useful websites:

- <http://www.eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/english-language/gcse/>
- <https://www.bbc.com/education/examspecs/zpxh82p>
- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise/topic/punctuation>

Other useful resources:

- WJEC Eduqas GCSE English Language: Revision workbook (available from Finance Office)
- Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar for Grade 9-1 GCSE Study Guide (CGP GCSE English 9-1 Revision)

Top tips when revising English Language:

1. Use the workbook to practise key skills
2. Refer back to class notes in your yellow books (Y10/Y11) for sample writing pieces and how to approach reading questions
3. Learn the spelling of key vocabulary
4. Revise how to use basic punctuation accurately (capital letters, full stops, apostrophes and commas)
5. Complete timed practice questions (use mock papers)

Subject: English Literature

Resources given by school:

- Sample questions

Useful websites:

- <http://www.eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/english-literature/gcse/>
- <https://www.bbc.com/education/examspecs/zw9mycw>
- <https://englishapp.pixl.org.uk/PiXLit.html>

Other useful resources (available from Finance Office):

- Macbeth revision guide
- CGP WJEC Eduqas Poetry Anthology revision guide
- Modern prose/play revision guide
- 19th Century Prose revision guide
- CGP Unseen Poetry revision guide

Top tips when revising English Literature:

1. Make sure you know the plot (in order) for each text and the **context** for the poetry anthology and your 19th Century text.
2. Learn key quotations (e.g. make and use flash cards, use the PiXL app)
3. Make lists/mind maps for each character and theme (e.g. using the revision guide and sample essays/essay plans you have been given)
4. Refer back to class notes in your purple books (Y10/Y11) for sample essays and essay plans, as well as question approaches
5. Complete timed practice questions (ask your teacher)

Subject: Food Preparation and Nutrition

Resources given by school:

- Illuminate Publishing AQA FP&N Revision Guide (to be returned after final exam)
- Sample mock paper from AQA website

Useful websites:

- <http://www.illuminate.digital/aqafood/>
Login- SSOHAM 3 Password- STUDENT3
- <https://www.bbc.com/bitesize/subjects/zdn9jhw>

Key Topics to cover:

- Food, nutrition and health
- Food science
- Food safety
- Food choice
- Food provenance

Top tips when revising Food Preparation and Nutrition:

1. Use the activities in the revision guide to practice understanding
2. Refer back to class notes in your A4 folders/ exercise books (Y10/Y11)
3. Learn the spelling of key vocabulary
4. Use practice papers/ spot tests to develop model answers.

Subject: Geography

Resources given by school:

- example high tariff exam questions (6, 8, 9 marks)
- key information for case studies and examples
- checklist of what needs to be revised

Useful websites:

<http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/geography/gcse/geography-8035>
<http://timeforgeography.co.uk> videos for rivers/coasts

Other useful resources:

Revision guides for AQA 9-1 e.g. CGP, and 'My Revision Notes AQA GCSE 9-1 Geography' (Ross & Blackshaw, Hodder)

Top 5 tips when revising Geography:

1. **Use the checklist/specification** to plan your revision. Mix up the topics in your revision timetable, rather than all of one topic at once.
2. **Learn case studies and examples** (Paper 1 & 2) and both pieces of **fieldwork** you did.
3. **Make 'question and answer' flashcards** for key words, causes, effects and management strategies - with questions on one side, and the required information on the back. Colour code. Use these to test yourself and be tested.
4. **Concept diagrams** are a good way to summarise whole topics and show links. **Flow diagrams** are useful for showing processes, like the formation of a spit, or the poverty cycle.
5. **Apply your knowledge** by practising exam questions- plan out longer written answers and try timed questions (1 mark = 1 minute)

Subject: History

Number of exams in the subject and length:

Paper 1 – Thematic study and the historic environment. Crime and Punishment in Britain, c1000 – present and Whitechapel, c1870 – c.1900

1 hour 15 minutes

Paper 2 - Period study and British depth study.

The American West, c.1835 – c1895 and Early Elizabethan England, 1558 – 88.

1 hour 45 minutes

Paper 3 – Modern depth study

Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918 - 1939

1 hour 20 minutes

Top tips when revising History

- 1) Be clear on the order of events, you don't have to learn hundreds of dates but you do need to know sequences. Timelines are useful for this.
- 2) Don't learn isolated facts – think 'how might this information be useful in the exam?' 'what type of question might it help with?'
- 3) Try to write questions based around the ideas such as change, causes, consequences. Use your mock exam papers to help you.

Useful websites:

- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/education/topics/z29rbk7>
- <https://www.bbc.com/bitesize/topics/zymqwx5>
- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zw9qk7h/revision/1>

There will also be after-school revision sessions starting in March and a guidebook to the exam questions given to all students free of charge.

Revision guides

The 'Revise Pearson Edexcel GCSE (9-1) History' series produce revision guides, revision cards and workbooks. These are readily available from retailers such as Amazon.co.uk. Just ensure you search for the courses listed above next to Paper 1 and Paper 2 as there are many different topic options.

