Guidance Department

Whole School Study Skills Guide

This guide has been designed to support you with effective strategies and techniques for revision, and positively affect your wellbeing.

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GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT

Study Skills Guide for Students and Parents 2023

Contents

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Mind-set for Study

"**Discipline is choosing between what you want now and what you want most**" A Lincoln

Often we really want to do well in school and achieve our best in each subject, but what we want in the moment is to play football, PlayStation/Xbox, watch Netflix etc. We often give in to the thing we want now, and sacrifice what we want most. In this lesson I will be encouraging you to find a way to have both and feel better about yourself and how you spend your time. We will look at rewards for study and see if the things we want now could motivate us to study, rather than compete with it.

Conscious Mind and Sub - Conscious Mind

We have 60,000-70,000 thoughts per day. Each of these thoughts are going to either bring you closer towards achieving your goals or further away from your goals. So carefully watch what you are telling yourself. Replace thoughts such as 'I can't do this' and 'I hate study' with 'I am making progress' and 'I am doing the best I can. This is a work in progress!' The problem with some of these thoughts, especially those coming from the subconscious, is that we do not challenge them, we accept them. If someone else told me I was rubbish at math's, I might get a bit annoyed at them and point out how I pass all my class tests! But when you say it to yourself, it can often go unchecked and be accepted.

The subconscious mind holds our thoughts for 90% of the day, but it is habitual and makes decisions based on past events, not based on logic.

The subconscious is problem oriented and tries to prevent change.

But most importantly, the subconscious runs on auto pilot, so we are not consciously aware of what it is telling us, and it may be telling us things that are not true- Cognitive Distortions.

Reticular Activating System (RAS)

RAS is a cluster of brain cells that control what information we allow to filter from our sub-conscious to our conscious awareness.
For example, at the moment there are probably dozens of noises nearby….. Birds singing, traffic, doors opening and closing etc. But you really don't hear them, do you?
When we concentrate on something in particular, it is amazing what our RAS can filter out. However, if someone says your name, you would almost certainly hear them. That is because the RAS is programmed to alert us to <u>important information that is consistent with our beliefs</u>.
Useful when we here "Help", "Fire", "Stop" .

But the RAS also filters our thoughts and <u>dismisses any information</u> that is <u>not consistent with our beliefs</u>. Therefore, RAS won't listen if we get an A in English if it believes I am not good at the subject. "The exam was too easy". We have to retrain it! Finding evidence for a preferred belief (a belief that is consistent with your goals) is the way to do this. "I work hard at English and I am getting better results"

"**You must expect great things of yourself before you can do them**". Michael Jordan

I like this quote from Michael Jordan, he may not realise it, but he's referring to the reticular activating system of the brain. To achieve your goals, (study, sporting or otherwise), it is ultimately choice not chance that determines our reality. You have the power to achieve anything, but you must first believe that you can.

What you believe you will always seek proof of. We sometimes engage in actions that don't support our ultimate goal, but instead prove our beliefs. So **we follow our beliefs, not our goals**. The RAS - Reticular Activating System- brings to light that we're looking for.

Understand your beliefs. **It is your beliefs that govern your habit and behaviours**. It is **your habits that will enable you to achieve your dreams/goals**.

Self-Limiting Beliefs

So, put simply, our self-limiting beliefs create the lives that we live, as they motivate our behaviors. Layne Benchley, a hugely successful surfer in Australia gives some advice on how to become aware of sub-conscious beliefs, so we can challenge them.

"**If you want to understand what you believe, you just have to ask yourself what you want, and the thought that follows that is actually what you tend to believe. Your "yea but's", your "but if's" are your beliefs**" (7-time World Surfing Champion, Layne Beachley)

The first thing you might need, to motivate yourself now, is to have a goal. Then ask, what thoughts follow this goal, your "yea but" thoughts, these are the beliefs that will govern how you act.

These may come in the form of thoughts or beliefs that go against your goal. Such as "Ah but, it's too hard", "I'm tired", "I don't know where to start". Tackle these one by one, and check out their accuracy.

- "Am I really tired……. If yes, I need to change my routine so I won't be tired tomorrow".
- "Where to start?….. if I just start somewhere, then I won't have to worry about this anymore".
- "It's too hard…. Ask have I tried yet? If no, then try. If yes, then I need to ask for help, so get started".

If you are having trouble getting started, begin with a subject you like.
At this point you may also be able to identify some smaller goals, maybe the task is too much so break it down.

Next, make yourself accountable. If you write down your goal, you are 39% more likely to achieve it. If you proclaim your goal, you are more accountable, and therefore again more likely to succeed. So now tell people your goal. Finally post you goal somewhere. Ideally stick up your written goal on the wall where you study.

“The obstacle is the way”

I read an interview with Rory McElroy where he referred to the book The Obstacle Is the Way: The Timeless Art of Turning Trials into Triumph, by Ryan Holiday, and the concept strikes me as very relevant to any goal. If we are aware of the negative thoughts that follows our goals, and see these obstacles as the way forward, we have a plan of action.

“If I can show myself that I can do this question with the help of ___, then I know that I AM Capable of doing well in maths”. I seek help and fill the gap in my learning.

Use empowering “I am”, “I trust” and “I will” statements to pull you towards your goals, and help you to uncover and become aware of any negative beliefs you may have that could stop you from pursuing your goals (these are the “but if..” thoughts that come after you think of your goal).

Too often we give up, without even realising we did. Self-awareness is the key, so you can choose what to think, what to believe and how to act.

Growth V Fixed Mindset

Intelligence is not fixed, and we can all learn. When we use a particular part or process of our brain, the connections in that part of the brain are strengthened.

Things that help us to learn are:

1. **Working hard**: actually making an effort and focusing our attention on a task.
2. Using **effective strategies**: In lesson two we will cover effective strategies for study, and your teachers can advise you of strategies for each subject area.
3. Seeking **support from others**: we all get stuck and need to ask questions. Be in class, ask friends, look up resources online
4. Seeing **setbacks as opportunities to build new skills**: another Michael Jordan quote may help here. He said: "I've failed over and over and over again in my life and that is why I succeed".
   Winston Churchill said "success is walking from failure to failure with no loss of enthusiasm".
   And Thomas Edison, the inventor of the light bulb said "I haven’t failed. I've just found 10,00 ways that won't work". Everyone has set backs, don't let them define you.

When you hear self-limiting beliefs ask yourself a few questions:

- Do I need help with this topic? Who can help me? Then ask for help
- Did I have a short break recently? If you are tired, take a short break, ideally every 30-40 minutes.
- Is something distracting me, making it harder to study? If yes minimize it. Turn off the phone, notifications etc.
- Am I tired? Have a look at your routine. Sleep is the master of wellbeing. Make sure your routine is allowing enough time to sleep
- Am I sluggish? Then get up and do a few exercises (jumping Jacks will do fine) to get your blood flowing and endorphins to give you energy.

"**Whether you think you can, or you think you can't…. you're right**" Henry Ford.

Memory – The Science of Learning

When we learn something—even as simple as someone's name—we form **connections** between neurons in the brain.

These neural connections called *synapses* create new circuits between nerve cells, essentially remapping the brain.

Those synapses **get stronger or weaker** depending on how often we're **exposed** to an event. The more we're exposed to an activity (like a golfer practicing a swing thousands of times) the stronger the connections. The less exposure, however, the weaker the connection, which is why it's so hard to remember things like people's names after the first introduction.

The reality is that you cannot "push" information out by learning new things. Each of the brain's 100 billion nerve cells can have 10,000 connections to other nerve cells The sheer number of possible connections gives the brain unfathomable flexibility.

Memory

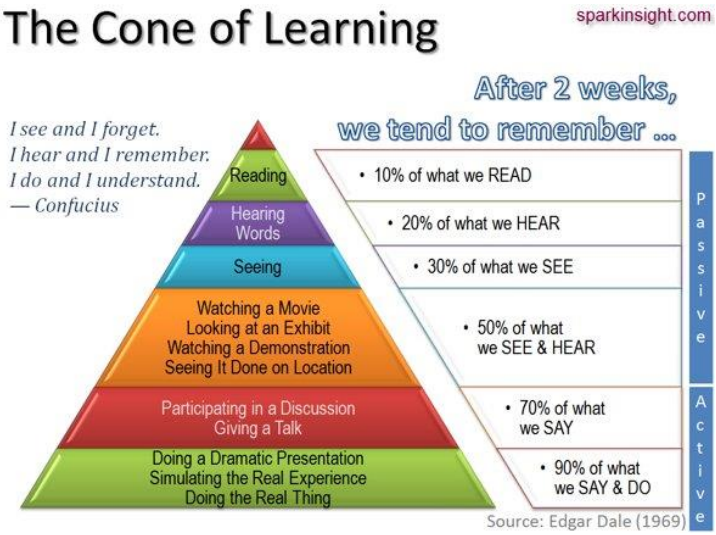
It is easier to recall information that you **understand** and that is **familiar** to you.
It is easier to recall information when you **strengthen the neural connection** to his information often – i.e. consciously think about the information

This is called Etching it in your mind, and there are three ways to help you to etch something in your memory, making it easier to recall. They are:

1. **Repetition** – frequently repeating something over and over
2. **Association** – creating a link or association with what you are trying to recall and what you already know.
3. **Imagination** - This is where you use your imagination to again associate word and images in your mind.

