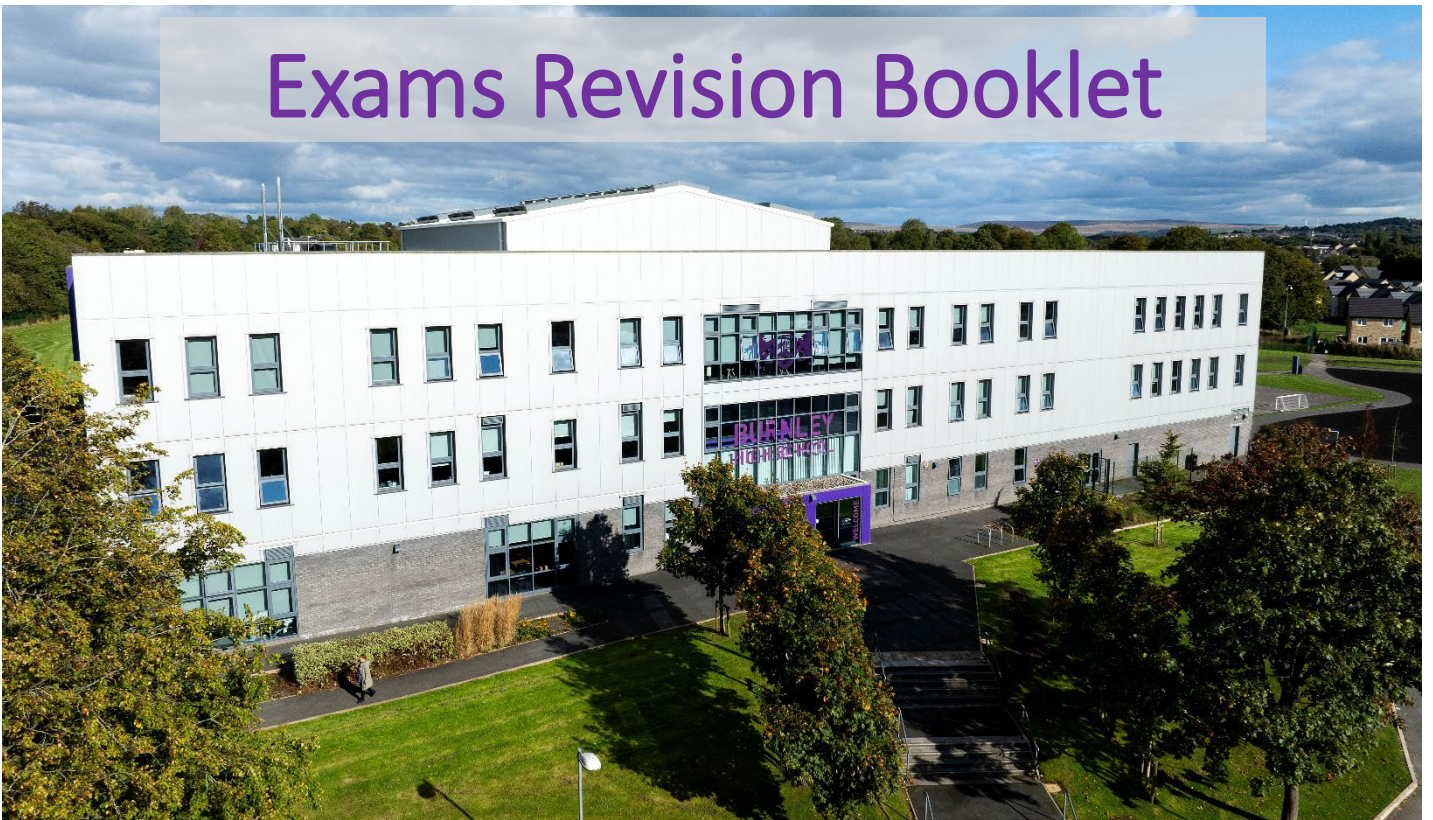




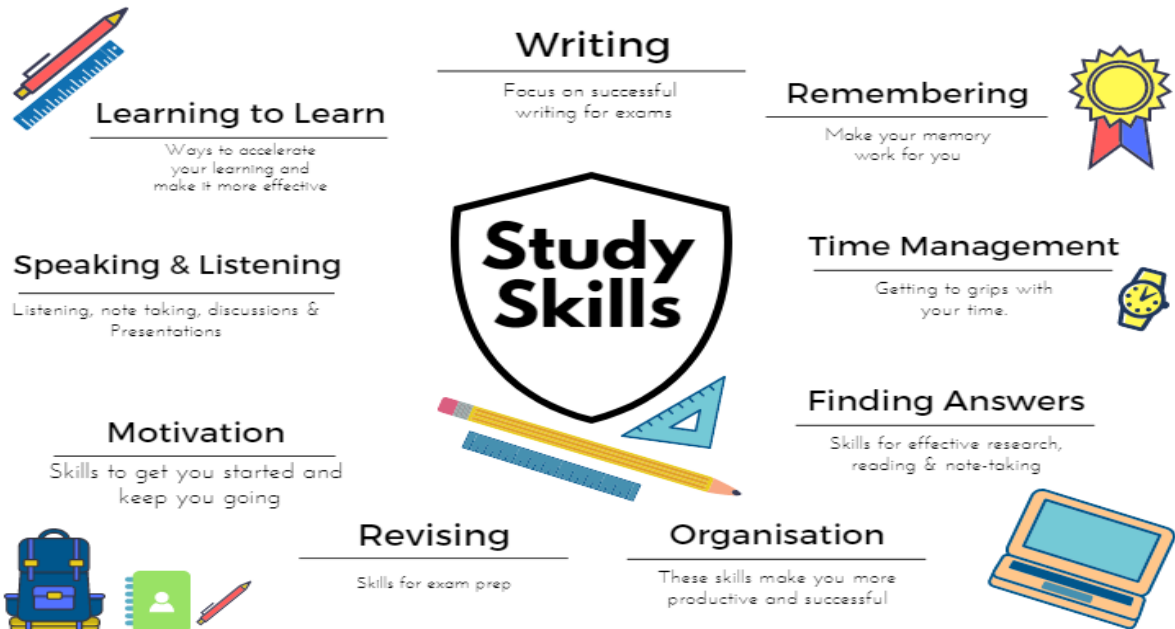
Exams Revision Booklet



*“Your future is built on the **effort** you put in today — **believe** in yourself, **work hard**, and **success** will follow.”*

What are study skills?

Study skills are the skills you use to **improve the way you learn**. These skills are