NB Pupil Premium students will receive a set of revision guides in the build up to final exams in 2020.

Subject: ICT

No final exam as students completed external exam in June 2019.

Currently working on last piece of coursework which is due to be completed Easter 2020.

Subject: Maths

Resources given by school:

- Revision Checklists
- Practice Exam Papers (extra papers will be on the VLE)

Useful websites:

- <http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/mathematics-2015.html>
- <https://www.mymaths.co.uk/>
- <https://mathsapp.pixl.org.uk/>
- <https://www.bbc.com/education/subjects/z38pycw>
- <https://corbettmaths.com/>

Other useful resources:

- Edexcel GCSE (9 – 1) Maths Revision Guide (available from Finance Office)
- Edexcel GCSE (9 – 1) Maths Revision Workbook (available from Finance Office)
- GCP 10 minutes tests (available from Finance Office)
- Corbettmaths revision cards (available from Finance Office)

Top tips when revising maths:

1. Don't treat practice papers like exams – work out how to do the questions you can't do!
2. Brush up basic arithmetic (non calculator)
3. Use revision checklists to identify topics to revise
4. Learn key content and formulae using flash cards
5. Practise exam questions thinking about exam technique: reading questions carefully, showing clear calculations, checking rounding and units
6. Focus on problem solving: develop planning strategies for multi-step (multi-mark!) questions.

Subject: Media Studies

Resources given by school:

Useful websites:

Go to the Eduqas website to find really useful revision material:

<https://resources.eduqas.co.uk/Pages/ResourceByArgs.aspx?subId=20&lvlId=2>

Other useful resources:

Finally, all videos, Quizlets and your own work can be found on your e-portfolio and Google Classroom

Top tips when revising Media Studies

- Make sure you revise The Sweeney and Luther episode 1 for each series only – these can be found on Google Classroom.
- Watch Katy Perry's Roar and Duran Duran's Rio carefully – these are also on Google Classroom
- Learn the media theories we have studied and apply these, in particular the uses and gratifications theory and feminism to all of the set products you research.
- Remember that the main issues affecting our contemporary culture are multiculturalism/diversity and the growing power of gender equality.
- Remember that the past was much more monocultural & patriarchal (men tended to be more powerful and dominant), so older texts will have fewer women and minorities represented in them
- Get Quizlet on your mobile device and learn all the texts in your class folder when you are bored – the knowledge will enter your mind by osmosis.

Subject: Modern Foreign Languages: French & German

Resources given by school:

- Mock papers & Practice questions

Useful websites:

- Memrise www.memrise.com
- BBC Bitesize (click then select French or German)
<https://www.bbc.com/education/levels/z98jmp3>
- Linguascope – Intermediate level (soham; cheval)
www.linguascope.com
- Kerboodle website (ask your teacher for activities)
- AQA

Other useful resources:

- Speaking portfolios – for speaking AND writing
- Revision guides (see MFL for details or buy from the school shop at a reduced price)
- 'Love it' grade 5 + 8/9 help sheets or 'Complexity & variety' sheets

Top 5 tips when revising French & German:

1. Little and often – 5 minutes of Memorise 3x week; learn a speaking topic per week
2. Revise your tenses – past/present/future as a minimum
3. Attend the Revision & Intervention sessions
4. Use the 'Love it' or 'Complexity & variety' sheets to help improve complexity in writing and speaking
5. Complete timed practice questions (L/R/W + translation) + use your revision guides.....!

GCSE MFL French and German speaking exams are your first GCSEs – 27 & 28 April, 6 & 7 May

Subject: Music

Number of exams in the subject and length:

One listening examination - 60 minutes long

Topics that may come up in the mock:

Solo Artists from 1990 to Modern Day, Concerto through Time, Bhangra, Rock Anthems from the 1970s and 1980s, Greek Music, Film/Video Game Music, Melodic dictation (notating missing notes in a score), Italian terms and symbols found on a score.

Recommended resources to use to revise and where they can be found:

The OCR GCSE Music website:

<https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse/music-j536-from-2016/>

Rhinegold OCR GCSE Music Revision Guide

Youtube - OCR GCSE Music Virtual Textbook (there are some excellent tutorial videos covering all areas of study complete with useful videos and audio)

YouTube - OCR GCSE Music AoS1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 (searching for these on YouTube will provide you with numerous helpful videos and tutorials)

Subject: Physical Education – OCR GCSE PE

Resources given by school:

- Mock papers
- Sample answers

Useful websites:

<https://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/316929-sample-assessment-materials-taster-booklet.pdf>

Practice paper 1 - <https://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/234823-unit-j587-01-physical-factors-affecting-performance-sample-assessment-material.pdf>

Practice paper 2 - <https://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/234825-unit-j587-02-socio-cultural-issues-and-sports-psychology-sample-assessment-material.pdf>

Other useful resources:

- The pocket sized revision guide. (Available in lesson or through the PE department)
- My revision notes OCR GCSE (9-1) PE 2nd edition (available through Amazon or through PE department)

Top 5 tips when revising PE

1. Organise your revision notes by topics. Make lists/mind maps for all topics.
2. Make sure that you are familiar with the command words in the questions (e.g. describe, explain, discuss) and practice applying knowledge in these different ways.
3. Be familiar with how to use data. Practice reading the graphs/tables that might show key points of theory.
4. Complete practice exam questions and mark them.
5. When revising information, get into the habit of making a A01 point (knowledge/facts), A02 point (apply the knowledge with a sporting example) and A03 point (Analyse/evaluate – give a further comment on the implications/consequences).