For all these activities, you need to be **ACTIVE** in your study rather than passive.

The Cone of Learning



Here we have the cone of learning, so show us which activities are active and which are considered passive. It also shows us how much we generally remember from each activity.

Reading alone is considered passive, and we only remember 10% of what we read. Have you ever been reading and noticed that you have no idea what you just read – your mind got bored and drifted off.

Hearing something alone is also passive, and we forget 80% of what we hear.

Seeing alone is passive and we forget 70% of what we see.

Hearing me now, and seeing this graph is still passive, and without revision you will forget 50% of what is on this graph.

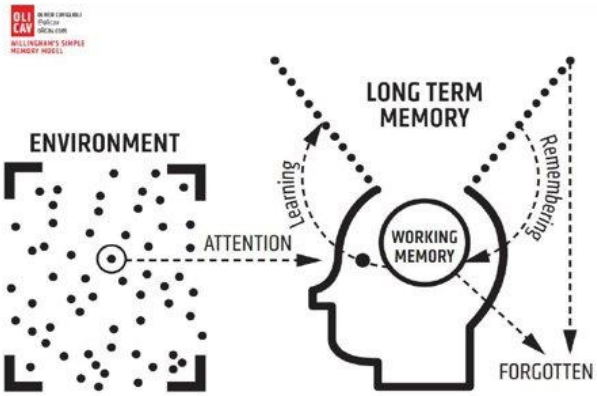
Finally, the active study activities that help us to remember more are discussing a topic, or doing something with the information, like an experiment or a presentation. We have to be fully focused to engage in these activities, and so we remember more.

This is not new, Chinese philosopher Confucius is said to have spoken about this approximately 500 years BC. "*I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand*" - Confucius

The trick is to be active, so you are focused on what you are trying to learn. We can often wander off in our thoughts when we are reading or transcribing. But when you are talking out loud, you need to focus on what you are saying. This is active study as you are paying full attention to the content.

Willingham's Simple Model of Memory, 2009

In recent years, there has been lots of research around the science of learning and how we learn and retain information. In summary, if we think of the learning process using the following diagram, it will help us have a greater awareness of the most effective revision strategies based upon the available research.



1. We have a **certain amount of attention to pay** and this can be **limited** and can dramatically vary depending on the individual or the environment. In the diagram above, 'attention' means we acknowledge new information and this is then transferred into our working memory.

2. Our **working memory is finite** and we can only absorb a **limited amount of information at a given time**. This may be up to 30 seconds. As an example, if you write down a 'long number' and try and remember it every 30 seconds, you will be surprised how difficult this is to do!

3. Information is processed into our long-term memory through 'learning'. This long-term memory is effectively unlimited, and we can retrieve information from here back into our working memory as needed in a given moment. As an example, this might be your phone number or address. We don't walk around thinking about those two things every second of the day but it is in our long-term memory ready to be used and retrieved when needed.

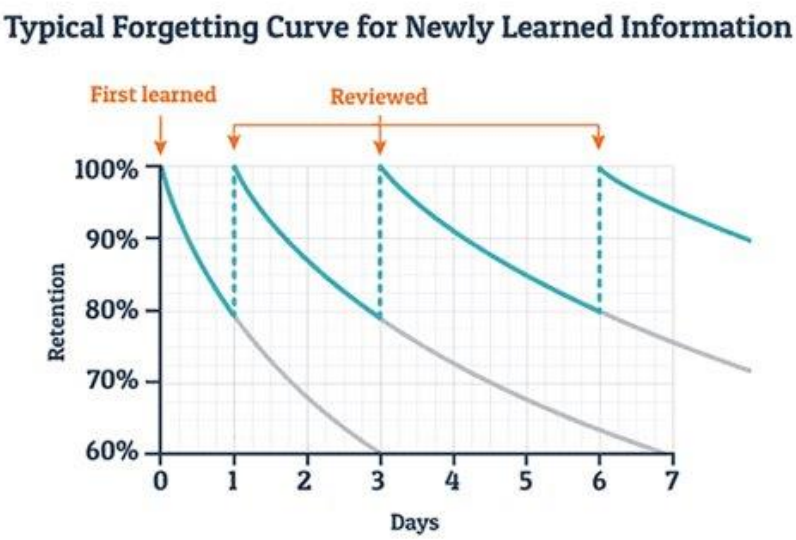
4. Information in our long-term memory is interconnected and linked with prior knowledge. Anything that is not connected or not successfully stored well enough in our long-term memory is forgotten. This is completely natural. SO things are not understood are easily forgotten.

5. If we undertake enough retrieval practice, generating the information in our long-term memory, it increases a level of fluency within the subject. **Practice makes perfect**

- So, in summary working memory is very small and we forget new things easily. "What was her name again...?"
- Long term memory is very large and allows us to remember an infinite amount of things, and things from a long time ago.
- For learning, we move information from our working memory to our long term memory. Retrieval practice is a good strategy to help with this.
- Cramming study overloads our working memory, so it is not considered a useful way to learn. We may pass a test the very next day, but by the end of the year we will have forgotten the learning we crammed to learn.

Ebbinghaus Forgetting Curve

Forgetting is completely natural. The following diagram outlines this process and is called the Ebbinghaus Forgetting Curve (1885).



Ebbinghaus proposed that humans start losing 'memory of knowledge' over time unless the knowledge is consciously reviewed time and time again.

He conducted a series of tests on himself which included the memorization of a meaningless set of words. He tested himself consistently across a period of time to see if he could retain the information.

He found that:

- Memory retention is 100% at the time of learning any particular piece of information (in the moment). However, this drops to 60% after three days.
- A range of factors affect the rate of forgetting including motivation, the meaningful nature of the information, the strategies for revision and physiological factors (sleep for example).
- If each day, repetition of learning occurs, and students take time to repeat information then the effects of forgetting are decreased.

According to research, information should be repeated within the first 24 hours of learning to reduce the rate of memory loss, as the rate of forgetting is fastest within the first 24 hours of learning.

Research suggests that these are some of the most effective learning techniques to ensure that the information is transferred to long-term memory:

- **Retrieval practice** – Generating an answer to a question helps strengthen memory traces.
- **Spacing** – Spreading out learning over different sessions helps reduce the likelihood that information is forgotten. Essentially, for transfer into long-term memory, learning little but often beats learning a lot all at once.
- **Daily and weekly reviews** – These are based on Rosenshine's first and tenth Principles of Instruction, which highlight the importance of reviewing information frequently. It helps increase the likelihood that the information is well connected and embedded in students' long-term memory

In summary, what do we know about memory?

• Consistent practice and revisiting previous material strengthen memory and boosts learning.
• Information, if not revisited, is 'lost' from our memory.
• Our working memory is finite and limited and so overloading this or cramming for revision doesn't work

Activities to help Long Term Memory

Retrieval practice

Retrieval practice is the act of trying to recall information **without having it in front of you**. It is a learning strategy which makes you think hard and bring information to mind

Suppose you're studying the systems of the human body—skeletal, muscular, circulatory, and so on. You could do retrieval practice by attempting to name those systems without looking at the list. Once you've listed all you can remember, you'd open up your book or notes and check to see if you got them right.

Using past **Exam questions** can use retrieval practice and help you to become familiar with the types of questions asked in state exams.

The whole concept of **flashcards** is built on retrieval practice.

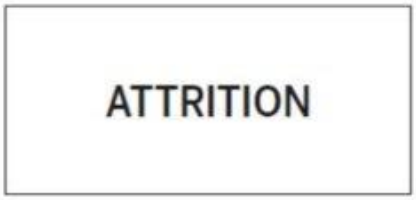
Other examples include:
- Knowledge quizzing and low stakes testing.
- Multiple choice tests.
- Answering verbal questions asked by teacher/peers/parents.