important tools you will need to harness in order to **achieve success in your examinations**.



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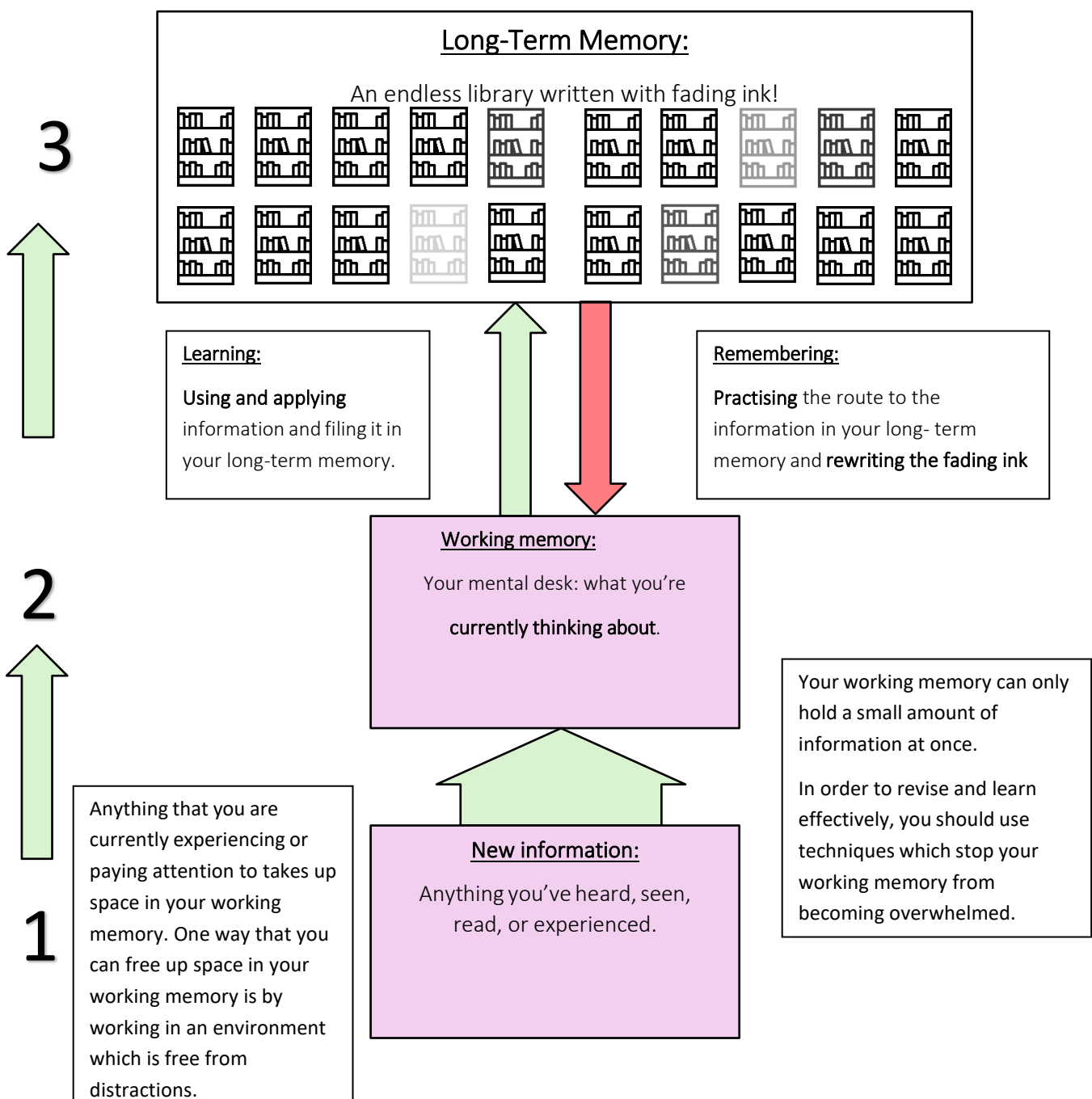
How do I learn and revise effectively?

Learning is the process of **understanding information** and **being able to remember it** over a long period of time.