Subject: Religious Studies

Resources given by school:

- Mock papers
- Sample questions and answers

Useful websites:

- <http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/religious-studies/gcse/religious-studies-a-8062>
- <https://www.bbc.com/education/examspecs/zy7spbk>
- <https://www.buddhanet.net/e-learning/index.htm>
- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/christianity>

Other useful resources (available from Finance Office):

- AQA Religious Studies A (9-1) Christianity & Buddhism revision guide.

Top 5 tips when revising RE:

1. Learn the meaning and spelling of key vocabulary provided for Christianity and Buddhism.
2. Use the revision guide to help consolidate and extend learning.
3. Learn key quotations for both religions (eg make and use flashcards)
4. Refer to revision guide for timed exam practice questions.
5. Practice key skills for 12 mark questions, eg ensuring answers are always linked back to the question.

Subject: Science (Combined)

Resources given by school:

- Broadsheets provided through google classroom
- Required Practical videos & questions provided through google classroom
- Two past papers & markschemes provided through google classroom

Useful websites:

- Revisionworld.com
- GCSE Bitesize
- Google classroom, the login details are:
Higher – [ir6tbo](#)
Foundation - [9orwgi](#)

Useful APPS:

- ExamPal (search as an iPhone app if using apple) - £1.49:
- Brainscape – Smart Flashcards - £ free: make your own cards up.

Other useful resources (available from Finance Office):

- Combined Science HIGHER or FOUNDATION 10-Minute tests
- Combined Science HIGHER or FOUNDATION Practice Papers
- Combined science HIGHER or FOUNDATION work books
- Combined science Revision guide

Top tips when revising Science:

1. Complete past paper questions and use the mark scheme to check the key vocabulary that gets you the marks.
2. Produce a set of flashcards with the key vocabulary, formula or learning outcomes. Better still have a question on the back of the flash card.

Subject: Science (Triple: Biology, Chemistry, Physics)

Resources given by school:

- Broadsheets provided through google classroom
- Required Practical videos & questions provided through google classroom
- Two past papers & markschemes provided through google classroom

Useful websites:

- Revisionworld.com
- GCSE Bitesize
- Google classroom, the login details are:
Triple – [qjtoxo](#)

Useful APPS:

- ExamPal (search as an iPhone app if using apple) - £1.49:
- Brainscape – Smart Flashcards - £ free: make your own cards up.

Other useful resources (available from Finance Office):

- Biology, Chemistry and Physics 10-Minute tests
- Biology, Chemistry, Physics Practice Papers
- Biology, Chemistry, Physics Revision cards
- Biology, Chemistry, Physics Grade 7-9 booster workbooks
- Biology, Chemistry, Physics work book
- Revision guides