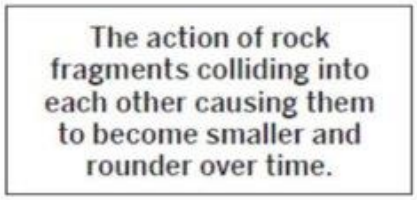
In essence it is the action of **actively retrieving knowledge** that boosts learning and strengthens memory. It means trying to remember previously learned information a**s opposed to simply re-reading it**.

Flashcards

One particularly effective strategy is the creation and use of flashcards. Flashcards are generally a card containing a small amount of information as an aid to learning. The use of flashcards is for low stakes testing to improve recall and to strengthen memory.

An effective flashcard may include the following (in each subject they will be used in a different way):
- A key term/key word with definition on the back.
- A key date with the event on the back.
- A key equation with its use in practice on the back.
- A past paper question and a model answer on the back.





In order to use flashcards most effectively, the Leitner System is a desired strategy. Once you have created a set of flashcards, create three boxes/areas marked as the following.
BOX 1: Every day
BOX 2: Twice a week
BOX 3: Once a week

• Test yourself on the flashcards in the Box 1 pile. If you get the answer correct on the flashcard, move it to the Box 2 pile. If you get it incorrect, it stays in Box 1.
• Twice a week, test yourself on the flashcards in Box 2. If you get the answer correct on the flashcard, move it to the Box 3 pile. If you get it incorrect, it stays in Box 2. The aim is to get all of the flashcards to Box 3.

This video will help support you in using the Leitner system:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C20EvKtdJw

SQ3R

In study you are looking for **GAPS** in your learning.

So it's actually a good thing if you identify an area you are very unsure of. It means you can work on an area that really needs work.

It is our tendency to be drawn to the things we know, the familiar. But in study you are looking for gaps in your knowledge.

The SQ3R method of reading outlined below is a useful way to become aware of the gaps in your learning.

- S= **Survey**. What is the chapter/page about. This prepares your brain for what's coming.
- Q= **Question**. Turn every heading, bold or highlighted word, graph, into a question. You are checking for **gaps** in your knowledge. If you come to a word or phrase you do not recall, you will be more focused when you read about it, because you are aware of the gap.
- R = **Read**. Only now read the definitions etc, knowing what you remembered and what you did not will help you to stay active ad focused.
- R= **Recite**. This is the time to learn off. If you are an oral learner say things over and over and ask people to test you orally. If you are a visual person you might write main points or do a visual representation such as a mind map as you explain the topic to yourself again & again.
- R- **Revise/Recall**. We know that repeated retrieval enhances long-term retention. We'll spend a whole slide on this …..

Repetition, Association and Imagination

Another way to use retrieval practice is the use **repetition**, **association** and **imagination.**

We will look at using Mnemonics, to aid learning.

An **acronym** is one way to use association and imagination to learn. Here we take the first letter of each word to be remembered in a list and try to make a word.

As an example, FAT DAD can be used to remember the countries in Northern Ireland. Write down that you think each letter stands for..... (Fermanagh Armagh Tyrone Down Antrim Derry)

Another example is using the first letter of each process to remember, like the chambers of the heart. Can you figure out what LORD stands for..... And that in the heart the **left** chamber carries **oxygenated** blood while the **right** chamber carries **deoxygenated** blood.

Another use of repetition, association and imagination in study is **Acrostic.**

Here we create an easy to remember sentence in which the first letter of each word provides a cue to the to-be-remembered material.

A sentence is easier to remember than disconnected words.

e.g. The order for operations in Math's - Subtraction, Addition, Brackets, Division, Multiplication
Becomes – "**B**less **M**y **D**ear **A**unt **S**ally" –
"Brackets, Multiplication, Division, Addition, Subtraction"

Treble Clef Lines in Music– "**E**very **G**ood **B**oy **D**eserves **F**ruit"

Finally, for now, we can also use **Mnemonic Associations** to learn material.

Here something in the to-be-remembered material is associated with an aspect of the material that is hard to remember –

For example, in Geography it may be hard to remember whether stalactites grow down or up in a cave, so we use an association to remember, using the C in Stala**c**tites to connect the word to the associated word **c**eiling; and the G in stala**g**mites to the associated word **gr**ound:

"Stala**c**tites grow from the **c**eiling; stala**g**mites from the **gr**ound"

Or this can be used to remember a spelling, such as – My Princi**pal** is my **Pal**, not my ple

Spacing

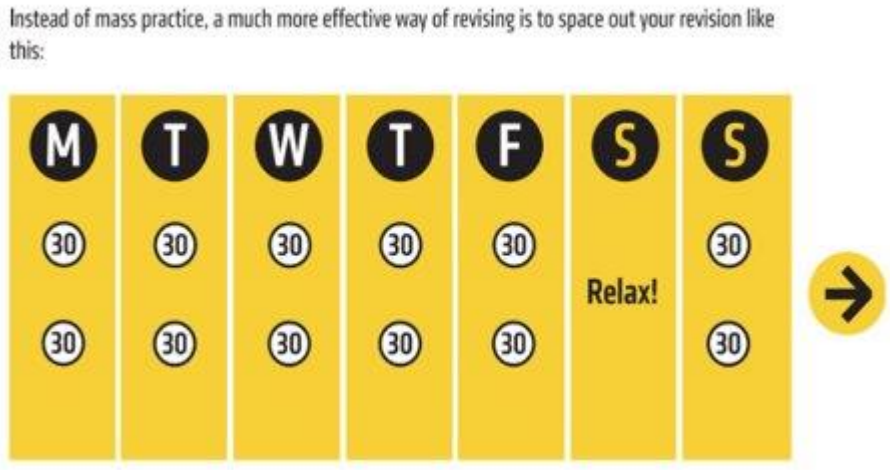
Another useful principle to be aware of for learning, is that learning should be spaced out.

Learning is enhanced when it is spread out over multiple sessions, and where the number of times you are exposed to the subject is increased.

We will look at how to organise study taking into account this principle.

Session Spacing

So the first principle tells us that spacing your revision into smaller chunks over a period of time helps you to remember the material better and ensures you are less overwhelmed with your revision



So using only time at the weekend is not as helpful to study as using your time all week long.

So if you have 5 hours to prepare for a test and you break down the topic into 30-minute study sessions, it is better to do two 30 minute sessions every day with a rest day, than to cram nine 30 minute sessions into a Sunday and one on Friday and two on Saturday.

You can see on the diagram how intimidating Sunday looks, and how it may easily overwhelm you. Studying little but often is more effective and you are more likely to achieve it.

Interleaving

The second principle of spacing is Interleaving. This involves switching between ideas and topics during a study session.

This ensures that you are not studying one idea or topic for too long.

Mixing up your revision and chunking it supports learning and strengthens your memory.

So you can see on the diagram we still study Macbeth three times, but not all on Monday; we spread out the study sessions to Monday, Tuesday and Thursday.

For example, instead of organising your revision week like this:

M	T	W	T	F
MACBETH	AN INSPECTOR CALLS	CREATIVE WRITING	UNSEEN POETRY	JEKYLL AND HYDE
MACBETH	AN INSPECTOR CALLS	CREATIVE WRITING	UNSEEN POETRY	JEKYLL AND HYDE
MACBETH	AN INSPECTOR CALLS			

A much more effective way of organising your revision would be like this:

M	T	W	T	F
MACBETH	UNSEEN POETRY	AN INSPECTOR CALLS	JEKYLL AND HYDE	CREATIVE WRITING
AN INSPECTOR CALLS	JEKYLL AND HYDE	CREATIVE WRITING	MACBETH	UNSEEN POETRY
CREATIVE WRITING	MACBETH	UNSEEN POETRY	AN INSPECTOR CALLS	JEKYLL AND HYDE

Review

Another effective learning technique is to review daily and weekly. We will look at study timetabling in the next section, but for now, to help with revising, we will look at the pomodoro technique.

This involves setting a 25-minute timer (or longer if you feel you can) for each task. The time will go by quickly, and you'll end up with a feeling of accomplishment.

Start by spending time reviewing a topic/unit before quizzing/testing yourself with no notes and from your memory (this is vital for revision).

Once you have finished, check your answers. This will support you in showing where your 'knowledge gaps' are and where focus needs to be in your future revision.

For those who find it hard to begin study this can be very effective. After about 5 minutes, the pain centers of your brain that sound an alarm when you're unwilling to get started will quiet down. So you could start with an easy topic or one you like for a short 5 minutes' revision, and then move quickly to more pressing study areas once you are in the flow.

Often beginning is the hardest, but if you force yourself to start working for just a few minutes it will ease your anxiety. But be sure to move quickly from your comfort zone; you need to be thinking hard and identifying your own areas for development. Avoid simply revising topics you enjoy.