Revising is the process of **revisiting information** which you have already been taught to ensure that you have learned it and to ensure that you can **easily use it in exams**.

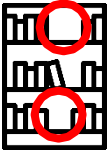
To remember a lot of knowledge quickly, that knowledge needs to be securely stored in your **long-term memory**.

To make sure knowledge **goes into your long-term memory**, stays there, and to make sure you can find it **quickly**, you need to spend time **thinking hard** and using/applying that knowledge in your working memory.



Whenever you revise, you are doing one of three things:

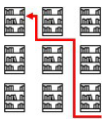
1. Finding and closing gaps in your knowledge.



2. Strengthening fading knowledge in your long-term memory.



3. Practising recalling knowledge quickly.



Why is **re-reading your notes** an example of **poor-quality** revision?

Why is revising in a **loud room** an example of **poor-quality** revision?

Why is only revising **immediately before an exam** an example of **poor-quality** revision?

Key pieces of advice to learn and revise effectively:

1. **Avoid distractions**; give yourself as much space as possible in your working memory to focus on the information you are learning or revising.
2. **Think hard**; if you don't think hard about the information you're learning or revising, it is unlikely to go into your long-term memory. Use and apply information, don't just read/highlight!
3. **Start early**; thinking hard about information takes time and you need to revisit information regularly to strengthen those memories. Leaving revision until the last minute is likely to be overwhelming and will limit how effective your revision is

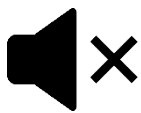
Do:

- ✓...work in a tidy environment where you have the tools you need to revise effectively.
- ✓...work in a quiet environment.
- ✓...put your phone in another room or use an app on your which blocks social media.
- ✓...work in a space which you only use for home study, schoolwork or revision.

Don't:

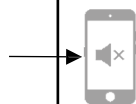
- X ...work in a cluttered environment.
- X ...distract yourself with (loud) music or noise.
- X ...work near your phone or other devices which can access social media.
- X ...work in the same space where you relax.

An example of an effective revision space:

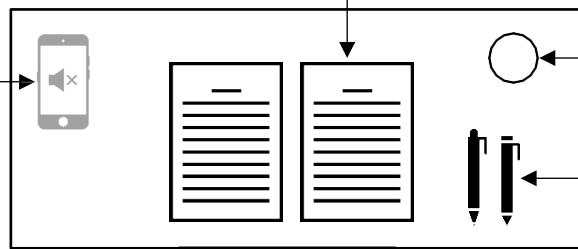


A quiet environment, such as a Classroom, room at home or library.

Put your phone on silent.
Or, put it in another room.



The resources you will need to revise using your chosen method



A drink, such as a glass of water

The pens and pencils you will need to revise

A chair (not a sofa or bed)

Where do you normally do your home study and your revision?

Use the scorecard below to rate the quality of your learning environment:

	✓/X
My chosen environment is quiet (e.g. There is no music playing and there are no conversations happening in the background.).	
I am unlikely to be disturbed in my chosen environment (e.g. It is unlikely that I will be asked to move so the table can be used for something else.).	
I only use my chosen environment for home study or revision.	
I don't have my phone with me while I complete my home study.	
I don't have other possible distractions near me when I complete my home study (e.g. games consoles).	
I use a desk which is similar to the desk I use in lessons.	
I have an office chair or a chair which is similar to the chairs I use in lesson (not a sofa or bed).	
I usually have the equipment I need with me when I complete home study (e.g. a computer)	

6-8 ✓	This is likely to be a positive learning environment. Working in this environment will allow you complete your home study and revision effectively and efficiently. In theory, this will mean that you will have more time for yourself to relax.
3-5 ✓	This is likely to be a reasonably positive learning environment. However, it is still likely that you will be distracted while you are completing home study and revision. This will mean that it may take you longer to complete home study and you may need to complete more independent revision than expected in order to be successful. You should make some tweaks to your learning environment and, if these tweaks aren't possible, you should attend study base.
0-2 ✓	This likely to be an ineffective learning environment. Working in this environment may mean that you have to spend a lot more time to complete your home study and revision. It may also mean that you complete your home study and revision to a much lower quality, meaning you will have to do more revision in order to be successful. You should make some major changes to your learning environment and/or attend study base.

Give one improvement which you are going to make to your learning environment to make it more effective:

When should I revise? The ‘forgetting curve’