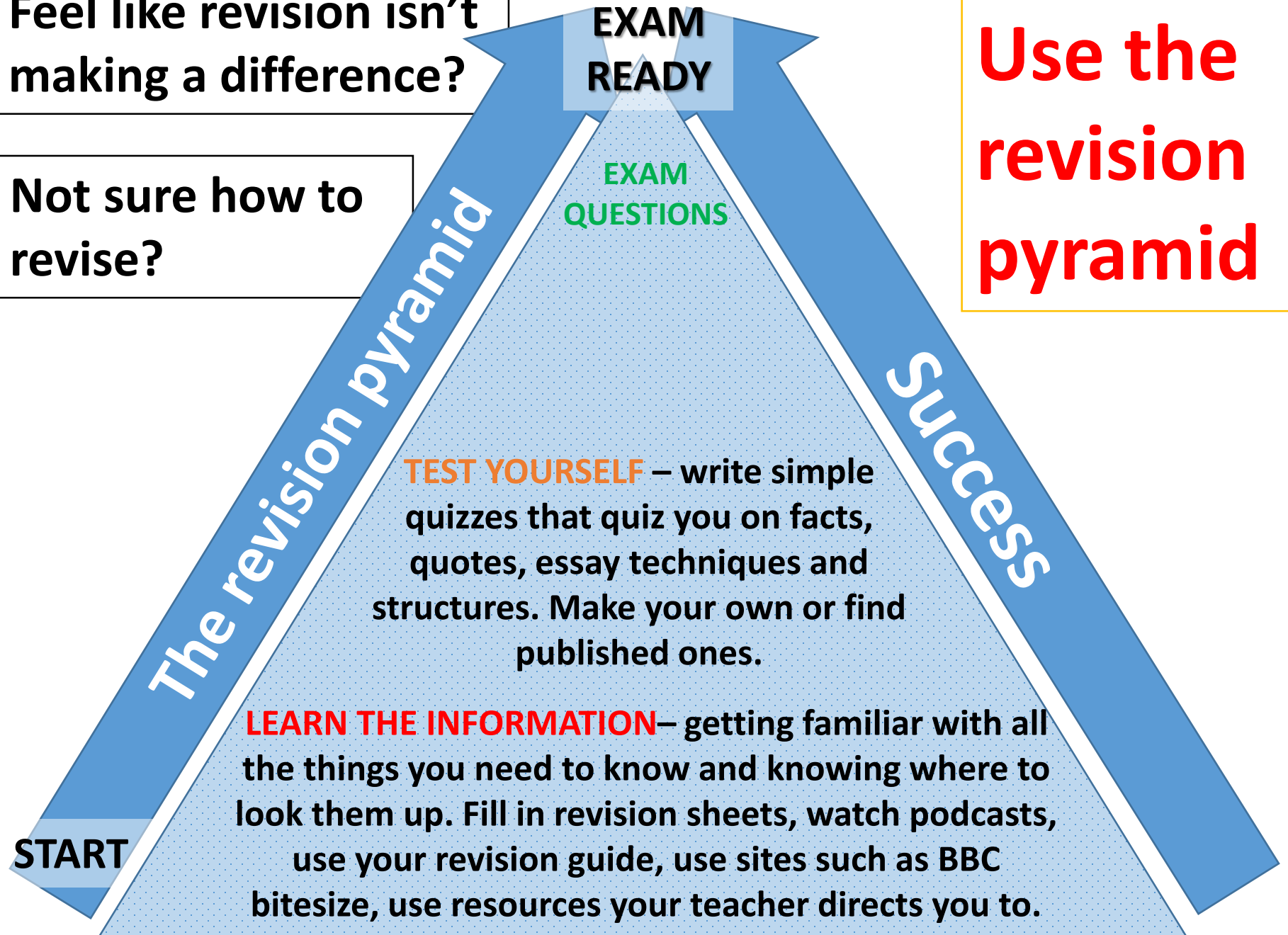
Top tips when revising Science:

1. Complete past paper questions and use the mark scheme to check the key vocabulary that gets you the marks.
2. Produce a set of flashcards with the key vocabulary, formula or learning outcomes. Better still have a question on the back of the flash card.

Feel like revision isn't making a difference?

Not sure how to revise?

Use the
revision
pyramid



How do I revise?

The key message when revising is that it must be **active** and not passive. Passive would be just reading the revision guide then finishing and going to watch TV. Active revision is anything that involves thinking, making a decision or doing.

Instead of just reading it...

- *Can you reduce the information down to half the size in note form? Can you reduce it further down to just keywords?*
- *Can you draw pictures to help you remember it?*
- *Can you summarise the information in 5 key points then put them in order of importance?*
- *Can you draw a mind map and link the information on a topic together?*
- *Can you turn the page of information into a 10 question quiz that you can get someone to test you on?*
- *Can you make flash cards with keywords on one side and definitions on the other?*
- *Can you make a podcast about the thing you are learning about?*



How do I revise?

Choose achievable targets. Trying to revise 'Science' is not possible. Breaking it up into topics is more realistic e.g. 'understand atomic structure' is a much more realistic thing to aim for over a few hours of revision.

RETRIEVAL PRACTICE – the practice of bringing information to mind. There are many ways of doing retrieval practice and these will form the basis of most of your revision activity.

SPACED PRACTICE – the method of spacing out your study over time, spreading out subjects and revisiting them rather than doing a large block of time on one subject.

INTERLEAVING – the method of switching between ideas or topics as you study, rather than studying one for too long. You should interleave different ideas and topics from one subject, as well as interleave subjects.

DUAL CODING – the strategy of combining words and visuals when creating revision resources and when recalling information.

ELABORATION – the practice of explaining and describing ideas with many details; in addition to learning the basic facts, think about how things work and why, elaborate further and make connections.

CONCRETE EXAMPLES – the use of specific, concrete examples to understand and explain abstract ideas.

How do I revise?

Once you feel like you've revise a topic, you need to **test yourself** to see if you really have and practice applying that knowledge. If the subject you are revising for involves writing them you must practice writing your answers

You can do this by answering questions in the revision guides, or by answering the relevant pages in a workbook or internet site.

It is extremely important that you mark the questions yourself – there is no point in doing questions if you don't know if they are right or not

Exam practice – build up to trying exams, there are not many practice papers so use them wisely! Make sure you mark them afterwards – get help from someone if you struggle. If you can't help looking at the answers, give them to someone responsible!

For more details about study skills, please see the 'Study Support' booklet on the website at:
<https://www.sohamvc.org/page/?title=Homework+%26amp%3B+Study+Skills&pid=1049>

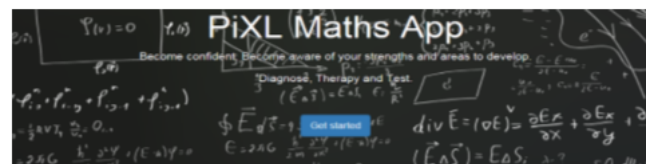


How do you login to the PiXL Maths and English app?