Brain Waves

We've probably all heard or even said the phrase "I've just had a brain wave". What you may not know is that brain waves are real. They are oscillating electrical voltages in the brain measuring just a few millionths of a volt. Researchers have identified five different types of brainwave, each with an associated brain frequency.

The five types of brain waves and their associated frequencies are:

1. **Delta waves**- occur during deep states of dreamless sleep (between 0.5 and 4 hertz (Hz)).
2. **Theta waves-** occur during light sleep or deep relaxation (, between 4 and 8 Hz).
3. **Alpha waves**- occur when people feel relaxed and when the brain is in an idle state without concentrating on anything (between 8 and 12 Hz).
4. **Beta waves-** are the waves that occur during most conscious, waking states. It is a fast activity that signals attentiveness and alertness (between 12 and 30 Hz).
5. **Gamma waves**- are the fastest wavelength brain waves that are linked to activities such as learning, problem-solving, and information processing (between 25 and 100 Hz).

When we sit down to study, we need to encourage our brain to move from usually Alpha mode (relaxing) to Beta or Gamma mode. It takes a few minutes to make the transition, so the Pomodoro technique is useful.

It also helps to have a **space reserved for study**, so this too aids the transition between modes.

Dual Coding

To move back to learning techniques, another useful approach is to use Dual Coding for reviewing notes and learning.

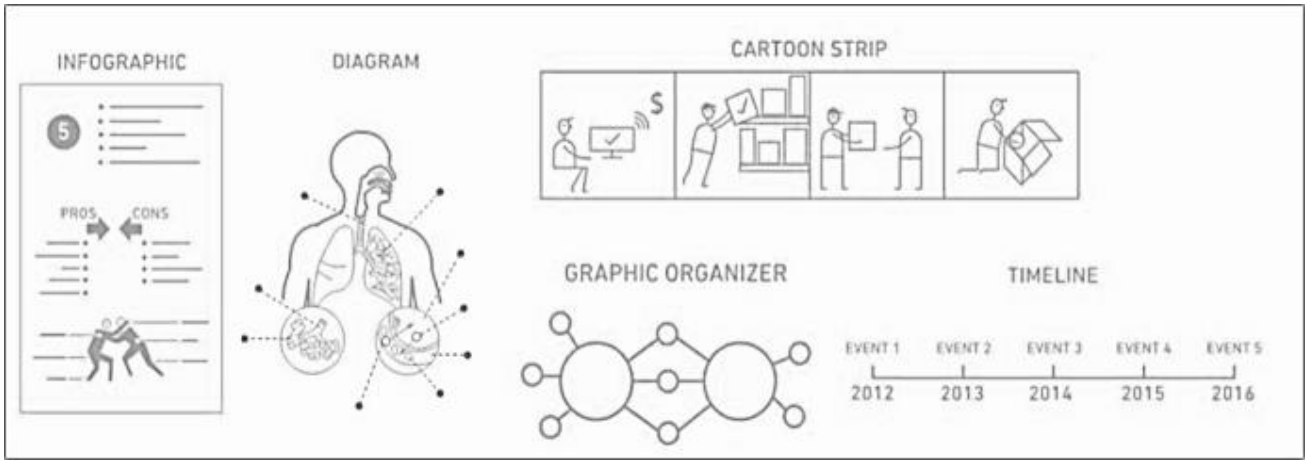
Dual-coding theory states that simultaneously processing both verbal and visual representations of an idea, that is, dually coding the information, will make the information more memorable (Kamil et al., 2000).

The Dual-Coding Theory posits that the human mind processes information through separate systems: one for visual stimuli and another for verbal stimuli. By simultaneously engaging both systems, learners can better grasp and retain complex concepts.

Scientific evidence supports the benefits of dual coding in education. Studies show that combining visual aids, such as diagrams, graphs, or illustrations, with verbal explanations enhances learners' ability to understand and remember information. This process not only reduces cognitive overload but also helps learners make connections between different pieces of information, leading to a better comprehension of the material.

So when reviewing something you have learnt, combining words and pictures can be powerful.

Examples of this include creating a: Infographic, Diagram, Cartoon Strip, Graphic Organiser, Timeline, and of course a mind map.

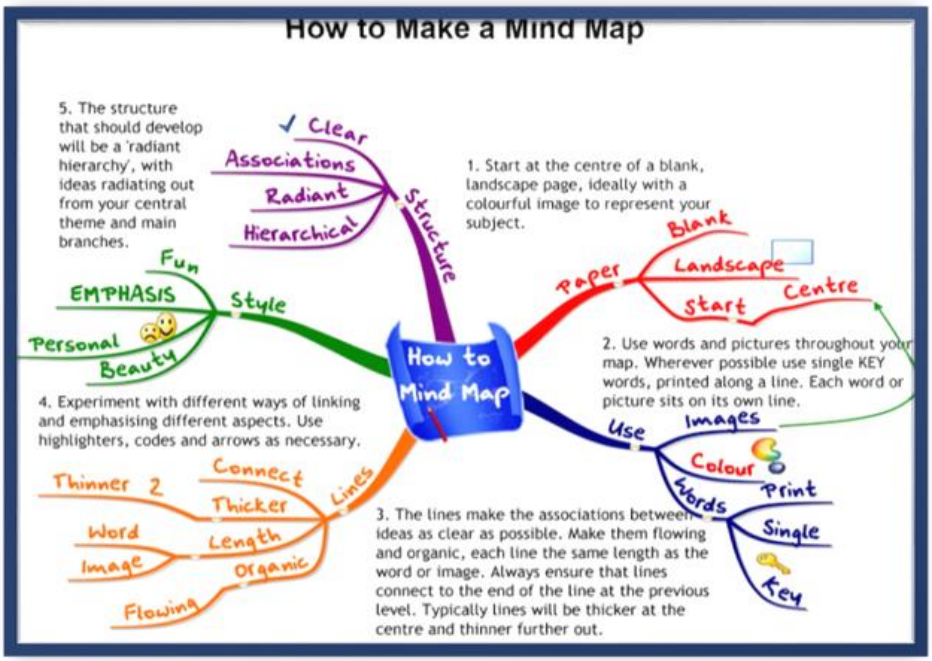


Mind Map

The mind map is probably the most well-known dual coding techniques. Some students find these useful. Be careful when using these not to distract yourself from making a perfect poster. It is made to aid learning, not to have a piece of art.

A Mind Map is a pictorial method to represent information that radiates from a central node.

To create a Mind Map:
Step 1: Write a concise heading for the overall theme in the center of a sheet of paper.
Step 2: For each major sub-topic start a new major branch from the central theme and label it.
Step 3: Carry on in this way for ever finer sub-branches.
Step 4: It may be appropriate to put an item in more than one place or to cross-link it to several other items.
Step 5: To differentiate items use a variety of fonts, colors, symbols, etc.
There are many resources available on the internet. You can start by searching, *"How to make a mind map?"*. You can also check out **Mind-Mapping.org**.



