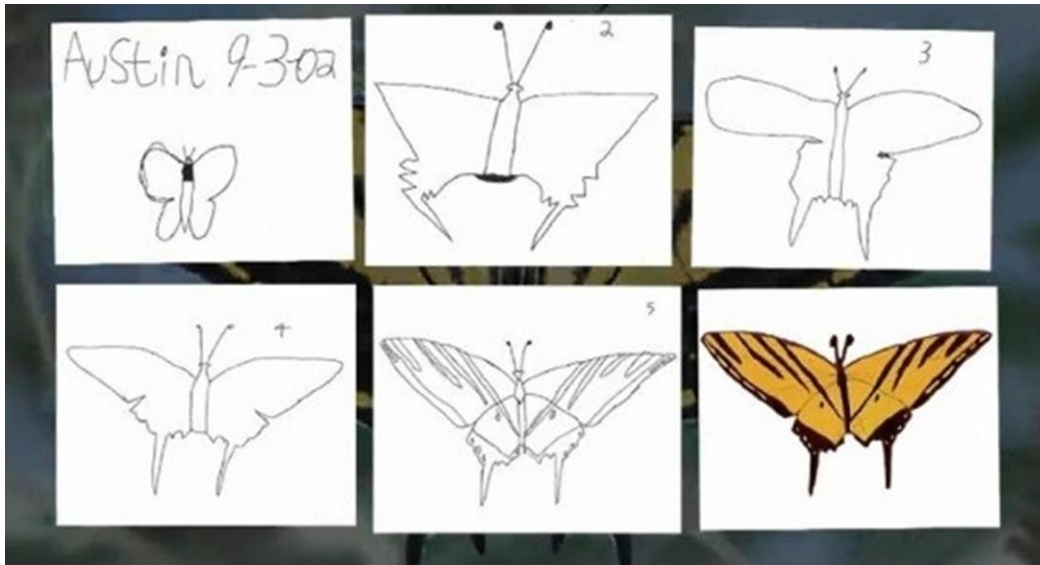


"Success is merely the result of persistence and practice" Matthew Syed

Effective study skills



Year 10

**"Working harder makes
you smarter"**

"Memory is the residue of thought" Daniel Willingham

"No matter what your ability is, effort is what ignites that ability and turns it into accomplishment" Carol Dweck

"If you're going to do something, you should do it well. You should sweat over it and make sure its strong and accurate and beautiful and you should be proud of it" Ron Berger

Dear Year 10 student,

As you are about to embark on your first experience of several formal GCSE exams over a short period of time, we wanted to provide you with some information that will support your revision and give you every opportunity possible to be successful.

There are three main aims of this booklet:

1) *Where are you now and where do you want to be?*

Your May Progress Report will give you a picture of where you currently are in all of your subjects. The most important aspect of this is identifying your strengths and weaknesses – and then working on your weaknesses to turn them into strengths.

2) *What learning techniques really work?*

Many people have a view on the best way to revise, but often there is no evidence to support whether or not these techniques work. We just think they do. We don't think that this approach is good enough – there is too much to risk from encouraging you to do revision techniques that don't really work.

To help you with this, we have looked at what the research evidence actually says does work – in terms of effective revision strategies. In 2013 there was a major research paper published by Professor John Dunlosky at the University of Kent, USA that looked at what actually works in terms of learning and revision. This work was then extended by a group called the Learning Scientists. We have summarised these strategies for you here.

3) *Getting organised*

Once you know the revision strategies that work, you need to get organised and make sure you plan your revision time effectively. This booklet will help you with that. We hope you find it useful.

Mr S Allison
Deputy Headteacher

Ms F Haynes
Senior Leader
Teaching & Learning

Subject	Current Working Grade	Projected Grade	Aspirational Grade	What do I need to do?
English				
Maths				
Science				

What Learning Techniques Really Work?

It's really important to be using revision techniques that have actually been shown to make a difference to learning. There are a number of common techniques that have been shown to have very little impact on learning – and so should be avoided:

Not effective list:

- Highlighting texts
- Re-reading
- Summarising texts

We often use these techniques because they are low stress. They don't really challenge us, but they make us feel good, because we are doing something. The truth is though, whilst it may keep you busy and stop you feeling guilty, it doesn't really help you learn.

There is a very simple reason for this. The way we remember things is by having to think hard about something and recall it from our memory. The more we do this, the higher the chances of us remembering something.

The following techniques from the Learning Scientists will help you with this. Each is also summarised on a YouTube video – search Learning Scientists.



1. Retrieval Practice

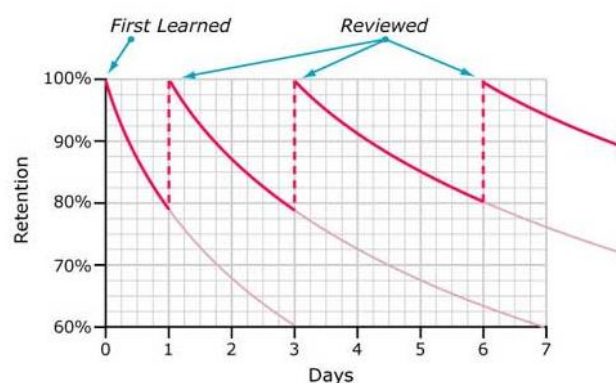
This technique is pretty straightforward – keep testing yourself (or each other) on what you have got to learn. This technique has been shown to have the highest impact in terms of supporting student learning. Some ways in which you can do this easily:

- Create some flashcards, with questions on one side and answers on the other – and keep testing yourself.
- Work through past exam papers – many can be acquired through exam board websites.
- Simply quiz each other (or yourself) on key bits of information.
- Create 'fill the gap' exercises for you and a friend to complete.
- Create multiple choice quizzes for friends to complete.

2. Spaced Practice

Rather than cramming all of your revision for each subject into one block, it's better to space it out – from now, through to the exams. Why is this better? Bizarrely, because it gives you some forgetting time. This means that when you come back to it a few weeks later, you will have to think harder, which actually helps you to remember it. Furthermore, the more frequently you come back to a topic, the better you remember it. Look at the 'forgetting curve' on the next page:

Typical Forgetting Curve for Newly Learned Information



So, use the calendar towards the back of this booklet, to space your revision for subjects out, over the coming weeks.

3. Elaboration

One of the best things that you can do (either to yourself or with a friend) to support your revision is to ask why an idea or concept is true – and then answer that why question. For example;

- In science, increasing the temperature can increase the rate of a chemical reaction....why?
- In geography, the leisure industry in British seaside towns like Porthcawl in South Wales has deteriorated in the last 4 decades....why?
- In history, the 1929 American stock exchange collapsed. This supported Hitler's rise to power....why?

So, rather than just try to learn facts or ideas, ask yourself why they are true.

4. Concrete Examples

Rather than looking at different topics from a subject in isolation, try to think about how this new information is related to what you know already. This is where mind- maps might come in useful – but the process of producing the mind map, is probably more useful than the finished product. So, think about a key central idea (the middle of the mind map) and then how new material, builds on the existing knowledge in the middle.

Try to find metaphors or practical examples of abstract ideas. For example when looking supply and demand in Business Studies you could explain how the price of a mobile phone is highest when it is first released because lots of people want to buy one.

5. Dual Coding

Take something you have learned and change its format. Case study diagrams in geography are great example of this. However you can do it with almost anything. You could take a vocab list

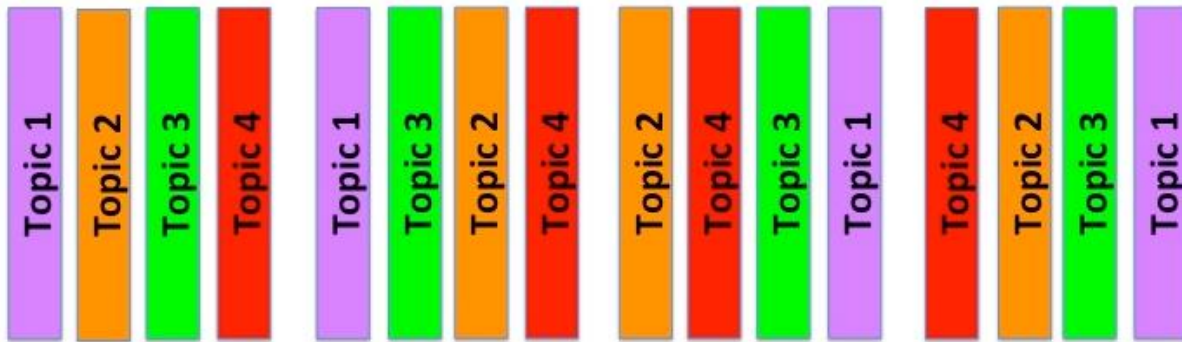
in French and rather than simply trying to remember the words draw a picture for each one. This will help trigger thinking about the word which ultimately will help you remember them. You could equally turn a maths equation into a sentence of 30 words.

6. Interleaving

When you are revising a subject, the temptation is to do it in ‘blocks’ of topics. Like below:



The problem with this is, is that it doesn't support the importance of repetition – which is so important to learning. So rather than revising in ‘topic blocks’ it's better to chunk these topics up in your revision programme and interleave them:



This means that you keep coming back to the topics. So, instead of doing a one hour block of revision on topic 1, do 15 minutes on topic 1, then 15 minutes on topic 2, then the same for topic 3 and 4.

Personal Revision Plan

Y10 mock GCSEs start week commencing Monday 21st May

To fill this in make sure you add:

- When during the day you will revise and how long (suggested maximum is 25 minutes per slot)
- What subject you will revise + what topic from within the subject?
- Which revision session you plan to attend
- When you will have 'relaxation time'
- When each exam you are entered for is and at what time (dates and times to follow)

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
14 May	15 May	16 May	17 May	18 May	19 May	20 May
21 May English Literature exam	22 May	23 May	24 May	25 May	Half Term 28 May – 1 June	
4 June	5 June	6 June	7 June	8 June	9 June	10 June
11 June	12 June	13 June	14 June	15 June	16 June	17 June

Personal Revision Plan

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Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
18 June Geography exam CiDA exam	19 June CiDA exam	20 June Biology exam French and Spanish exam	21 June Maths exam	22 June PE exam	23 June	24 June
25 June English Language exam French exam	26 June Chemistry exam Computer Science exam Spanish exam	27 June Maths exam Business Studies exam Music exam	28 June Geography exam	29 June INSET DAY	30 June	1 July
2 July English Language exam Computer Science exam French and Spanish exam	3 July Physics exam History exam Drama exam	4 July Maths exam Dance exam Media Studies exam PE Exam	5 July Business Studies exam Design Technology exam Citizenship exam	6 July	7 July	8 July