PiXL Maths App

Login to <https://mathsapp.pixl.org.uk/>

(You can google pixl maths app)



Click on Desktop to download
or you can download to phone or tablet



School id: SH2534

User id: Surname followed
by first initial

Password: Same as user id

A login form titled 'Welcome to the PMA'. It contains three input fields: the first contains 'SH2534', the second contains 'BROWNJ', and the third contains '*****'. Below the fields is an orange 'Login' button.

PMA

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Edit profile

Logout

Take a test

Set tasks

Paper QLA

Scoreboard



I get stressed by exams, what can I do?



Some stress isn't always a bad thing. It focuses us at a time when it really matters. But it is crucial to find the perfect balance, somewhere between not caring how you do to being so anxious that you are not able to perform in the exam.



What can you do?

- **Revise-** It sounds obvious but you will become more anxious if you haven't done any work. Revising will give you more confidence in your ability to perform in the exam.
- **Sleep-** Revising until the early hours won't help anyone. You won't sleep well, which means in the morning you're tired and grumpy. That's not going to help anyone is it?
- **Ban the socials-** Checking your notifications late into the evening before a big exam is distracting and the light from your phone/ tablet/ laptop actually tricks the brain into thinking the light is morning sunlight and 'wakes' you up. Plus who knows what someone has tagged you in or written on your wall. You don't need that drama!
- **Meditate!**- If the pre-exam build up throws you off you're A-Game then try some guided meditation (sessions in the Hub before the exams)- proven to calm and relax you, focusing the mind.
- **Speak to us!**- Every year we have students who struggle with exams. You're not on your own! Pop in, email us, ask your tutor to email/ speak to us, ask parents to call in. However, you need to do it, let us know. Talking to someone will always make you feel better. We've got so many tips and tricks but unless we know about you we can't help!

What can we do?

- **Self-help resources-** we use some fantastic resources that have been written by professionals for students around exam times. Why not pop into the Hub to pick up a pack?
- **Offer support and strategies to manage anxiety-** After Easter we're going to run some sessions with Mrs Rockley to explore what the right support for you is.
- **Tweaks to exam arrangements**
- **Guided meditation-** As mentioned earlier, meditation is hugely successful in focusing and calming you down. We'll be running some sessions to teach you how to do it. Then, if you're getting stressed, you can try to calm yourself down. Any time, any place! And there's not a hippy in sight!

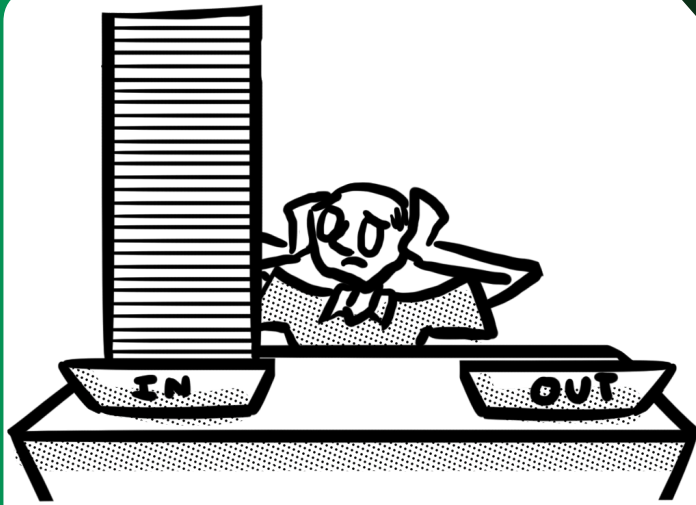
Chunking Technique

Information for Students

PiXL
partners in excellence



What is it?



- It is a technique which can improve your memory
- Chunking is the process of taking individual pieces of information (chunks) and grouping them into larger units

The power of chunking to help you learn

- Your memory system becomes far more efficient
- It helps you to recall the relevant information in your exams
- Information becomes easier to retain and recall
- It improves your creativity

Top Tips

1. Practice:

Challenge yourself to remember lists of things, whether a shopping list, vocabulary words or important dates.

As you become better at remembering larger chunks of information, continue to challenge yourself to remember even more.

2. Look for Connections:

As you are creating groupings, look for ways to relate them to each other in meaningful ways.

Think about what they have in common and what makes sense.

3. Associate:

Linking groups of items to things from your memory can also help make things more memorable.

4. Incorporate other Memory Strategies:

For example, you might use mnemonics as a way to chunk different units of information. If you need to remember a list of things—such as buying figs, lettuce, oranges, apples, and tomatoes—you can create a word out of the first letters – e.g. “FLOAT”.

Once you remember the keyword, you will then be better able to recall the items represented by each letter of the acronym.