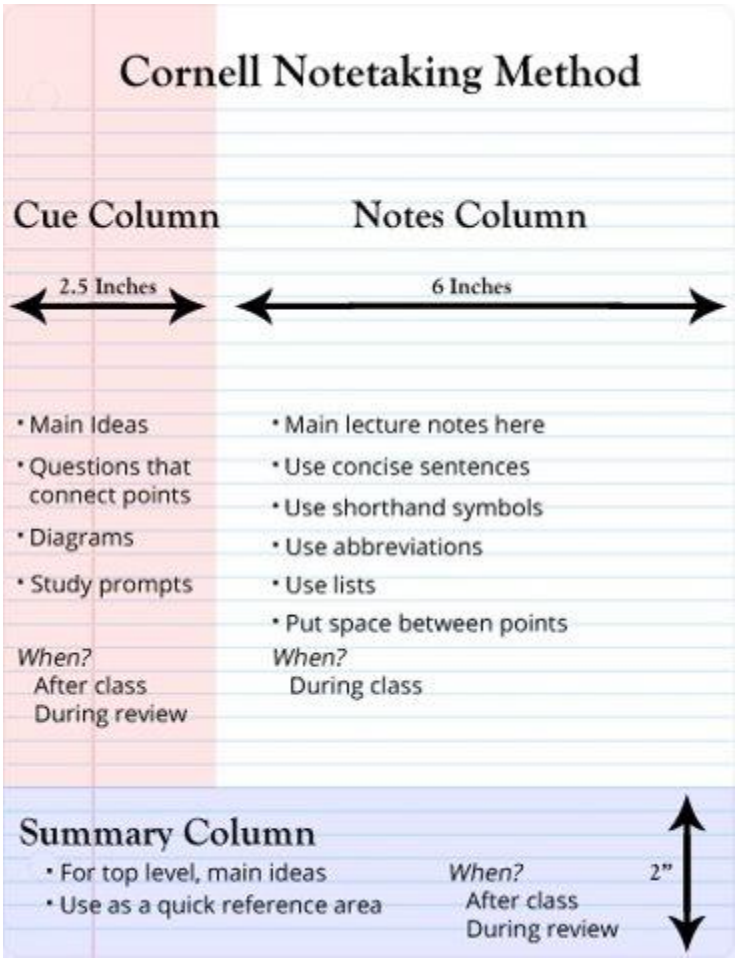
Note Taking

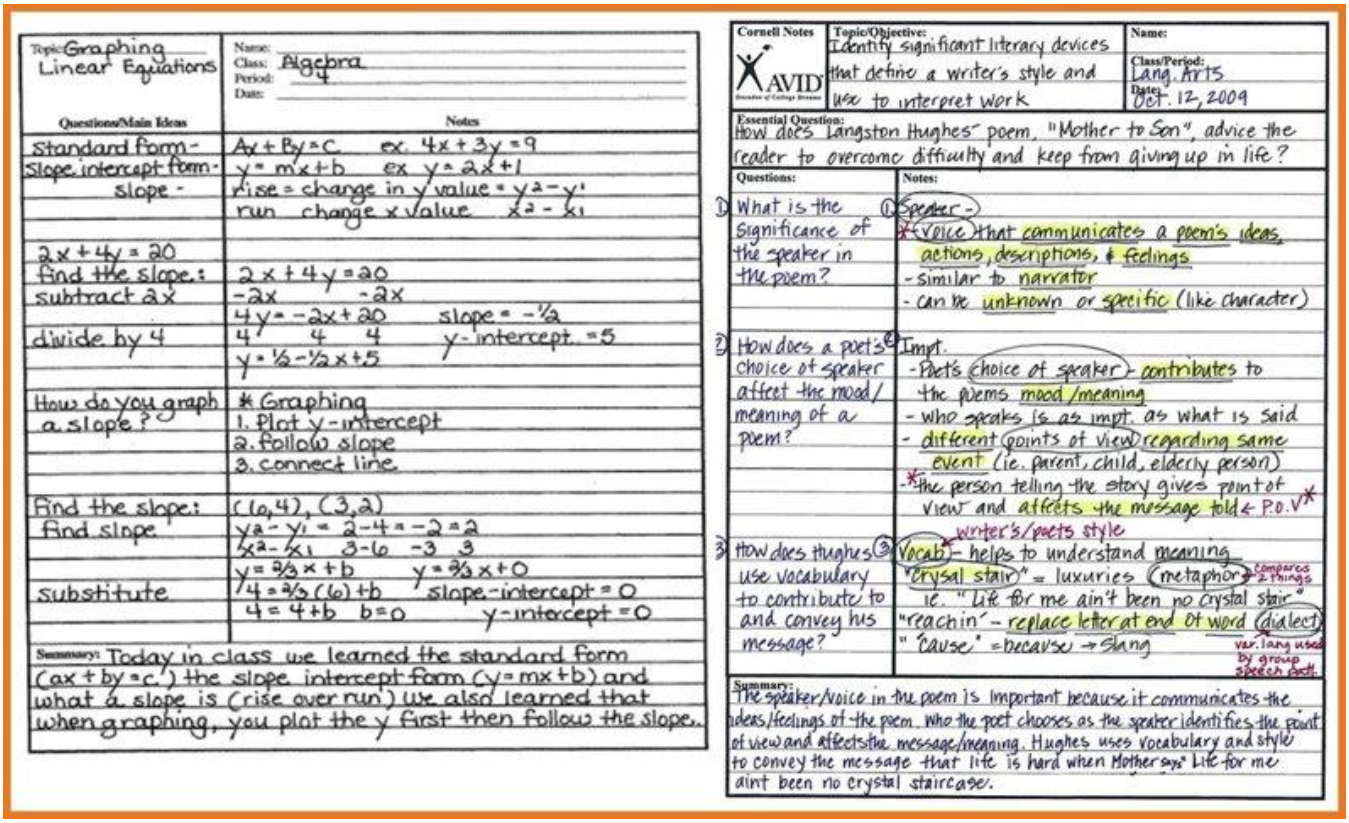
Transcribing is considered an ineffective study strategy as it is too passive. But for those who are drawn to note-taking the Cornell approach could be useful.

Cornell note taking

This is a system of note taking originally designed to help to take good notes in lectures. However, it is a very useful system for creating revisable notes for your two weeks of memory work before the LC.
Essentially you have:

A Topic Heading
A column with questions/cues
A column with solutions/answers
A summary section which outlines the main points


Cornell Notetaking Method
Cue Column
Notes Column
2.5 Inches
6 Inches
• Main Ideas
• Questions that connect points
• Diagrams
• Study prompts
When?
After class
During review
• Main lecture notes here
• Use concise sentences
• Use shorthand symbols
• Use abbreviations
• Use lists
• Put space between points
When?
During class
Summary Column
• For top level, main ideas
• Use as a quick reference area
When?
After class
During review
2"


Topic: Graphing Linear Equations
Name:
Class: Algebra
Period:
Date:
Questions/Main Ideas
Notes
Standard form - Ax + By = C ex. 4x + 3y = 9
Slope intercept form - y = mx + b ex y = 2x + 1
slope - rise = change in y value = y2 - y1
run change x value x2 - x1
2x + 4y = 20
find the slope:
subtract 2x
divide by 4
2x + 4y = 20
-2x -2x
4y = -2x + 20 slope = -½
4 4 4 y-intercept = 5
y = ½x + 5
How do you graph a slope?
* Graphing
1. Plot y-intercept
2. Follow slope
3. connect line.
Find the slope:
find slope
substitute
(6,4), (3,2)
y2 - y1 = 2-4 = -2 = 2
x2 - x1 3-6 -3 3
y = ⅔x + b y = ⅔x + 0
4 = ⅔(6) + b slope-intercept = 0
4 = 4 + b b = 0 y-intercept = 0
Summary: Today in class we learned the standard form (ax + by = c.) the slope intercept form (y = mx + b) and what a slope is (rise over run) we also learned that when graphing, you plot the y first then follow the slope.
Cornell Notes
AVID
Topic/Objective: Identify significant literary devices that define a writer's style and use to interpret work
Name:
Class/Period: Lang. Arts
Date: Oct. 12, 2009
Essential Question: How does Langston Hughes' poem, "Mother to Son", advice the reader to overcome difficulty and keep from giving up in life?
Questions:
Notes:
1) What is the significance of the speaker in the poem?
① Speaker -
* Voice that communicates a poem's ideas, actions, descriptions, & feelings
- similar to narrator
- can be unknown or specific (like character)
2) How does a poet's choice of speaker affect the mood/meaning of a poem?
② Impt.
- Poet's choice of speaker → contributes to the poems mood/meaning
- who speaks is as impt. as what is said
- different points of view regarding same event (ie. parent, child, elderly person)
- * the person telling the story gives point of view and affects the message told ← P.O.V *
3) How does Hughes use vocabulary to contribute to and convey his message?
③ writer's/poets style
Vocab* - helps to understand meaning
"crysal stair" = luxuries (metaphor - compares 2 things)
ie. "life for me ain't been no crystal stair"
"reachin'" - replace letter at end of word (dialect)
" 'cause" = because → slang
ver. lang used by group speech each
Summary: The speaker/voice in the poem is important because it communicates the ideas/feelings of the poem. Who the poet chooses as the speaker identifies the point of view and affects the message/meaning. Hughes uses vocabulary and style to convey the message that life is hard when Mother says "Life for me ain't been no crystal staircase."

When studying take an approach that comes naturally to you- Visual, Written, Oral, Past Exam Questions. However, it is worth stating that Past Pupils interviewed on the topic in December 2020 all stated they used Past Exam papers.

Many students only use study clix and exam questions, and that is fine. Other prefer flash cards, and that too is fine. Use whatever works for you. We are all individuals with our own set of preferences. Figure out what works by trying these, but don't feel you need to use them all, you don't.

Seek help in any way you can when you need it
Refer to podcasts or YouTube videos. Spend 20 minutes watching an informative video that breaks the topic into simpler terms.
Or better still call a friend, email a teacher, certainly get help with the topics you find difficult.