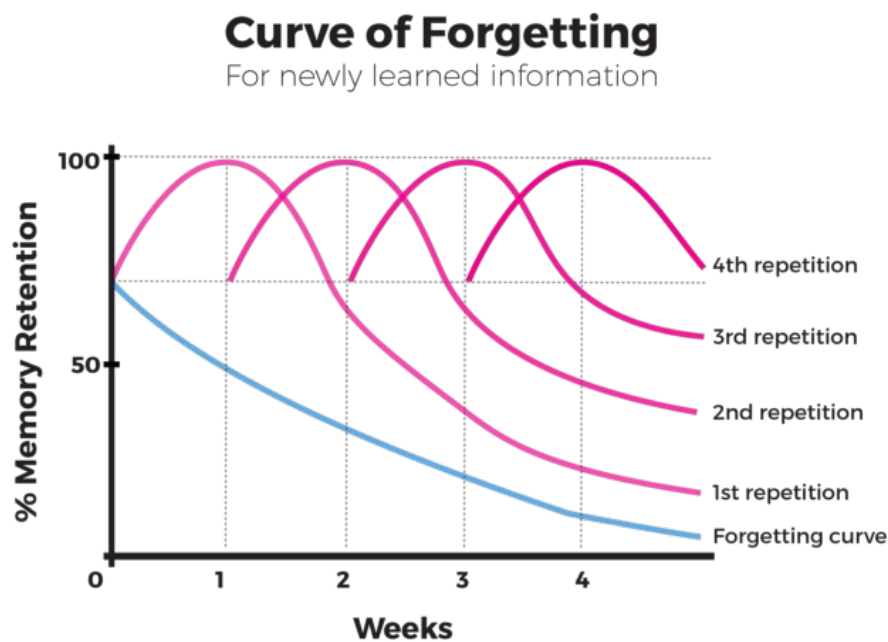
In order to revise effectively, you have to **think hard**. Thinking hard is tiring. Therefore, when you revise, you should choose a time when find it easiest to **focus**. This should be a time when you are well-rested and when you are used to working.

Research shows that **immediately after we have learned something, we start to forget it**. (Forgetting curve).

It is possible to overcome the forgetting curve using a technique called **spaced practice** (sometimes called distributed practice).

This technique is much more effective than massed practice (also known as cramming).

The graph below shows Ebbinghaus’ forgetting curve and how distributed practice can help improve long-term memory. **You can see that each time the materials are reviewed, the retention of information increases**. The more frequently it is revised, the more it is remembered.



What does this mean for my child? Revision works best if we **space the learning out over time** rather than cramming it in close to the examination. Learning things once doesn't mean we will remember it a day, a week or a month later – we need to return to information we have revised. Encourage your child to **revise a section or topic area once, then come back to it again** after a short break to remind themselves of what they have learned. They could then **test themselves** a week later to see what they remember.

When revising:

Do:

- ✓ ...get into a routine of revising at a particular point every day.
- ✓ ...revise when you are well-rested or at a time when you are used to working.
- ✓ ...take regular small breaks.

Don't:

- X ...depend on when you *want* to revise.
- X ...revise late at night or when you are tired.
- X ...try to force yourself to work for long periods of time without a break.

Planning revision sessions using the Pomodoro Technique:

1. Choose a time when you are well-rested and used to working.
2. Decide the **specific task** you are going to complete (e.g. I will complete a Science revision module about electrolysis of aqueous substances).
3. Set up your study area (See “Where should I revise?”).
4. Decide on how many **25-minute slots** you will need to complete the task you have decided to complete.
5. Remove your phone and any other distractions from your working space.
6. **Set a timer for 25 minutes.** Ideally use a digital timer which is *not* on your phone.
7. Spend the **entire** 25 minutes working. If you have spare time at the end, start another task.
8. When the timer goes off, leave your working area and **take a 5-minute break.**
9. **Repeat.** Take a longer break after every 3 25-minute sessions.

Revision Timetables: Making a plan

It is important to know **how much study time you have** available in your average day.

Once you have identified the time available you can identify **when you are going to study**.

What is the point of a revision timetable?

A revision/study timetable has the following benefits:

- It will help you cover what you need to in the time that you have available.
- Helps you identify and then prioritise subjects that may need a little more revision.
- It can motivate you to use your time effectively.
- It can help kick start your revision.

Once you have created your revision timetable you just need to get it up on your wall and follow it!

Things to think about:

- Include any revision clubs you may attend after school. These are all hours that count towards you revision time.
- Highlight revision sessions which are a priority/need a little more time.
- Include time for other activities such as family time, sports clubs etc.
- Allocate a block to a subject, but then break these into smaller chunks with little breaks in between. Remember to chunk your revision!

Revision Timetable Example

Times/sessions	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Session 1 (30 minutes)	Maths	Science (Physics)	Geography	Science (Chemistry)	Maths	Citizenship	Science (mix)
Session 2 (30 minutes)	English (Literature)	English (Language)	Sport Science	History	Science (Biology)	Geography	Maths
Session 3 (30 minutes)	History	Spanish	Citizenship	English (Language)	English (Literature)	Art	History
Session 4 (30 minutes)	RE	Maths	Coursework	RE	Spanish	Coursework	Spanish

My Revision Timetable

Times/sessions	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Session 1 (30 minutes)							
Session 2 (30 minutes)							
Session 3 (30 minutes)							
Session 4 (30 minutes)							

Revision 'HIT LISTS'



When revising, it is important that you have a **clear start points** so you know where to start and don't waste time! You should think about identifying the topics you feel **least confident** about.

This also helps you **break a subject down into chunks** that are easier to revise, rather than worrying about revising a whole subject or topic.

How to identify the topics you feel less confident about:

- × Ask your teachers for past papers and identify the questions you would struggle to answer. Which topic are they from? What skills do they require?
- × Skim through your notes looking for the topics that make you think "I hope that it doesn't come up in the exam"
- × Look through the topic checklists from each of your subjects and circle the topics that seem least familiar.

Revision Hit List: Science

Subject: Biology

Top Three Hit List Topics

Topic	What's the problem?
Genetic Diagrams	Can't remember how to do these
Alleles	Just the whole thing! Need to get it straight in my head
Spread of Pathogens	What are animal vectors? On past paper but.....?!