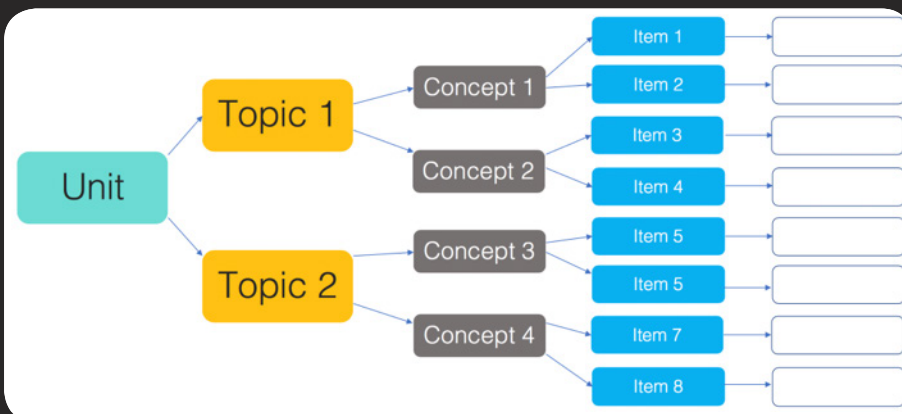
5. Separate your revision

Separating revision into relevant sections can help you digest everything and remember it more easily.

Creating links between different bits of information and putting them in meaningful categories can help you remember them better.

The Process

1. Break down larger amounts of information into smaller units.
2. Identify similarities or patterns.
3. Organise the information.
4. Group information into manageable units.



Use HEADINGS and TITLES for different sections

Use TABLES to summarise LARGE AMOUNTS of DATA

Use BULLET POINTS to summarise and CLARIFY IMPORTANT POINTS

Combine quick ILLUSTRATIONS with TEXT to create VISUAL ASSOCIATIONS

Are you ready?

FOCUS

Chunking requires YOUR attention on the learning

UNDERSTANDING

You need to fully understand information before chunking material

CONTEXT

You need to go beyond understanding the initial problem or concept and seeing when, where and how to apply it

**Form Patterns. Develop your tactics.
Make connections.**

Cognitive Load Theory

Information for Students

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What is it?



'Cognitive Load' Theory was developed by John Sweller out of the study of problem solving.

Cognitive load is the amount of information our working memory can hold at any one time. The working memory is where we process information and is key to learning.



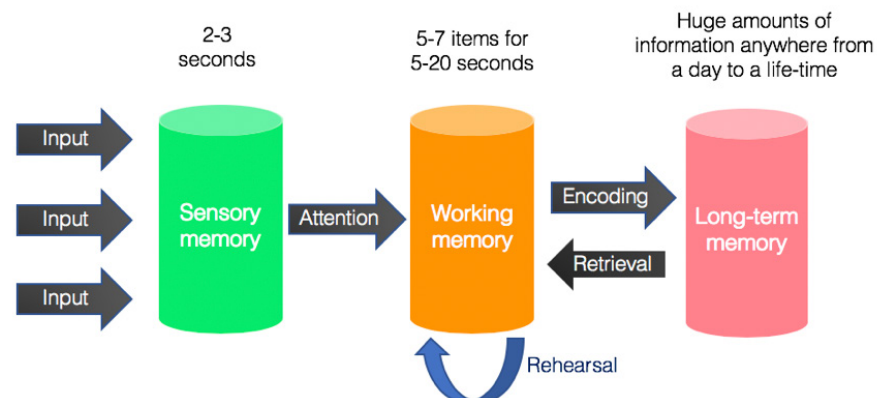
We are Limited!

We must therefore manage our working memory using different strategies. There are 3 types of working memory:

1. Intrinsic Load – this means how complex a task is. If a task or problem is really complex then it can take over most of our working memory. If a task is simple, it uses less working memory.

2. Extraneous Load – these are the instructions you are given or how questions are written. Incomplete instructions take up space in working memory and don't help you learn.

3. Germane Load - This is the amount of work you put in to create a permanent store of knowledge.



What does this mean?
You should **ALWAYS ASK** if you don't understand something.

Top 10 tips to help you apply the Cognitive Load Theory to revisit and learn new information:

1. Break the problem down into parts. This reduces the problem space and lightens the cognitive load, making learning more effective.
2. Look at worked examples to understand how to complete tasks.
3. Take advantage of auditory and visual channels in your working memory.
4. Start with learning simple information and build on it.
5. Create an environment with as few distractions as possible so turn off your phone, music or the TV. Distractions add to your working memory.

Top Tips

6. Avoid overloading your brain with too much information at one time.
7. Always review information from your lessons as you go along because this will help improve your retention and add knowledge to your long-term memory.
8. Focus on one task or topic at a time.
9. Rehearse the components of a complex task so that it becomes automated, thus freeing up working memory capacity.
10. Create stories from information to be remembered or group information into more memorable categories or more accessible chunks.

Did you know?

The mind processes visual and auditory information separately BUT too much visual and text displayed together compete with each other in your mind.