Reward yourself when you complete your study goal(s).
Think of a small way to reward yourself when you've met your goal. If you're in the middle of a study session, you can take a quick walk, eat a granola bar, or listen to a favorite song. The achievement of study itself will become the reward, but it helps when beginning to have a little something else to help form the habit.
If you've finished your study session, then feel free to wind down by playing a video game, hopping on social media to connect with your friends, or going out somewhere.

Eventually though, the reward is actually the feeling of accomplishment of meeting a goal. Intrinsic motivation tops extrinsic motivation, so try to allow yourself to feel good just for studying and meeting a target without relying on external rewards like access to computer games etc.

Getting Organised

Develop a personalized study guide for each subject- Make a list.

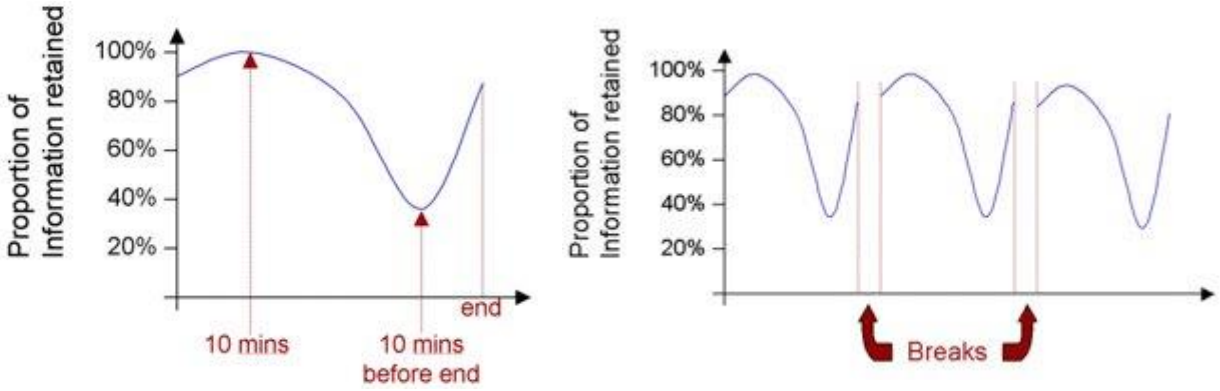
Design a study guide that makes the most sense to you – do a timetable

Decide what strategies will be effective to study the topic chosen

- Try creating flash cards
- Make a mind map
- Record yourself asking and answering questions
- List out all of the questions you think might appear on your exam.
- Refer to your textbook for review questions or turn each section heading into a question (SQ3R method)

If the textbook's section heading reads, "Stalin's rule as dictator", ask questions of yourself "Can I describe the how Stalin became a dictator? What did he do as a leader? What happened?"
Look online for study guide and examples as a starting point such as on studyclix.

You study best at the beginning and end of a study session
Don't forget to take regular short breaks while studying, as this too helps concentration and learning. We study best at the beginning and end of breaks, so try to have many beginnings and ends in two-hour block (a walk to have a glass of water every 30 minutes or so).



Focus on Tasks; not Time. Be productive, not busy

If you tell yourself, "I'll study business for 1 hour", you haven't set any tangible/visible result. You could sit there listening to dance monkey and flicking through the business book, but learn very little.
Yet feeling successful is what keeps us striving. So we need our study sessions to feel successful.

We can achieve this by being task focused. Have definite criteria for success.
This sounds like: "I will learn the sources of finance for business and be able to name, explain and give an example of long, medium and short term sources of finance". So now if I can "name, explain and give an example of long, medium and short term sources of finance" after whatever amount of time (an hour/30 minutes), I will feel successful as I have achieved a task.

This success will help me to keep going and set a new task. Keep a record of this revision work, as it too spurs you on when you see how well you are doing, and how much you have achieved. It also helps you to do that all important quick recall revision the next day and in a week from now.

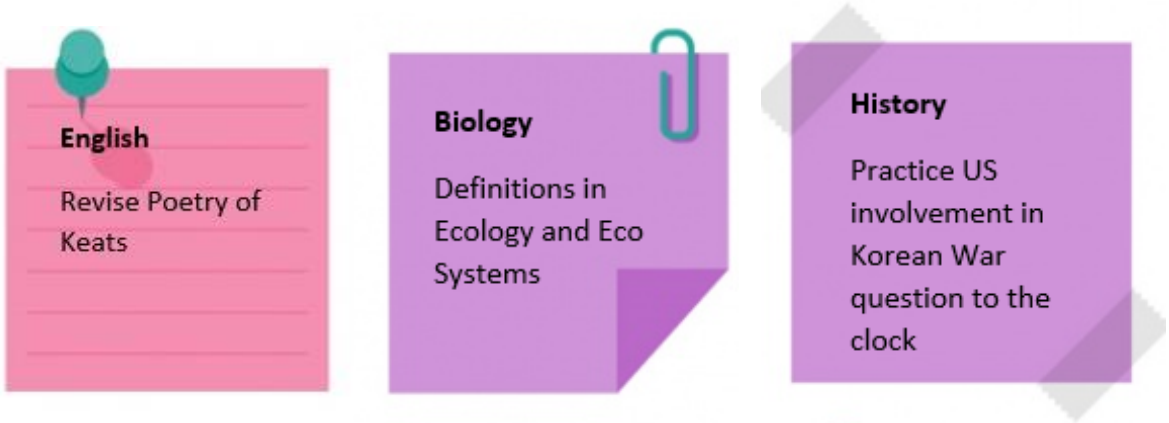
Use SMART Goals

Specific – a particular set of definitions or experiment
Measurable- test your knowledge after your study session
Attainable – an amount of work that you can achieve in the time you have available
Relevant – an important goal to you. These should include any gap you notice in your learning as filling these gaps will result in better grades in exams
Time-Bound – have a set amount of time in which to achieve the goal – usually a study session or two if these is a lot to cover. This is where a timetable will help.

SMART Goals- Set an attainable target, that matter to YOU for each subject.
What would YOU like to achieve?

Targets:	English H2	Irish H5	Maths H4	Biology H6	DCG H4	History H5	Business H3
Grades:	(80%)	(50%)	(60%)	(40%)	(60%)	(50%)	(70%)

SMART Goals-2. Set tasks to reach those goals- what obstacles are there, what gaps are there in my learning? These are the tasks I need to address

Targets:	English H2	Irish H5	Maths H4	Biology H6	DCG H4	History H5	Business H3
Grades:	(80%)	(50%)	(60%)	(40%)	(60%)	(50%)	(70%)
Tasks: this week (use post-its, as these change regularly)							

Once you have decided on your target grades, ask yourself what is stopping you/could potentially stop you from getting that grade? These topics are now your tasks. I like post-it's as they can go from your **to-do list**, to **a "done" list** where you can see you progress over time.

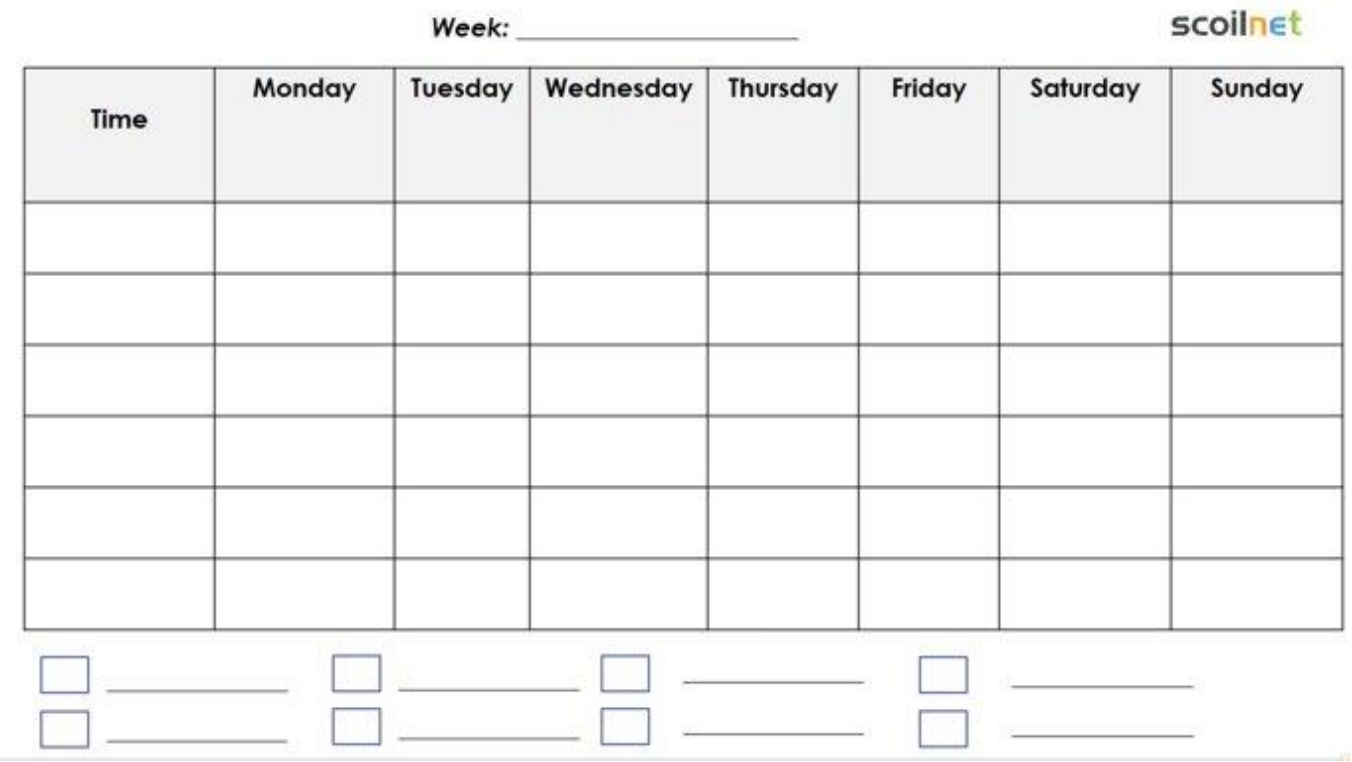
Focus on your long-term goals and what you'll achieve by studying.

