

**experience to last a lifetime**





# WHAT TO REVISE

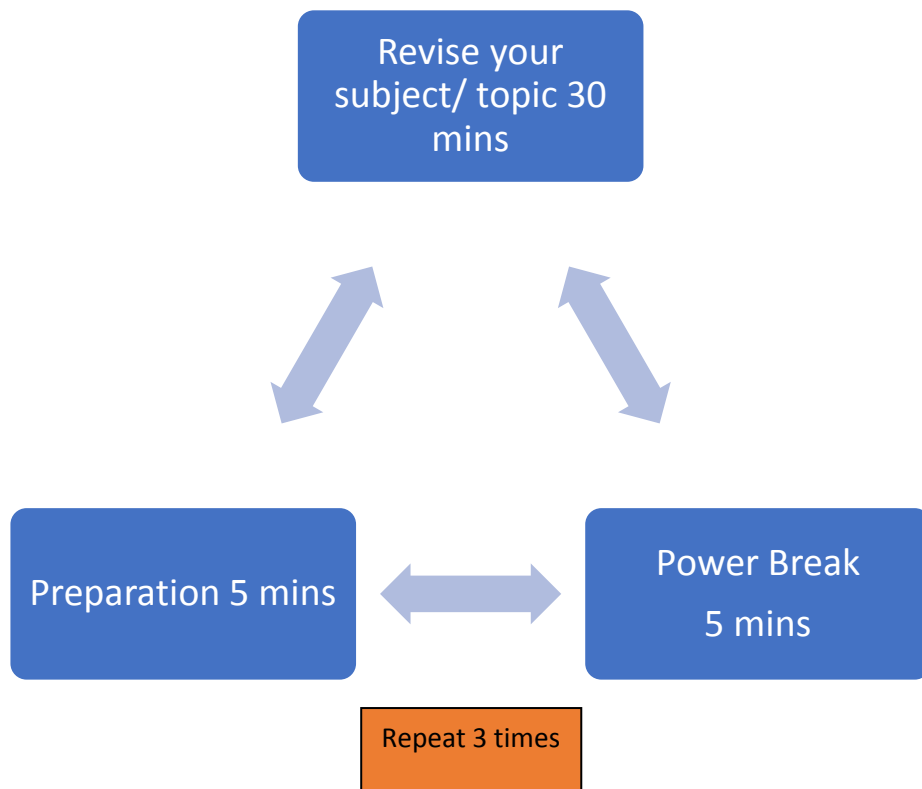
There is no doubt that the pressures around exams can be stressful. Good preparation for your exams is the key to reducing the stress and that means revising effectively throughout the year. This booklet is a reminder of a number of revision strategies available to you. For each of your subjects, you will need to revise the content of the course as well as exam techniques, so you know how to answer different types of question. You will continue to practise exam skills for homework, but you must use your time at home to make sure you know the content well. This means revising regularly by revisiting past content.

## How to structure your revision:

Firstly, create a list of all the subjects you need to revise. Remember, only study between 2 and 4 subjects a day.

Study for 30 minutes followed by a physical break for at least 5 minutes. Repeat this 3 times to make up one revision cycle. Take a 1-hour break between each revision cycle.

## Revision Cycle



# HOW TO REVISE

Over the next few pages, you will find an outline of some strategies for effective learning. These strategies provide specific revision activities to do as well as suggesting ways of organising and scheduling your work. They are particularly important for your revision at home and they will help you to improve your long-term memory and prepare for exams. The strategies are:

## 1. 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.

## 2. 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.

## 3. 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.

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

## 5. 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.

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

# RETRIEVAL PRACTICE: STRATEGIES TO GET YOU STARTED

Listed below are some strategies for retrieval practice that you will probably already have used at some point. You do not need to use all of these, but it is a good idea to use a variety of methods when revising for each subject.

● **Online quizzes.** These can be found at various locations - on Senecalearning platform, Memrise, Quizlet, BBC Bitesize and more. Please check with your individual subject teachers if you are not sure which to use. Repetition is the key to success with quizzes, so make sure you repeat them multiple times to help the knowledge stick.



[www.quizlet.com](http://www.quizlet.com)



[www.memrise.com](http://www.memrise.com)



<https://www.senecalearning.com/>



[www.bbc.com/education](http://www.bbc.com/education)



## • Mind maps

Write the key topic in the middle of a big bit of paper and then see how much to recall from memory about that topic - mind map key information round the edge.

Then you could colour code the things you have written into 'bigger ideas' or create a second copy, organising the information into categories or groups.

These 'bigger ideas' might form essay plans for extended-answer questions.

Once you have done a mind map, use your class notes or revision guide to check for accuracy and for what is missing and then add to the diagram.



## • Flash cards

Create a series of cards for each topic in a subject.

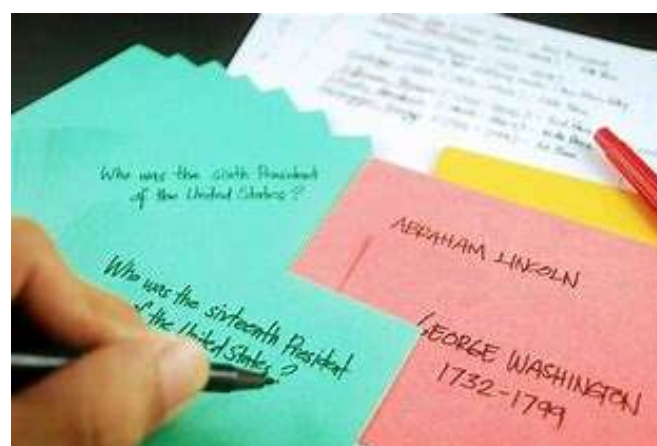
You can create these by hand on card, by using PowerPoint or by using online revision resources such as [www.memrise.com](http://www.memrise.com).

Make sure you write the question or topic heading on one side and the information on the other so you have think to recall the information on the reverse of the card.

The next step is to then go beyond the definitions and make links between ideas and information you have learnt.

You can also sort the cue cards into relevant chunks relating to your course, or into chronological order for example.

You can also get someone to test your knowledge using the flash cards.



- **Find someone to test you**

Find a family member to help test your knowledge.

Get out your revision guide, your flash cards or mind maps.

Get the tester to ask you questions about the content.

Ask them to ask you to explain what things mean.

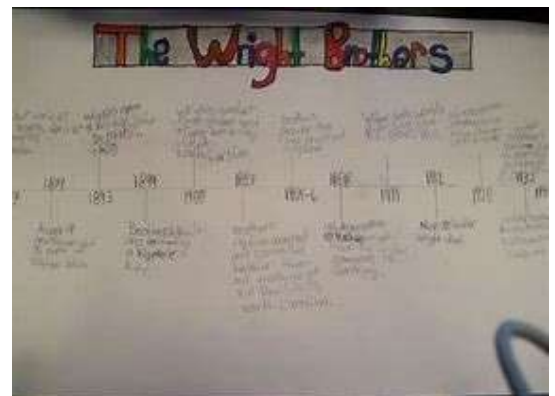
Get them to increase the challenge - by explaining things in detail to them you are practising the skills you will need for exam questions.

For some people, the temptation to talk to their peers about unhelpful things is too great. These people should probably revise alone or at least use an adult instead!



- **Create a timeline**

In some subjects, knowing the sequence of events is important (e.g. the plot of a book, a geological process, historical events). Choose a topic and create a timeline or sequence with all the key dates or sections labelled on it. Try to recall the sequence from memory before checking for accuracy using your class notes or revision guides.



## • Write (a plan for) an exam question

Particularly for subjects where you need to do extended writing, use a blank piece of paper to plan out an answer to an exam question.

Try to recall more and more specific details and add them to the plan.

Then use your class notes or revision guide to check what you missed and add to the plan in another colour - focus on learning these things.

## • Create mnemonics and acronyms

Mnemonics are words or phrases that help someone remember something ("Richard of York Gave Battle In Vain" gives you the colours of the rainbow - Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue, Indigo and Violet).

Acronyms are words where the letters stand for other words. (BPAIN gives you JFK's options for dealing with the Cuban Missile Crisis - Blockade; Pressure through the UN; Airstrikes; Invasion or do Nothing).



Create mnemonics for the information needed to explain a key topic or question. Eg. SENSIBLE FARMERS, HADDAFORREST

## • Write out and reduce your notes

Start with a blank piece of paper and try to recall as much as you can about a topic you have just covered.

Check for accuracy before then re-writing your notes using fewer words.

Re-write your notes again using fewer words still. Repeat this until you have boiled the topic down to a handful of sentences.

Remember, at each stage try to recall the information from memory and check for accuracy.

Alternatively, as you write out information about a topic from memory, use a combination of words and images (see 'dual coding').



# HINTS & TIPS

1. Set yourself achievable tasks. “Revise for English” is not achievable. “Create a summary timeline for the plot of Jekyll and Hyde” is - you will know when you have finished. Set yourself achievable tasks so that you know when you have succeeded.
2. Do little and often. Aim to do 20 minutes to half-an-hour every night for three or four different subjects (‘interleave’ them). Make sure you also build in breaks where you can switch off and let your mind recover.
3. Work in a calm, quiet place. Always find somewhere you can do your blocks of revision without distraction. Turn off your mobile, your TV, your music and your computer. You will achieve a lot more in 20-30 minutes of focused effort than an hour with distractions.
4. Avoid re-reading & highlighting notes. It is not an effective strategy for learning. In reality, once the notes are taken away, it’s difficult to recall them. You have to try to recall information and think hard if you want to develop your long-term memory.
5. Do it systematically. Work through key topics and content from different parts of the course in a single session, but don’t switch topic too often. Tick off topics you do on a course summary document.
6. Give yourself a break. Spend a short amount of time between your planned revision sessions doing short tasks that use your brain in a different way - it is good for your memory. Do not play computer games, watch TV or phone your mates - you will get sucked in and lose time. Learn to juggle. Do press-ups. Meditate. Go for a quick walk. Do some ‘keepy-uppies’. Physical activity is particularly helpful as a way of letting what you are learning sink in and stick.
7. Reward yourself. When you get to the end of a full revision session give yourself a reward - chocolate or sweets might be the reward you need. When you have done a night’s worth of revision TV shows, computer games, sport and the internet are good rewards. When you have done a good week’s revision a day off is a good reward.



Finally....

If you know you won't always have internet access and you'd like to buy revision guides for your subjects (lots on amazon - recommend CGP, Letts, Pearson etc.) it's important for you to know which exam board you are taking for each subject, to make sure you get the right ones. Here are the exam boards for each subject in Yr10:

SUBJECT	BOARD
Art GCSE	AQA
Business Studies GCSE	Pearson
Computer Science GCSE	OCR
DT GCSE	AQA
Engineering Level 1/2 Technical Award	NCFE
English Language GCSE	Pearson
English Literature GCSE	Pearson
Geography GCSE	AQA
History GCSE	Pearson
Land Based Level 2 Technical Award	City and Guilds
Mathematics GCSE	Pearson
Science (Combined) GCSE	Pearson
Sports Science Cambridge National	OCR

#### REVISION TIMETABLE

MONDAY				
TUESDAY				
WEDNESDAY				
THURSDAY				
FRIDAY				

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