When you have multiple sources of visual information, such as diagrams, labels and explanatory text, your attention is divided between them. This adds to the cognitive load, making it more difficult for you to learn.

Top tips to help you revise:

- Incorporate labels into diagrams rather than writing text in separate boxes

- Use acronyms to help you learn so information can be 'retrieved' more easily from your memory
- Try talking through the problem
- Watch videos with animation and voiceovers

How will using the Cognitive Load Theory affect your learning?

- Improve your long-term memory and knowledge
- Learn new skills more easily
- Remove unnecessary distractions
- Reduce anxiety and feelings of being overwhelmed

Don't overload your brain when you want to learn more efficiently

What is it?



Interleaving is a method to use when revising, to help you remember more for the exam and to understand it better as well.

It is about what you do with your time when revising.

How does Interleaving work?

Learning is spread over time rather than in concentration on narrow topics one after the other.



What are the benefits?

It strengthens memory recall.

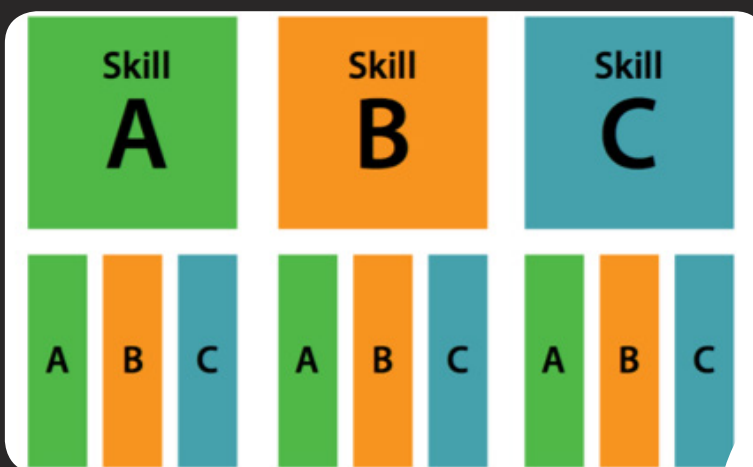
Your brain is continually changing focus and attempting to find different responses to bring into your short-term memory.

By revisiting material from each topic several times, in short bursts, you can increase the amount you remember in the exams.

Each time you revise information, it strengthens your memory recall

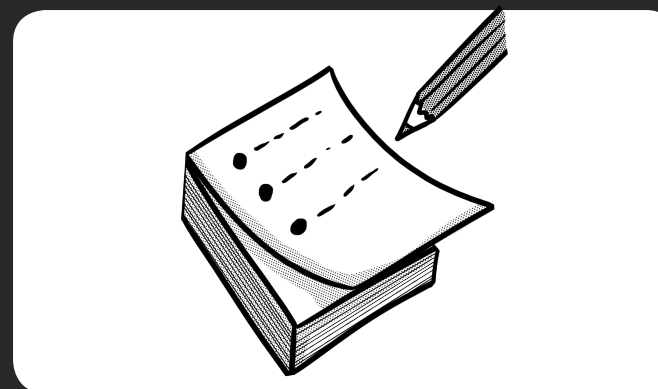


Blocking vs. Interleaving



Pan (2015) says, 'Mixing it up boosts learning' compared to more traditional methods of block learning where students master one topic before moving on to the next in preparation for exams.

How to apply it...



1. Break units down into small chunks and split these over a few days rather than revising one whole topic all at once.
2. Decide on the key topics you need to learn for each subject.
3. Create a revision timetable to organise your time and space your learning.

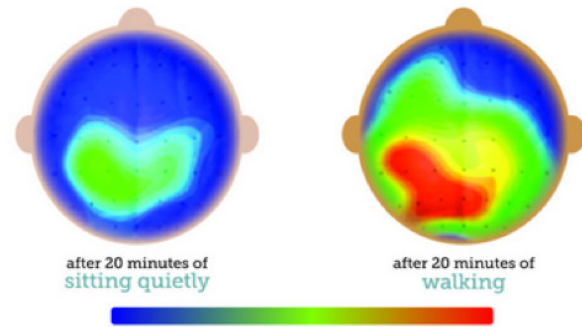
**Focus on quality and not quantity-
short targeted bursts are more
effective.**

**Do little and often, and mix it up
every day!**



How can it help?

BRAIN SCANS OF STUDENTS TAKING A TEST:



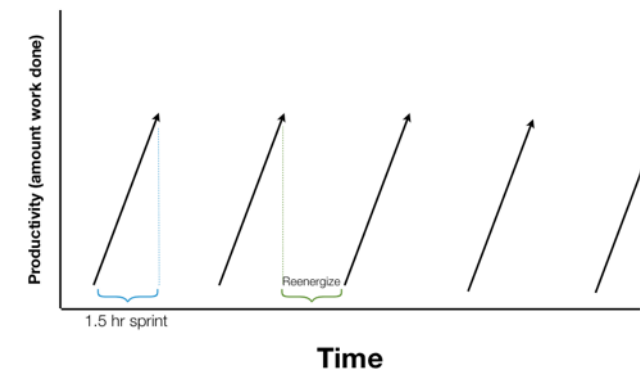
Red areas are very active;
Blue areas are least active

- Boost your memory
- Improve your concentration
- Help reduce stress
- Lengthen attention span
- Improve cognitive brain function
- Improve your ability to focus for longer periods of time

Physically active students have more active brains.

How can I fit it in?

1. Schedule regular breaks during your revision. This could be 60 minutes of revision, followed by a 10-minute break. Exactly what schedule is best varies from person to person.
2. Use your break for something relaxing and refreshing, but which won't distract you from getting back to work.
3. Do something that involves getting up from where you're revising and moving around.



Your brain uses up more glucose than any other bodily activity. Typically, you will have used most of it after 60-90 minutes.

So take a break, get up, go for a walk, have a snack, and do something completely different to recharge.

It can even help in Exams!

Exercise triggers the release of various hormones and chemical compounds in the body.

Serotonin – involved in regulating your sleep cycles and boosting your mood.

Norepinephrine – affects motivation and mental stimulation

Dopamine – positively influences learning and your attention span

Why take breaks in Revision?

- You're less likely to get distracted while you are revising
- It's much better to spend 60 minutes revising well and 10 minutes on a break than to spend longer, with half the time revising and half playing with your phone.
- Breaks actually make you work more effectively. After all that mental work, your brain needs a rest.

Find a routine for you

Be flexible. Fit your exercise around your revision timetable, and find what works for you.

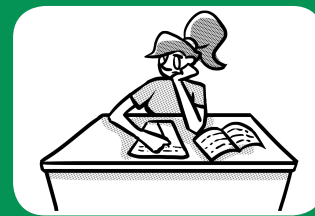
Shorter intense exercise is great during the exam period as it doesn't take too long.

Take regular walks during the day to help you stay fresh and active.

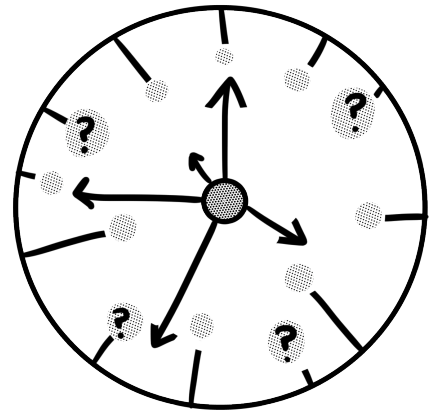
Top Tips

- Exercise regularly
- Eat well
- Sleep well
- Relax often
- Socialise and connect with others
- Take time out for you

Exercise helps to oxygenate the brain and release tension, helping you to keep calm, mentally relax and study more efficiently.



What is it?



Spacing is a revision technique which is all about spacing out your revision so you don't get swamped and overwhelmed.

It means introducing time intervals into your revision sessions, as well as spacing out the days which you use to revise for topics.

To commit something to memory, it takes time and repetition.

Optimum Spacing

- Research suggests there is an 'optimal gap' between revision sessions so you can retain the information
- If the test is in a month, you should review the information around once a week; if the test is in a week, create time once a day

Time to the test	Revision Gap
1 Week	1-2 days
1 Month	1 week
3 Months	2 weeks
6 Months	3 weeks
1 Year	1 month

To commit something to memory, it takes time and repetition.

How can it help you? Top Tips for time!

- Doing something little and often – spacing – beats doing it at once, or cramming
 - The time in between revision allows you to forget and re-learn the information, which cements it in your long-term memory
 - It cements information into your long-term memory
 - We can learn more information over time than in one longer session
 - It helps you revise more efficiently
1. Know what your revision goals are and set aside blocks of time.
 2. Don't work too much – work smarter, not harder.
 3. Establish good habits and a structured revision routine.
 4. Don't procrastinate- don't waste precious time worrying or thinking about what to do –just do it!
 5. Review your work – prompt your brain with short review exercises.

Did you know? The brain requires a physical “prompt” in order to keep something in long-term memory. Otherwise, it is designed to let it go.

Create the perfect revision plan

1. Organisation: determine where you need to focus your time – e.g. which subjects, topics, what you know, what you struggle with etc.
2. Planning: map out what you are going to revise and when. Use a timetable or revision planner to do this. Choose a mixture of a subject's topics to focus on each day to make sure you are spacing them out.
3. Review: build in different revision techniques to help you do some quick 5–10 minute reviews of your topics throughout your revision plan - e.g. reading through notes, highlighting information, making post-it notes.
4. Transformation task: these are 30 minute activities to help you take in information - e.g. writing summary sheets, flashcards or mind maps for topics.
5. Practice testing: test yourself on the area that you have reviewed, such as with quizzes or by testing yourself with a friend.
6. Exam questions: complete an exam question or questions on the area you have reviewed and mark this yourself, using a mark scheme.

Five hours of time, spent in smaller chunks and spaced periodically, is a far more effective way to learn something than five hours spent the night before.