Revision Hit List:

Subject:

Top Three Hit List Topics

Topic	What's the problem?

Next Five Hit List Topics

Topic	What's the problem?

Revision Hit List:

Subject:

Top Three Hit List Topics

Topic	What's the problem?

Next Five Hit List Topics

Topic	What's the problem?

Revision Hit List:

Subject:

Top Three Hit List Topics

Topic	What's the problem?

Next Five Hit List Topics

Topic	What's the problem?

Revision Hit List:

Subject:

Top Three Hit List Topics

Topic	What's the problem?

Next Five Hit List Topics

Topic	What's the problem?

Revision Strategies



Most of us tend to read through things several times and then hope some of the information sticks. However, **this isn't the best way to revise**. You should think about unpicking the information and then explaining it to yourself, before **using the information productively**.

The brain learns best when you **challenge it to make connections and create meanings**. Pick and mix the methods you use, not all will work for you! If you get stuck revising a topic in one way, try out another strategy and see if that helps!

Condensing your notes

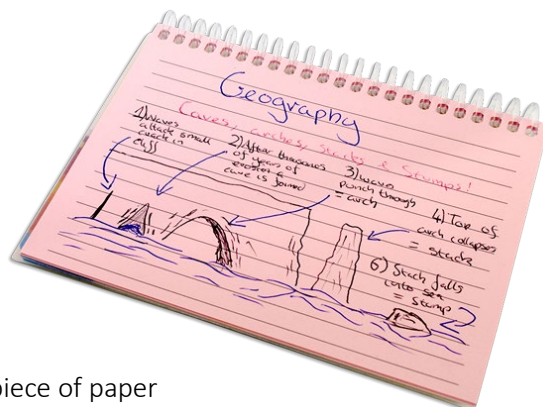
Condensing your notes means making summaries of the main points.

Why is this a good idea?

- × Making the summaries is good revision
- × The summaries are a lot easier to revise from.

There are four steps to condensing your notes:

1. Get your notes organised
2. For each page of notes, write a summary of the main points on a piece of paper
3. Condense each summary down to the main ideas, key terms and key points
4. Write your condensed notes on index cards, leaving plenty of space between points.



Memory Strategies

First-letter phases: Use the first letters of a list of things you need to remember to make up a memorable phrase.

Putting things in your own words: Read through your notes, then turn the page over and see how much of the information you can recall and then write down. Try explaining to someone what they mean. Can you explain the information you have just revised?

Making unusual connections: Your brain will often remember things that seem unusual. Try thinking of **weird connections** to things you need to remember.



Getting Visual – Diagrams, Flow Charts and Concept Maps

Flow Charts: These are helpful when you are having to revise processes.

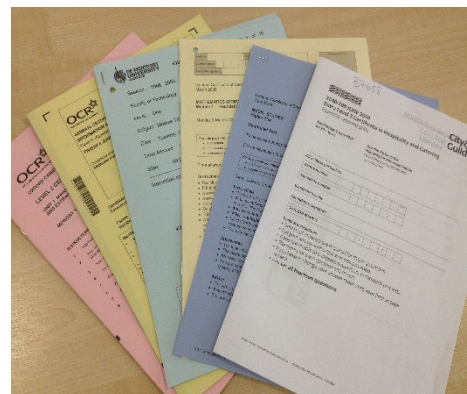
Concept/Mind maps: concepts are a great way to revise how one thing connects to something else. A good technique is to start one as you start revising a new topic and map the connections as you go through. Once you have completed it, hide strands of the map and redraw it to test your knowledge. Think about using sheets of A3 paper which gives you room to expand your map. Use colours and little pictures making the maps memorable and interesting to look at.



Past Papers and Mark Schemes

Using past papers and mark schemes are a good way to test your knowledge and understanding of a subject as well as practicing exam technique. Using past papers and the mark schemes also helps you understand what the examiners are looking for.

You can find past papers on the exam board websites, however, it is best to ask your teacher, as they will be able to provide you with the correct ones for your course.



Self-quizzing

Self-quizzing is when you answer a series of questions about a topic from memory. It is a useful tool for finding specific gaps in your knowledge within a topic and it allows you to quickly check whether you have remembered something correctly.

Self-quizzing can be completed in lots of different ways. For example, you could answer specific questions, you could complete gap fill-activities, or you could fill in a diagram from memory.

When answering quiz questions:

Do:

- ✓ ...answer every question, even if you are unsure.
- ✓ ...write the answers to the questions from memory.
- ✓ ...answer the questions in as much depth as you can.
- ✓ ...mark and correct your answers after you have finished.
- ✓ ...improve your knowledge of incorrect answers after you have marked your answers.
- ✓ ...keep a record of your scores.

Don't:

- X ...skip questions because you find them difficult or you are unsure about the answer.
- X ...answer the questions using textbooks or knowledge organisers.
- X ...write single word answers so you can answer the question as quickly as possible.
- X ...assume that your answers are correct.
- X ...throw the quiz away as soon as you have finished it.

Flashcards

Flashcards are small sheets of paper or card with matching pieces of information on either side. They are a useful tool for learning facts and allow you to quickly check whether you have remembered something correctly.

When making and using flashcards:

Do:

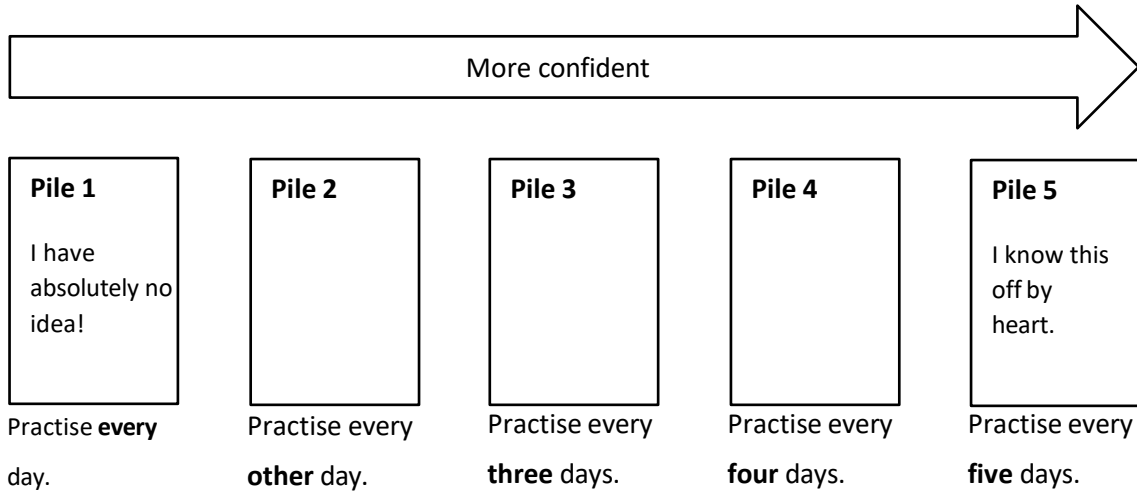
- ✓ ...make flashcards quickly.
- ✓ ...put a single piece of information of each flashcard.
- ✓ ...sort your flashcards according to your confidence with them (see below).
- ✓ ...test yourself on the flashcards from memory.

Don't:

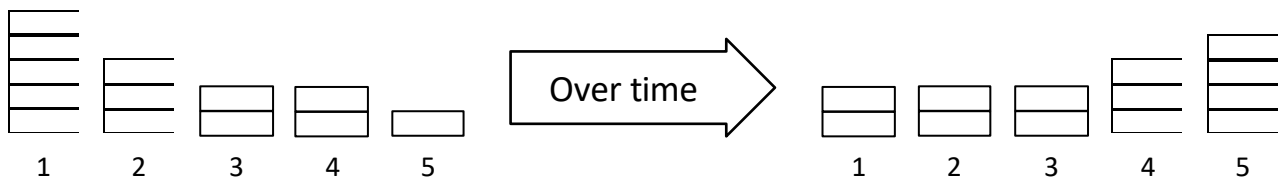
- X ...spend more time *making* flashcards than actually using them.
- X ...put lots of information onto each flashcard.
- X ...revise the flashcards in the same order every time that you use them.
- X ...only read through flashcards.

How to use flashcards:

- Test yourself using the flashcards.
- As you test yourself, sort the flashcards into up to five piles according to how confident you are with the content. Put the piles into numbered envelopes (1-5).
- Test yourself on the different piles on different days (see below):

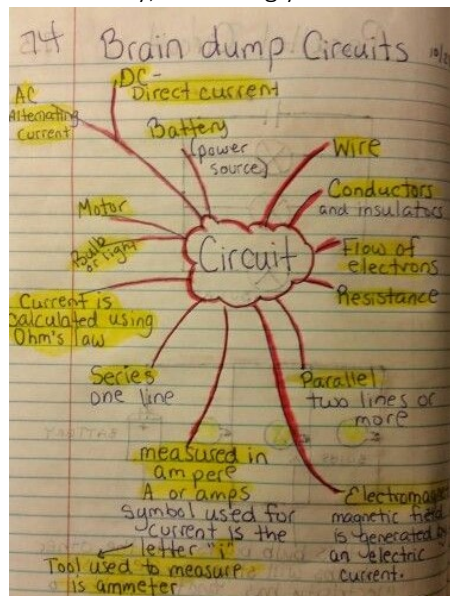


- As you test yourself on the different piles, move the cards into different piles as you become more



Knowledge Dumps/Brain Dumps

Knowledge dumps (or brain dumps) involve recalling and writing down all the information you remember about a topic or subject on blank piece of paper without referring to any resources. This revision strategy is effective because it helps activate your memory, identify gaps in your knowledge, and reinforce key concepts. By forcing yourself to retrieve and write down information from memory, brain dumps enhance memory retention and improve recall during exams. Additionally, reviewing your brain dump allows you to prioritise areas for further study.



When writing knowledge dump

Do:

- ✓ ...write from memory.
- ✓ ...check what you have written against a textbook or knowledge organiser.
- ✓ ...connect information together in a spider diagram format (see below). This will allow you to remember more.

Don't:

- X ...copy information from textbooks and knowledge organisers.
- X ...assume that everything you have written is correct.
- X ...write a list (see below).

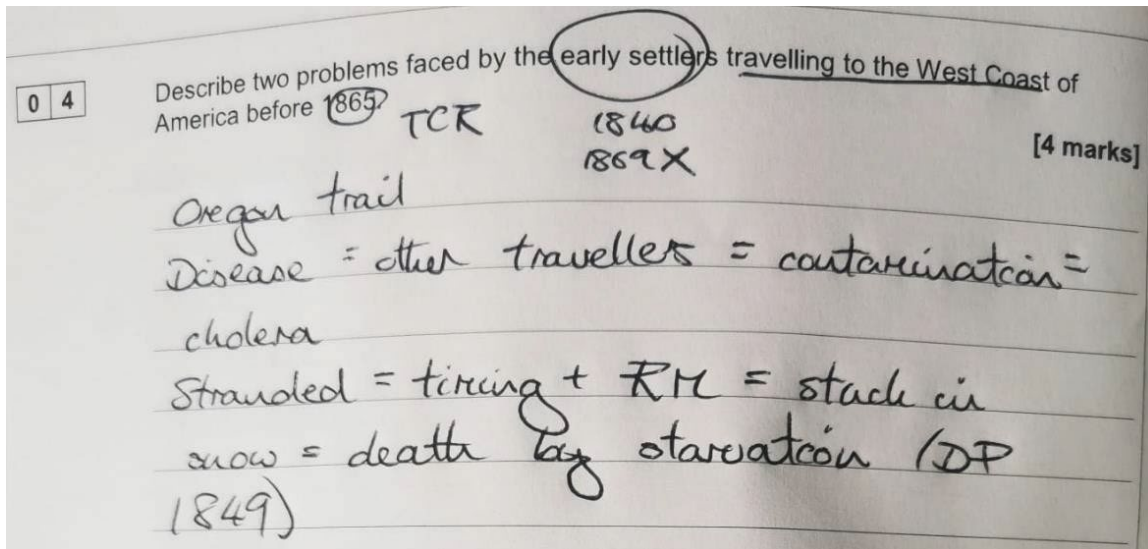
How to write a knowledge dump:

1. Without any support, write down the first thing you can remember about the topic you have chosen. Use single words or phrases.
2. As this fact triggers more information, write those facts down. Connect the facts together with lines or arrows.
3. Once you can't remember anything else about the area you started writing about, try to remember another fact to start another 'web' of knowledge. Stop once you can't remember anything else.
4. Using a knowledge organiser or textbook, check and correct your knowledge using a different coloured pen.
5. Keep your knowledge dump. This will allow you to compare knowledge dumps over time so you can see your success.
6. Note down what you corrected or added. Practise these gaps using flashcards or quizzing.

Exam Questions & Mark Schemes

You remember what you **think hard** about. One of the best ways to think hard about knowledge you have learned is by completing **exam questions**. Practising exam questions will also allow you practise exam techniques, such as writing in timed conditions or annotating questions. Using marks schemes will also enable you to discover gaps in your knowledge, as well as model answers to help you.

Get exam questions from your teachers and complete them as closely to a real exam as possible.



When answering practice exam questions:

Do:

- ✓ ...write from memory.
- ✓ ...write in timed conditions (ask your teacher how long you should take)
- ✓ ...ask your teacher to give you feedback or to give you a mark scheme so you can check your own answer.

Don't:

- X ...use textbooks or knowledge organisers while you're answering questions.
- X ...assume that everything you have written is correct.
- X ...type your answer if you won't be able to use a computer in your exam.

When deciding what to revise:

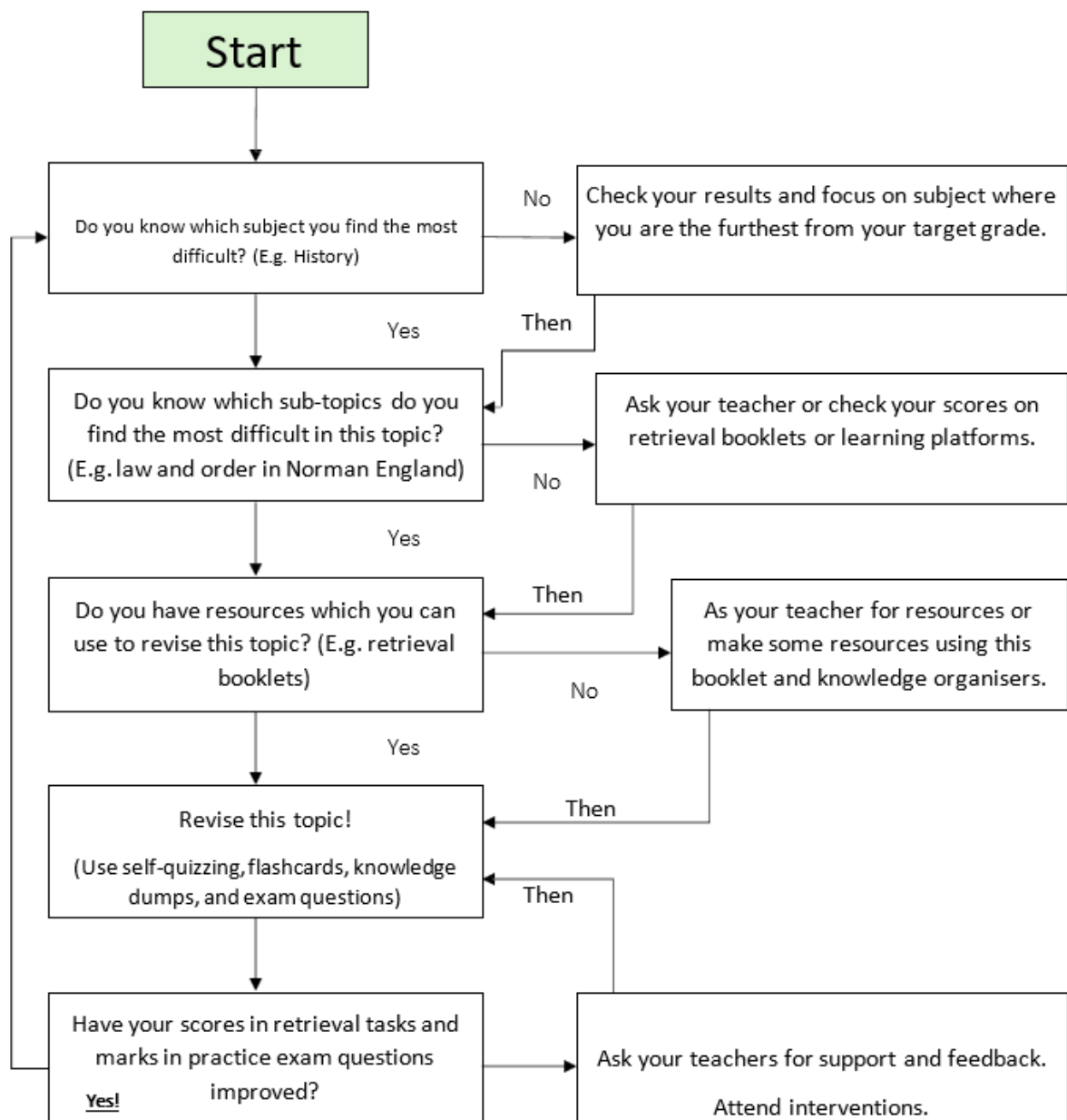
Do:

- ✓ ...gather information about the topics which you need to revise.
- ✓ ...break subjects and topics down into manageable chunks.
- ✓ ...revise topics which you don't enjoy or which you find difficult.
- ✓ ...keep a record of the topics you have chosen to revise and the revision you have completed for those topics.

Don't:

- X ...spend more time making lists of what to revise than actually revising.
- X ...write down entire subjects or topics as areas to revise.
- X ...revise topics you enjoy or topics in which you are already successful.
- X ...expect yourself to remember the areas which you need to revise.

Use the flowchart below to figure out one topic which you need to revise. This will only be one topic for one subject. You will then be able to use this method to help you decide what other topics should revise, both within the subject you choose and within other subjects. You can still use other methods.



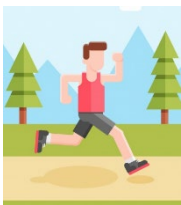
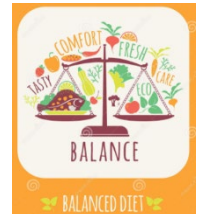
Exam Board Information

Title	Board
English Language	WJEC
English Literature	AQA
Spanish	Pearson
Mathematics	Pearson
Combined Science - Trilogy	AQA
Biology	AQA
Chemistry	AQA
Physics	AQA
History	Pearson
Geography	AQA
Religious Studies B	Pearson
Citizenship	Pearson
Creative iMedia	OCR
Sports Studies	OCR
Hospitality and Catering	WJEC
Design & Technology	WJEC
Fine Art	AQA
3D Art	AQA
Music	OCR

Health and Lifestyle during Exams

It is important to remember that having a healthy mind and body is also key to achieving within exams. Making the effort to maintain a healthy body and mind will help keep your stress levels to a minimum helping you achieve your best come exam day!

Eat a well-balanced diet: It's tempting to reach for study snacks such as crisps and chocolate to see you through exams, but you'll find it much easier to concentrate if you eat nutritional meals and healthy snacks. While the odd treat here and there is a good study reward, overloading on sugar or salt will only leave you feeling flat. It's also important to make sure you eat a decent meal and drink plenty of fluids before your exam.



Keep Active: It is important to maintain an active lifestyle. It is recommended that young people should engage in moderate to vigorous activity for at least 60 minutes a day. The benefits of an active lifestyle include a healthy heart and lungs, maintains a healthy weight as well as improving self confidence and social skills!

Avoid excess caffeine: Many students fall into the trap of turning to coffee or energy drinks to help them study. You may think that it will help you study into the night — or pep you up for an exam — but it's more likely that you'll 'crash' and fatigue during the exam.



Get a good night's sleep: Sacrificing sleep for late-night cramming isn't a good habit to keep, even if you want to be more prepared for your exam. It's unlikely that you'll do your best study if you're struggling to stay awake — and it goes without saying that you should try to get a full night's rest before an exam. You should aim to achieve 8-10 hours sleep a night.

Allow yourself some breaks: Studying can be tiring, so it is important to stop and refresh every so often — even if you're feeling overwhelmed and short of time. Taking five minutes to go for a short walk or make a cup of tea can help you clear your head and regain your focus.



Learn to manage stress: Each student has their own way of dealing with stress — you need to determine what works for you. Doing some exercise, having a short nap, catching up with friends or even just taking a few deep breaths are all good ways to relieve stress and refresh. If the stress is really starting to build up, you can speak to someone at your institution — your tutor or lecturer, an academic adviser or a counsellor.