Studying day after day can be grueling, but rather than fixating on the negatives, get yourself in a positive frame of mind by visualizing all the good that your hard work will bring. Imagine yourself getting a good score on a test, receiving praise from your family and friends, or feeling proud of your LC results. Let these good feelings wash over you as you reframe your perspective on studying.

You will derive the most benefit from study when you target the subjects and topics you need to study the most. The ones you avoid and find difficult are the ones you will benefit most from studying.

Establish tickable tasks for each study period.
Break down your studying into smaller tasks or goals. These could be topics, or parts of topics depending on the amount of learning involved.
Set concrete goals for your study session. Identify **Specific, Measurable**, **Attainable, Relevant and Time-specific (SMART)** goals that you can work on one at a time.
This way, you can make good progress and achieving each goal will make you feel accomplished at the end of your study session.

It's easy to get overwhelmed by a huge amount of assignments and emails. But rather than worrying, "How will I ever finish this assignment?" ask yourself, "How much of this assignment can I accomplish in 2 hours?"



- Assign each task/topic a time limit or a slot in your schedule.
- Once you've broken down your study load into bite-sized goals, it's time to fit them into a schedule that works for you. Reserve a specific block of time each day for studying.
- Telling yourself, "I'll have to study sometime this week" will encourage procrastination, but "I'm going to study from 6 PM to 9 PM on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday" will help you stick to your plan.
- Try sticking to a regular schedule, but feel free to break your usual routine if you need to shake things up. Do whatever feels natural to you.
- The more specific and intentional you can be about scheduling your study tasks, the more success you'll have with your studies and time management.

Study Clix

Study clix is very often mentioned by students who are happy with their study routine. Study Clix divide all the Junior Cycle and Leaving Cert subjects into topics and give you past exam questions, marking schemes, sample answers, notes and videos. This way you can study by topic more easily.

This approach to study helps you to identify gaps in your learning, especially if you mark your answers using the marking schemes. It also helps you to apply your learning, and not just remember notes, so you are more exam focused when learning notes

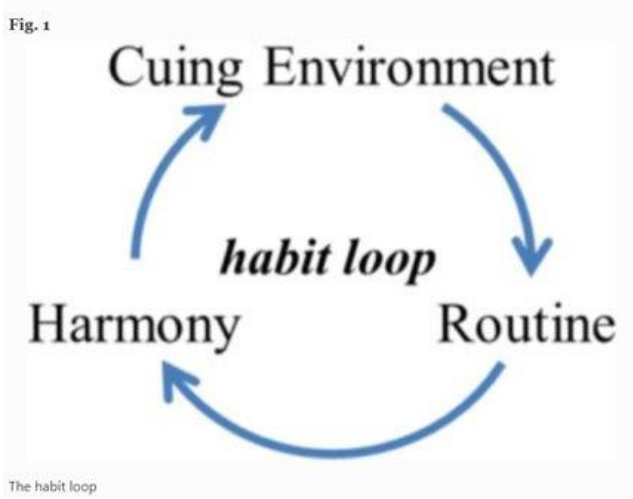
Practising papers can help you to get used to the style of questions that might come up in your exam so that you'll be better prepared for the real thing. Exam questions use command words (describe, analyse, name, explain, evaluate etc) to tell you how they should be answered so getting used to recognising and responding to these is really helpful exam preparation.

This knowledge can ease anxiety during exams, as you are familiar with the style of questions and how to approach answering the various sections of each exam paper.

Another similar resource is pocket papers.

The Importance of Habits

- Start small and build up – reduce distractions where and when you revise. Have a timetable, and ensure someone else is knowledgeable of this timetable to enable accountability and aid support.
- Make it attractive – collaborative focused revision is beneficial but you could also ensure there is a 'reward' at the end of a revision session. If I complete this, I can do this.
- Make it satisfying – challenge yourself, track your own revision progress and ensure you stick to your revision timetable. Small steps build success and motivation. Use a done list to support.
- Make it obvious – revise in one area, leave your materials out ready to support organisation and ensure routines are stuck to. Ensure your environment is clear, uncluttered and comfortable.

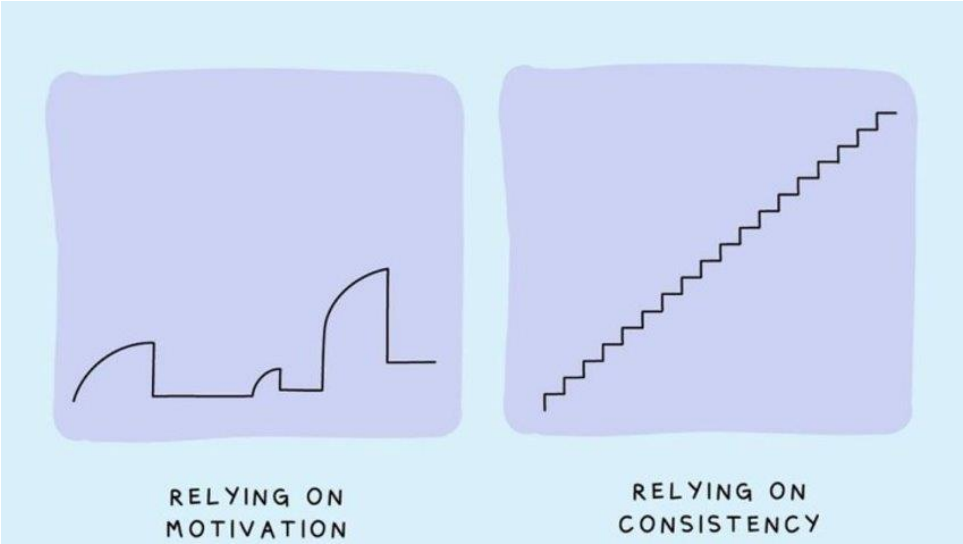


Finally, in terms of getting organized, it is important to state that the getting into good habits really helps. This is clear when we looked at the principle of spacing earlier. The diagram on this slide shows The habit loop. This is the process of building a habit and it consists of three component concepts—

- **Cuing environment-** a trigger that tells your brain to get prepared for study (remember you are moving form alpha to beta or gamma brain waves)
- **Routine**- use a similar pattern of behaviour that helps you to learn. Use the technique/s learned in this presentation to help you to on a consistent basis. By making this study attractive and easy, we will get into a habit faster.
- **Harmony**- this is the affective outcome of the routine activity (feeling satisfied). This is where rewards are good, but it can also be a sense of achievement from doing the work. Intrinsic motivation towards the goals you have set will ensure harmony.

If you get into this cycle with study, you will from a habit you are satisfied to be in, and it's never too late to from this habit.

Consistency is key



Consistency is the key to success so try to make a consistent effort. Replying on the extrinsic motivation you may get from class tests, like the week 11 exams in November and end of year exams in May, when your parents' get a report card, will not be enough. You need to form a consistent study habit to achieve the success you deserve.

Ineffective Study Strategies

So to take a look at what not to do, this list is a fairly good starting point:

- Simply writing out notes or copying from a textbook/exercise book.
- Reading and doing nothing with the information. Trying to focus on 'too much information' on a single page and cramming revision.
- Highlighting information for the sake of it.
- Not enough silent work or attention to a given task. Attempting to revise while multitasking and doing other things.
- Comfort zone revision of easy material that pupils have already mastered because it makes you 'feel good'.

