

KS4 Revision Strategies for Success

Why?

Your GCSE exams test up to five years worth of knowledge. Trying to learn **all** this knowledge in summer of Year 11 is too late- you need to be making the learning from EVERY lesson stick in your brain. We need to space out the learning over time (spaced practice). This will help you build up a really solid and deep understanding of each subject and will reduce your overall stress levels. This guide is based on scientific research on how the brain works. For more information go to www.learningscientists.org.

Post lesson REVIEW

After every lesson spend up to ten minutes doing a post-lesson review.

1. Read over the lesson notes to review and check your understanding.
2. Examine the knowledge organiser/revision guide/Bitesize
3. Retrieval practice on key knowledge by self-testing
4. Investigate links to previous work **Elaboration**
5. Explain key concepts to yourself **Elaboration**
6. What's coming up next lesson? Predict and anticipate.

How to revise for a test/exam

1. Give yourself plenty of time so start the process early. **Spaced practice**.
2. Gather together all your notes for the topic.
3. Make a mindmap or flashcards on the topic to organise the knowledge. Use **dual coding**.
4. Test yourself on the mindmap or flashcards (**retrieval practice**)
5. Use past paper questions without using your notes.
6. Identify where you have lost marks.
7. Review the topics where you have lost marks and try the past papers again.
8. Switch between different topics and in different orders **interleaving**.

Making and using effective flashcards

Flashcards work for learning definitions, vocabulary, quotes etc. and allow **retrieval practice** through recall.

- Put a question or heading/key word on one side and the answer or definition on the other.
- Try adding a picture (**dual coding**).
- Only one question/keyword per card to ensure 100% recall
- Self test by calling out answers.
- Try it both ways round: start with the answer and recall the question.

Weight
Mass

front

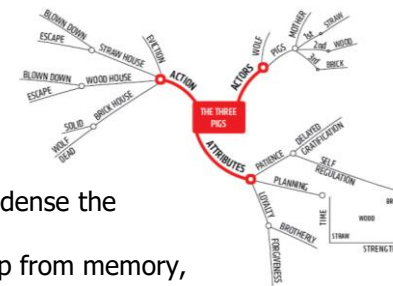
$[W = mg]$
W Newtons (N)
m kilograms (kg)
g Newtons per kilogram (N/kg)

back

Making and using effective mindmaps

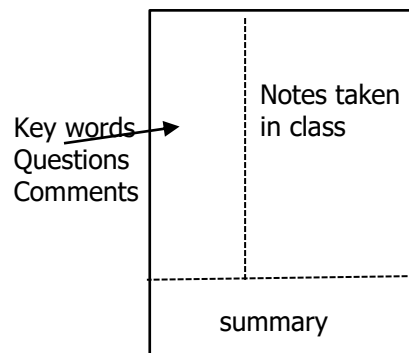
Mindmaps work for a theme or topic.

- Subdivide the topic into the main themes.
- Subdivide each theme further, adding keywords and key information.
- The aim is to summarise and condense the information.
- Self test by recalling the mindmap from memory, **elaborating** on each word and adding detail.



Cornell notes- a memorisation strategy

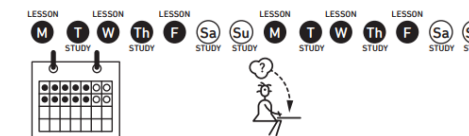
We don't **learn** without **thinking**. So your brain needs to be working hard in lessons and in your independent study. Activities like copying text, where you are not thinking, do not help you learn. Cornell notes is a note taking technique that gets you to **think**.



Glossary- Revision strategies that are proven to work

Spaced practice

Space out your revision over time. Review knowledge regularly, e.g. 1 month, 1 week, 1 day before test.



Retrieval practice

Practice recalling the knowledge from your memory. Regularly test yourself. Try revision apps like quizlet.



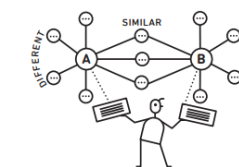
Dual coding

Combine words and visuals. The brain processes words and visuals separately so this leaves two memory traces.



Elaboration

Explain and describe ideas with many details. Make connections.



Interleaving

Switch between ideas during a revision session. Go back over the topics in different orders.