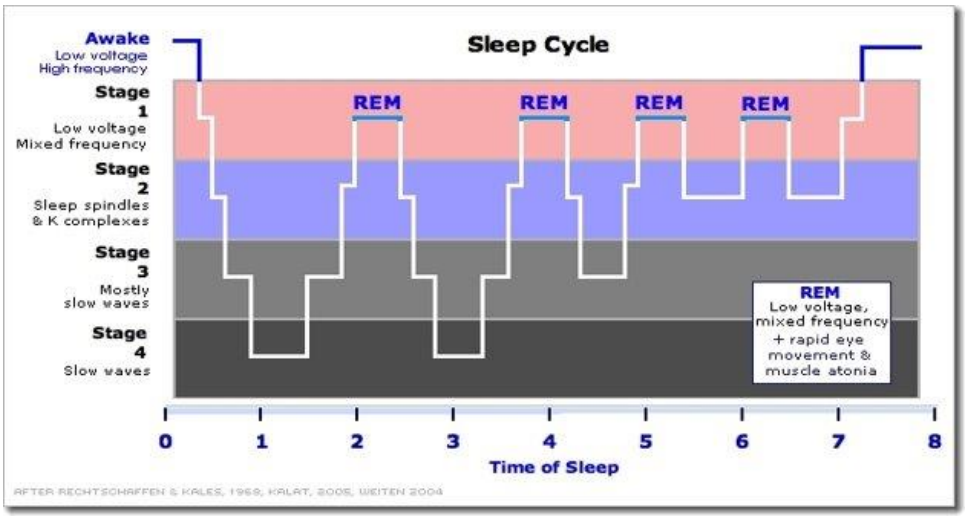
Sleep and Learning

I want to mention the importance of sleep before we end. Sleep is actually very important for learning. So I'm sure you have heard the phrase "Sleep on it", and there's a reason the phrase is used.
It refers to the consolidation of learning that takes place while we sleep.

Learning and memory are often described in terms of three functions.

- **Acquisition** refers to the introduction of new information into the brain. This occurs while awake.
- **Consolidation** represents the processes by which a memory becomes stable. This occurs during sleep through the strengthening of the neural connections that form our memories.
- **Recall** refers to the ability to access the information after it has been stored.

Each of these steps is necessary for proper memory function.
The more REM you have a night, the more rested you are the next day and the better you'll have processed your short-term memory into long-term (consolidated; strengthened neutral pathways).



If you get a good number of REM sleep periods during sleep, you will more easily recall and understand what you have learned today.

The best time to sleep (biologically, not just my advice) is from 10pm to 6am. So try to sleep during this period (not 2am-12pm or you will miss REM periods of sleep).

https://youtu.be/VnHthxHsSgY
Sleep Learning and Memory (1:52 Min)

Your Phone at nighttime:

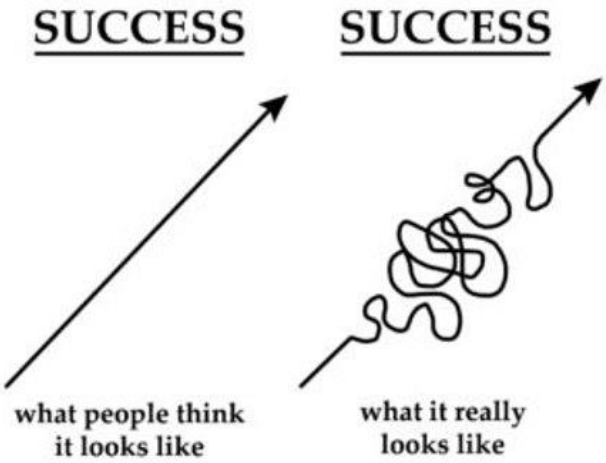
If possible do not have your phone in your bedroom. If you must, then don't look at it.
If you must look at it turn down the backlight and limit your time on it.

A Word on Gaming

If we recall the quote from Abraham Lincoln during the first presentation, that "Discipline is choosing between what you want now and what you want most", a common problem for students can be the temptation to stay up late gaming. You may want to do well in school, you may even do all your homework and some independent study, but find it hard to get to bed at a reasonable time because of gaming. It is worth setting for yourself a time limit and how much to play and on how late you will stay up. Ask yourself if gaming is getting in the way of your other goals.

Balance

According to the BACE theory of self-care, study is actually good for your mental health and wellbeing. It gives a sense of achievement when we set a goal and achieve. But if you are an exam year student in particular, don't be tempted to neglect the other areas necessary for wellbeing – body care (sleep, eating well, exercise and rest), connections (socialising, friends, family, and community) and enjoyment (hobbies, fun, relaxing). So we won't cut out gaming or sports, just get a good balance.



Success involves set-backs

Go easy on yourself. We can sometimes think success should build on success, but it is more complicated than that. So see setbacks as opportunities to learn, and not a reason to give up.

Set backs are part of success. Just stay focused on your goals, use effective strategies, seek help and work hard and you will succeed.

Common Challenges and Overcoming them

So what do we say about those challenges we began with, let's see if we've figures out how to overcome them all.

"I don't know where to begin"

– First take control. Make a list of the things you most need to do. Break down the list into manageable chunks, and then tickable tasks/post-its. Prioritize and stay focused on what you are going to begin with.

"I've got so much to do"

- use a planner and topic lists to break down work into smaller chunks

"I'm falling asleep reading it"

- take a break, stretch, get fresh air, exercise to aid focus. Or perhaps it's reading that is too passive. Test yourself and use memory techniques to help you to learn.

"I read it, I understand it, it won't sink in"

- use SQ3R notes and again try memory techniques to help with the hardest parts – e.g. flash cards.

"I think I understand it"

- test yourself. Make up questions form key sections in notes or your book. Remember what your teacher stressed in class and check recent exam papers.

"There's too much to learn"

- again make a list and prioritize. Start somewhere.

"I knew it a minute ago"

- make a flash card or memory aid to help you to recall.

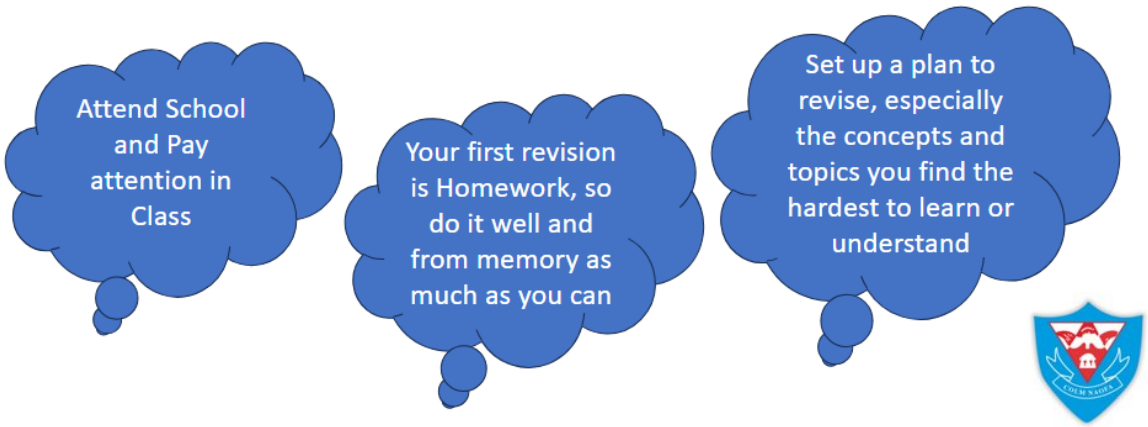
"I'm going to stay up all night until I get this".

- Don't forget to have a balance – BACE – rest, eat, exercise, connect with friends and family and have some fun and enjoyment too.

Final Remarks

"**Practice makes perfect**", Why? Because practice requires us to revisit a skill many times.
Study works the same way. The more often you recall information, the stronger the neural connection becomes and the easier it will be to recall in the exam.

- **Attention** is the primary gatekeeper of learning, so be in class and pay attention (avoid things that distract you in class), do your homework (this is your first set of revision) and use a revision/review timetable and effective learning strategies. These elements will ensure you are focused and paying attention.
- Knowledge of forgetting is very much a part studying – the **gaps** in your learning are your learning goals.
- Watch out for "perfect notes", reading too much and highlighting. **Test yourself** often instead.
- Shoot for **consistency** in study- form good habits. Success is 5% brains and 95% consistency.
- Believe in yourself.



Useful Posters for Parents: