

Examination

POWER!

revision advice and strategies...

*High expectations. No Excuses!!
Exams... We are coming to get you.*



a prayer to help with revision...

Loving God.

I ask that you are with me now as I revise.

I ask that your Holy Spirit

Calms my nerves and anxieties,

Motivates me to do my very best,

Inspires me to remember the information that I have revised and been taught.

Gives me the wisdom to stay focused and the energy to work hard until the end of each session.

In the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Book compiled by

Mr T Nunn, Assistant Headteacher

Thanks to the following people for helping me complete this book:

Jim Smith, Maree Hooper and Laetitia Roake



this support pack aims to...

- 1 Bring us all together as one community working to help you fulfil your potential and achieve your target grades.
- 2 Re-emphasise heavily your responsibilities so that you are confident and successful in exams.
- 3 Give you clear advice related to revision structures.
- 4 Give you clear examples of revision techniques.
- 5 Motivate and inspire you to take full responsibility for your exam success.

questions to help you measure your success ...

- 1 Have you continued to develop as a kind, loving and respectful individual following the example of Jesus?
- 2 Are you always well equipped, with high attendance and no punctuality concerns?
- 3 Are you enthusiastic, positive, hard working and polite to all students and staff?
- 4 Are you on track to reach all your target grades?
- 5 Are you resilient and motivated, ready to tackle challenges ahead?

our academic expectations...

- 1 Every student leaves school with a qualification
- 2 Over 98% of students to achieve Level 1 (A minimum of 5 A-G grades at GCSE)
- 3 90% of students to achieve Level 2 (A minimum of 5 A-C grades at GCSE)
- 4 75% of students to achieve Level 2 Inclusive (A minimum of 5 A-C grades at GCSE including English and Maths)
- 5 Every student to progress into our Sixth Form, employment or apprenticeship.

BE BOTHERED...

What is it that motivates you?

- Feeling proud about your grades?
- Making someone who loves you feel proud?
- Wanting to know that you have done all that you can for your exams?
- Better grades = better jobs = more money = opportunity to spend on.
- A Sixth Form or College place? No place is secure without a strong set of examination results.
- An Apprenticeship?
- The best summer holiday after exams?
- Winning a bet or competing with a friend?
- Proving someone wrong (or right!)?
- The sweet smell of success on results day?
- The even sweeter smell of saying and having your grades for the rest of your life?

Whatever it is, the brutal truth is the exams aren't going away - so you might as well tackle them head on...and win! **You can do this.** You really can. Everyone at school and at home will support you. But you need to take on this challenge now!

Where you lead, others will follow. So get stuck in. Take those exams on. And visualise getting what you want...and go for it!

THE BASICS!

The foundations for success

1 Be positive about your education.

(Remember millions of people worldwide can only dream of the opportunity, teachers and school that you have)

2 Attendance.

You must attend school every day to keep attendance high, so gaps in learning do not develop. 90% attendance is not good enough as 100 lessons will be missed by the time you sit your exams. This has a MASSIVE impact on your standards, results and success in exams.

3 You must always be in the correct uniform.

Black shoes, blazer, school shirt and school trousers/skirt. Teachers need to focus on teaching and learning NOT maintaining uniform standards.

4 You must always have a school planner and a full set of stationery, including a calculator.

5 Be punctual.

You must be in school by 8.40am and arrive at all your lessons on time.

6 St Joseph's is a place of work.

Behaviour and listening skills must be excellent as every teacher has the right to teach without disruption. NO ONE has the right to affect the learning and qualifications of another student.

REVISION THE FACTS...

a list of facts...



The sooner you begin revising, the better your grades **FACT**

Deep down, everyone wants to achieve their personal best **FACT**

The sooner you begin the less stressed you will feel **FACT**

Planning your revision is crucial **FACT**

Revision involves letting others help you **FACT**

Repeated testing is a key part of revision **FACT**



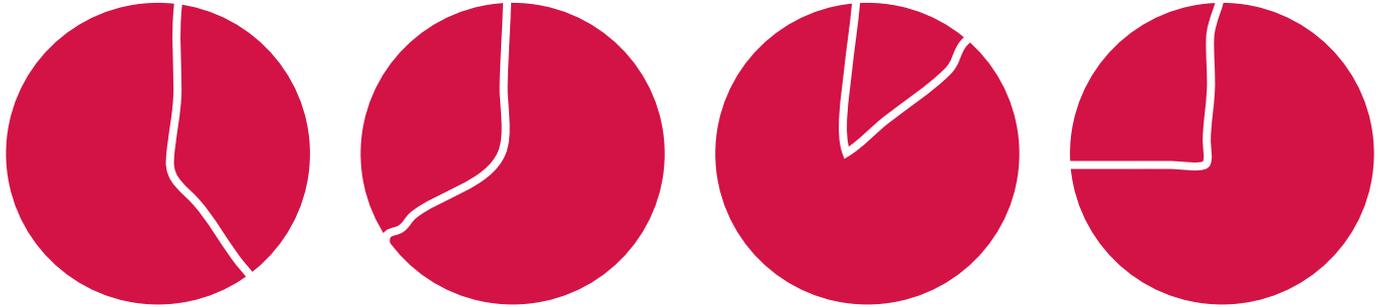
If you have revised properly you will be able to:

- 1 Recall key knowledge and facts.
- 2 Know the correct answer techniques.
- 3 Be able to speak about topics and answer past paper questions without reference to notes.
- 4 Know your areas of weakness and have addressed them.
E.g. through more revision, buddy or teacher support.
- 5 Feel less pressurised and nervous. Be more confident and importantly pleased with yourself for preparing to the best of your ability.
- 6 Feel less pressure and be able to cope with the exam.
- 7 Most importantly, you should achieve your target grades and be successful.

OK, ENOUGH FACTS.
LET'S CRACK ON.
HOW DO I GET STARTED



WHEN TO REVISE...



PFS... preparing for success

When should you revise during term time?

Every night do three sessions:

Session 1:

Recap lessons of the day
(30 mins, 6 mins each subject)

Session 2:

Revision or key homework session (45 mins)

Session 3:

Revision or key homework (45 mins)

For example:

Home at 4pm!

Session 1: 4.30-5.00pm - Recap

Session 2: 5.15-6.00pm - Revision/key homework 1

Tea

Session 3: 6.30-7.15pm - Revision/key homework 2

Bed (by 10pm at the latest)

How often should you revise during the school breaks? (Holidays renamed 'PFS' - Preparing for Success)

You cannot afford to think of Easter and May Half Term as 'holidays'. They are crucial 'PFS' study periods which will make the difference between achievement and underachievement; between success and failure; between confidence and stress.

The structure of a day during the 'holiday period':

Young adults like to sleep and relax

BUT

You need to commit to 6 revision sessions each day.

Probably 2 sessions for 3 different subjects.

This amounts to 4.5 hours of revising from a 24 hours day.

For example:

Session 1: 10.00-10.45am, English 1

Session 2: 11.00-11.45am, English 2

Break.

Session 3: 12.15-1.00pm, Maths 1

Lunch

Session 4: 2.00-2.45pm, Maths 2

Session 5: 3.00-3.45pm, Science 1

Session 6: 4.00-4.45pm, Science 2

Finished!!!

Bed at 10pm.

This leaves 5 hours and 15 minutes for relaxation, sport, socialising or whatever you fancy doing that day.

RECAP

checking you are ready



Ensure you have all key resources, success topic lists are essential.

Ensure you have the correct working conditions for revision
Eg. desk, room, quiet, water

Ensure all distractions are managed and you are in control
Eg. technology, friends)

Ensure you have a rota for revision during the school week/evenings and during 'PFS'.

- You may have a revision timetable focusing on every single day and date but a rota is very straightforward and easy to stick to and remember.
- Do not procrastinate. Focus on what must be done and the areas of difficulty. For example: In Maths, what are your weaknesses and difficulties? Focus on these!
- Constantly check you are motivated. Question and challenge yourself.

Why do you need to do it?

What will it achieve?

- Set rewards for yourself, know when your breaks are, ask your parent/guardian to help with a reward system but remember your main reward is YOUR results.

5 day subject rota

Day 1	Maths (lc) and RE (mc)
Day 2	Option 1 (mc) and English (lc)
Day 3	Welsh (mc) and Option 2 (lc)
Day 4	Science (lc) and Option 3
Day 5	Extra...

mc = more challenging

lc = less challenging

HERE YOU GO, THERE IS ONLY ONE WAY TO START...

try using this to make PFS successful...

My 5 day subject rota								
	10-10.45	11-11.45	12.15-1	Lunch	2-2.45	3-3.45	4-4.45	Evening Reward
Day 1								
Day 2								
Day 3								
Day 4								
Day 5								



Revision

TIPS

THESE TIPS WILL
IMPROVE YOUR MOOD
AND MAKE YOU FEEL
MUCH MORE CONFIDENT

gather together oddles of stationery...

plain and lined paper, different pens, revision cards, post it notes etc.

- 1 Start revision in February half term — the more time you have spent on your revision, the better prepared you will be for the exams.
 - 2 Attend **every** available revision session at lunch and after school.
 - 3 Tackle the things you find the most difficult first. This gives you plenty of time to ask for more help if you still don't understand!
 - 4 Make sure you build time for breaks into your revision timetable. Set yourself clear times and stick to them e.g. revise English for 45 minutes, have a 15 minute break.
 - 5 Drink lots of water — it helps speed up learning by 30% and prevents headaches and tiredness.
 - 6 Eat a balanced diet. Try to eat plenty of 'brain food' like green vegetables, bananas and fish. Eat at regular intervals to maintain your concentration. Bananas are the food of champions!
 - 7 Avoid too much chocolate, coffee, sugar, fizzy drinks and food with E numbers. These interfere with the way information is passed inside your brain.
 - 8 Get plenty of sleep. Your brain needs time to sort out all of the information you have given it during the day!
 - 9 Don't be influenced by friends who talk about how little work they are doing. Your results do not matter to them but they matter to you. Ask yourself: "Am I my own person or am I led and controlled by others?"
 - 10 Tell yourself that all this hard work is not for long and keep thinking of the extra long summer holiday!
 - 11 Use a 'study buddy'. Someone to test you, keep you motivated, walk you along the way. Allow them to ask you what you are doing, the progress you are making and hold you to account. After all, the plan is just that — you need to work through your plan!
- LOSE** all distractions! For many people this is social media. Give it a break! Remove distracting devices from your room or at least switch them off. The best message you could put on your tweet will be on results day and that won't happen if you are giving everyone a running account about what you are not doing! Pass your phone to your study buddy for 45 minutes.

The best study buddies are parents/carers, people who love you and want you to succeed and also people who will not distract you from achieving success.



STEPS TO SUCCESS

step 1.. preparation

What do you need to know?

Find your exam syllabus and topic checklist for each subject.

If it is helpful, break it down into smaller topics that are easier to learn.

Use the revision booklets provided by your teachers. If in doubt always ask your teacher - straight away!!

step 2.. revision

Learn and revise what you need to know

Revise all the topics on the syllabus using techniques given in this book focusing in more depth on areas of weakness.

If there are any gaps you must ask your teacher, straight away!!!

step 3.. testing

Test yourself, four times...

Testing helps you lock in what you need to know.

The more you do it...the more you remember.

step 2

WHAT IS REVISION?



Revision literally means 're-visiting' information that you have already learnt.



You will need to reduce the amount of information for each subject to a series of key points.



During the exam, the key point should then prompt your brain to retrieve the extra information you have learnt.



This could be writing, drawing, reading, listening, watching... anything to help your brain make connections between the key point and the information.

The aim is that you know the information that you could be tested on and remember it for the exam.



You then need to read around these key points so that you can expand upon them during the exam.



Useful revision sessions involve doing something with the information that you want to learn.



A session could then end with answering exam style questions to put your learning into context.

TECHNIQUES...

finding the right revision technique is about trial and error. some methods will work for you, others will not. a lot depends on what type of learner you are...

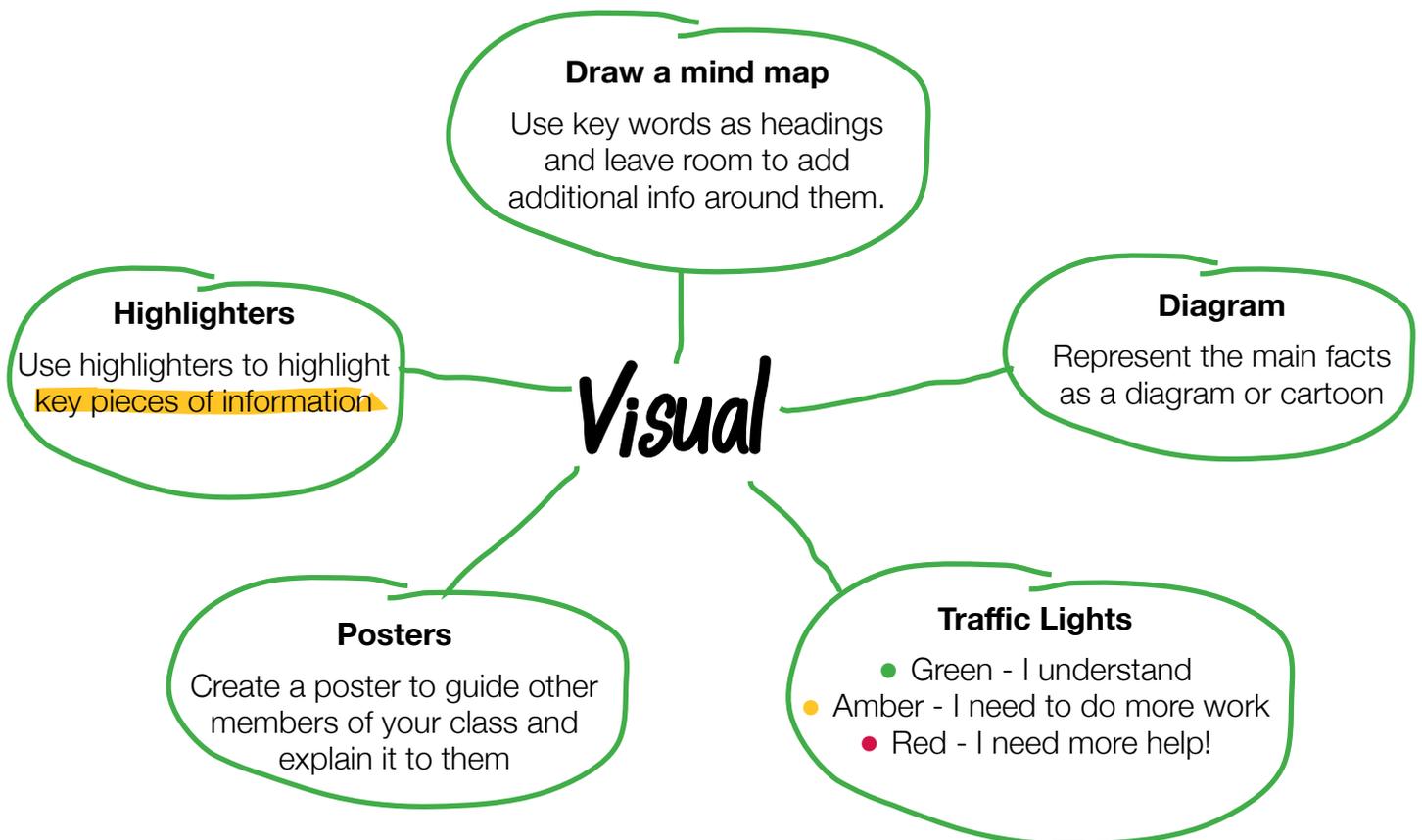
Some people prefer to work alone, others with a partner.

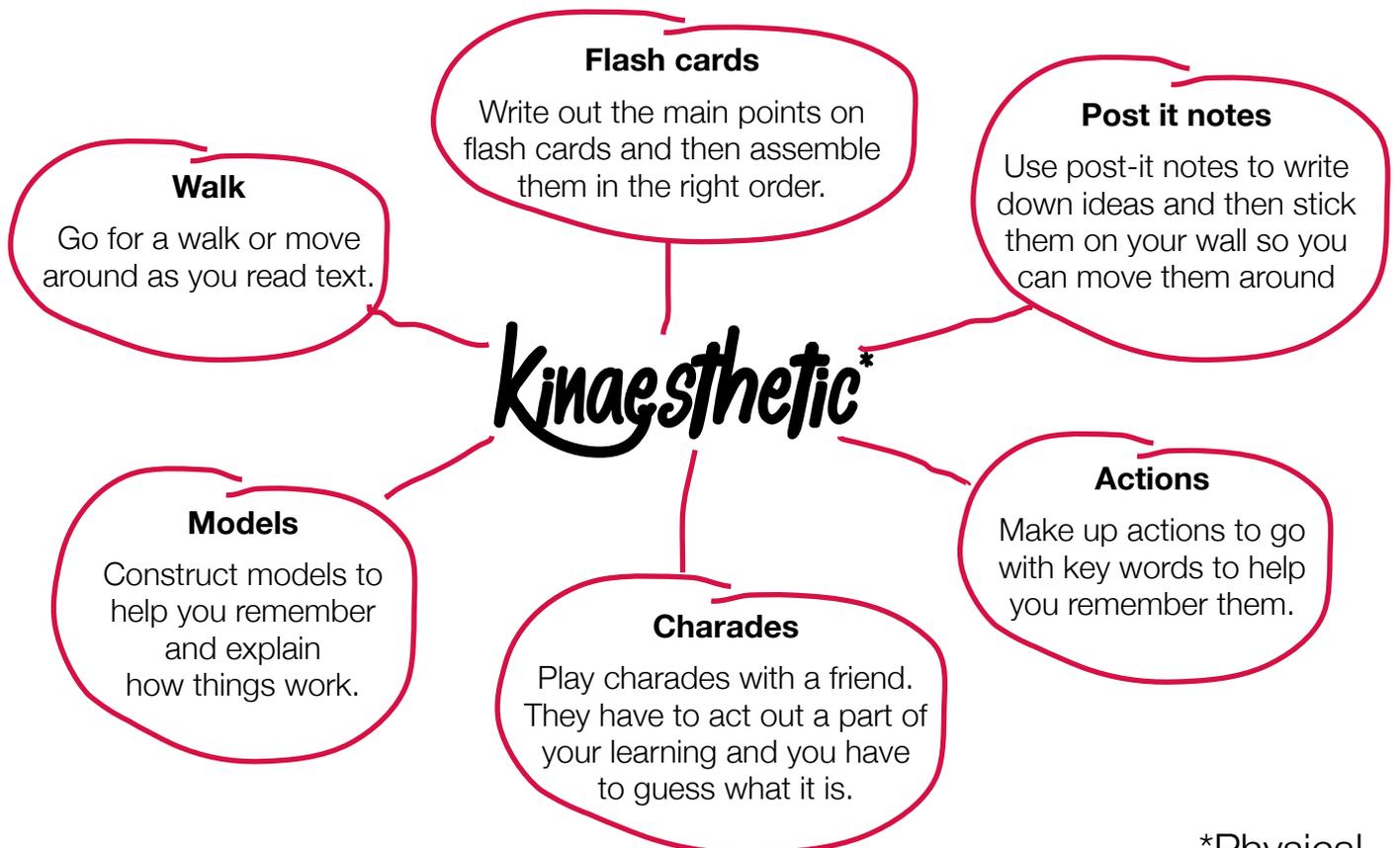
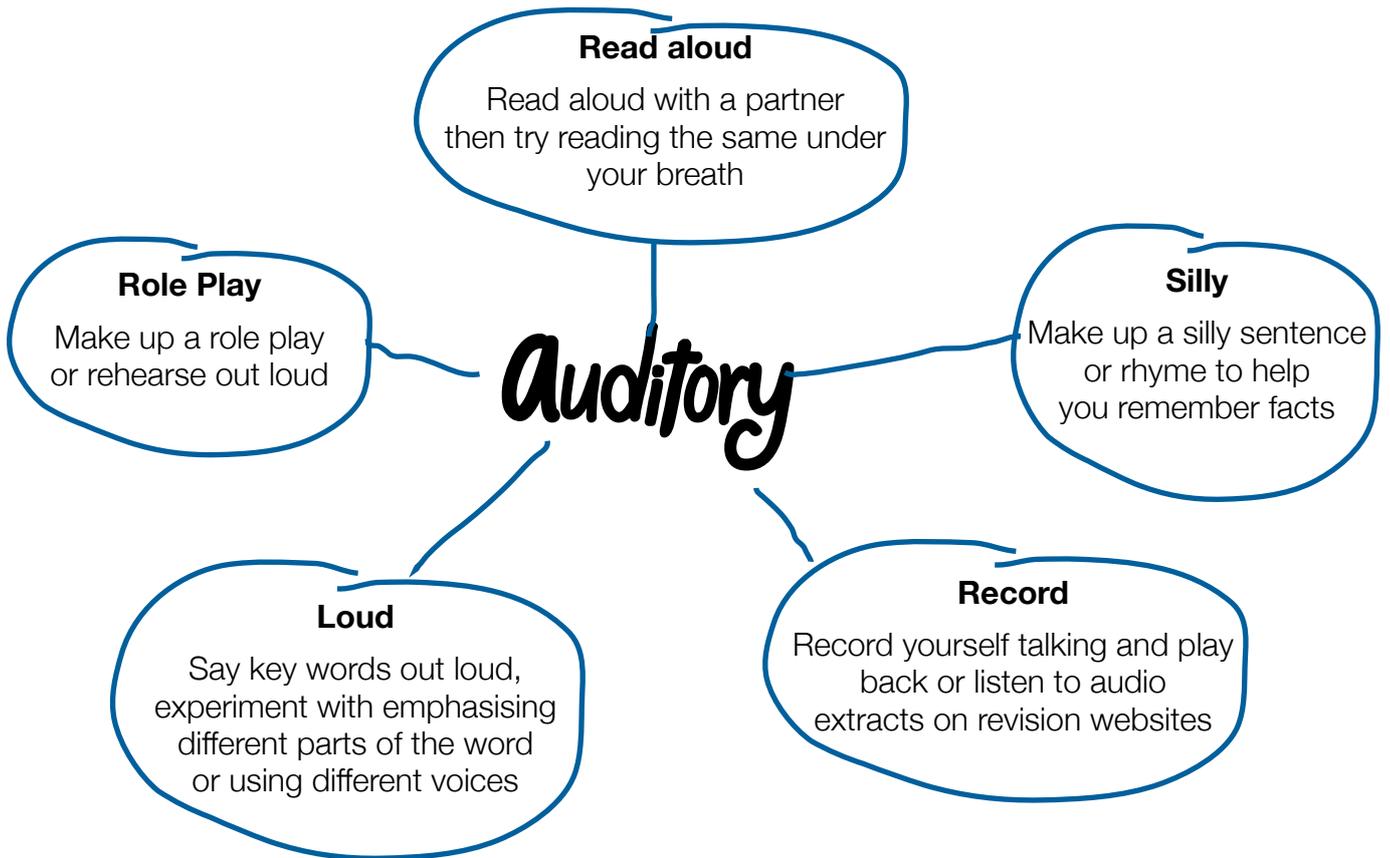
Some people like background noise, others need silence.

Some people can read and absorb, others need to draw pictures or copy out.

Some people can concentrate on one subject for long periods, others need short bursts of lots of subjects.

Usually though, once you have found the right style for you, it will be the method you use more frequently.





*Physical

LEARNING STYLES QUESTIONNAIRE

Remember, this is just a bit of fun, not a psychological test!

tick or highlight your most likely response to each question:

What do you notice about most people?

- V How they look or dress
- A How they sound when they talk
- K How they stand or move

What kind of humour do you prefer?

- V Cartoons/Comics
- A Stand-up comedians
- K Physical/clown comedy

What do you prefer?

- V Reading instructions
- A Being told how to do something
- K Getting stuck in and doing it for yourself

When trying to find somewhere new, do you:

- V Follow a map
- A Ask for directions
- K Follow your gut feelings

What do you find it easier to remember?

- V Faces
- A Names
- K Things that you have done

When you are researching, do you prefer:

- V Work that is written and drawn in colour
- A To listen to a talk or be told what to do
- K To be active: making and doing

Which of the following are you most likely to say?

- V "I see what you mean"
- A "I hear what you're saying"
- K "I know how you feel"

When solving problems, do you:

- V Writing and drawing out possible solutions
- A Talking through possible solutions
- K Getting stuck in and working it out as you go

What do you do when you are concentrating?

- V Focus on the words and pictures
- A Discuss the problem in your head
- K Move about or fiddle with your pen

How do you choose food from a menu? Do you:

- V Imagine what it will look like
- A Talk through the options in your head
- K Imagine what it will taste like

Your totals:	Visual	Audio	Kinaesthetic
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Use this additional box to see how your results compare with friends or family...

	Visual	Audio	Kinaesthetic
	Visual	Audio	Kinaesthetic

which technique?

TRY IT

hurricanes

highlight

pictures



Hurricanes are one of the most powerful forces on earth. They are the combination of powerful masses of swirling wind, clouds and rain. Rain pours down in a steady flow of solid sheets and winds can gust up to one hundred and seventy kilometres per hour.

The extraordinary power of the storms damages more property than all other kinds of storms. Trees are uprooted and roofs are ripped off the tops of buildings. Power poles crash to the ground causing power failure. Low-lying lands are saturates by floods.

In 1970, over 500,000 were killed during a hurricane in Bangladesh, and the most deadly hurricane to hit the USA in recent times was in August 2005, when Hurricane Katrina devastated parts of the east coast especially New Orleans. 80% of the city was flooded and over 200 people were killed and countless other became homeless. The total cost of the damage was in excess of \$1 billion.

Expert scientists use satellites and a series of radar stations to monitor the formation and movement of hurricanes. The storms no longer take people by surprise. Experts issue a 'hurricane warning' if a storm is predicted to strike within twenty-four hours and this gives people in the storm's path time to move to safety.

NO 80%

symbols

REVISION

some technique details

1 Reading for understanding

Reading alone is no guarantee to success, it does not mean the information has been stored in your memory. You must test yourself and see what you can recall. Test yourself with bullet point lists, diagrams, brainstorming, verbal recall etc.

2 Lists, bullet points, charts and notes

- Shrink the information down as far as possible. Eliminate excessive words from lists, focus on key terms.
- Timelines are useful for organising dates and events e.g.. Scientific experiments.
- Bar and Pie Charts can show different pieces of information and the importance of each item.
- Create a bookmark. Keep it in a book/ magazine that you are reading for pleasure. Glancing at your bookmark can add to your revision plans.
- Use connected circles to link ideas, characters and facts.
- Highlight or circle key points using various different colours. Making the important information easier to process later.

4 Note taking

Again this is a traditional revision method but one that is often misused, or not successful.

How do you know the notes are going in? How are you going to test yourself well before the exam? (I had a great, tidy set of files at Easter for every subject I was taking...The problem was I knew only a quarter of the information!)

3 Flash Cards

Make some brightly coloured lists or just write down key words that you want to remember. Try different colours for different topics/ subjects.

5 Wall posters/large scale flash cards

- Use different rooms or areas at home for different topics.
- Use story boards to summarise your main points using pictures.

10 Use your tablet device

- Use your tablet device across the best websites and apps as advised by your teachers. SELF DISCIPLINE is crucial.
- Take some key points from your lists or notes and condense them onto MP3 files.
- Variety is important. Get other people to record bits so that you have a variety of voices.
- Using instrumental background music may help. Some people have found that playing the same piece of music every time you study a particular topic can help embed knowledge.
- Use the file for playback during 'dead-time' i.e. on the bus
- Record small amounts each day and your file will soon fill up with relevant information very quickly.

6 Make a mind map

Use key words as headings and leave room to add additional information around them.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LOzZCd2tPE>

7 Repetition

- Read, cover, repeat (write or talk aloud).
Read, cover, repeat.
This is a stronger checking method as you are really testing how much has been remembered. Flashcards help with this method.

8 The Shrinking Mind Map

- The aim of revision is to shrink as much of the key points down into a small space. This process helps you learn the information.
- The result is that you have a portable device that you can carry around and access frequently and easily. Chunk down your mind map further.
- Cut off the outside legs and use the main stems to stimulate your brain to help you remember the key areas.

9 Difference

- Make topics different, use picture stories, journey method.

E.g. Hitler's Rise to Dictatorship.
Weimar Germany...Putsches...Treaty of Versailles...Depression...Scheming... Propaganda.

- Use different places for topic areas.
E.g. Bed = main character in a novel;
Desk=the plot etc..
Revise out loud, use arm movements, be dramatic.

12 Use some Acronyms

- RENCH - Hitler's Rise to Dictatorship.
Reichstag Fire...Enabling Law...Night of the Long Knives...Control...Death of Hindenburg.

13 Use some Mnemonics

E.g. To learn the functions of the skeleton
Some Men Play Soccer Before Preparation
Shape...Movement...Protection...Support...
Blood Production

11 Rap and Rhyme

- Making up catch phrases, raps, song or rhymes can help with the crucial bits of information.

E.g. To help you sort out which is the x and y axis on a graph you could "Remember x below y because y goes up high" cringeworthy yes, when scoring points in an exam, who cares?

- Making up a song or rhyme can be fun, sharing it with others, even funnier...

14 World Walls & Key Words

- Using key terms and specific language in subjects is essential at GCSE. Use the right language! Remember that using the right terminology will earn you more marks.
- Clusters of key words for each topic area/ subject area a great way to learn the language for your GCSE courses.
- Know critical words such as analyse, compare, contrast, describe, justify, evaluate, account for, examine, outline, summarise and explain. Pay the same attention to these words as you would do for learning the content.

15 Study Buddy/Shared Learning

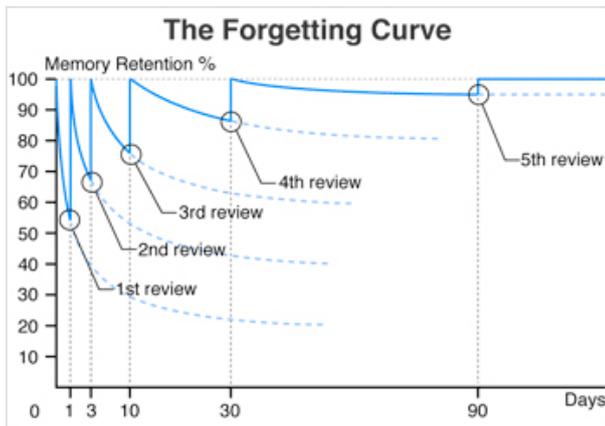
- One of the most effective ways to learn is to teach someone else. This helps you process information yourself as you explain it to others.
- Ask friends and family to test you – how do you know it? Forget the idea that if you have read something that you must know it, you probably don't.
- Talk it through. Buddy up with friend/talk to a parent or carer or your teacher.
- Each day build in a test to see how well you are learning or revising something. Y=Try the 'Mastermind' technique – questions and answers.

16 Image Chains

- Link images to reinforce learning.

TESTING

Test yourself, and again, and again after a few days...



Testing seems like the last thing you want to do. Especially when you have these on the horizon! BUT the most important fact you cannot ignore is that testing helps lock in what you know. And the more you do it...the better it is.

Try some of these methods...

1 Key word flash cards

Using your device app or pen and paper take your key words and write a definition for them. Challenge yourself for that definition if you chose a key word and then vice versa.

2 Talking exam

Talk through what the answers would be to a given exam question.

3 Connect 10

Start with a keyword and link 10 other words, concepts or ideas to it.

4 Evidence emporium

Facts, statistics and quotations underpin top quality answers. Make sure you know them by writing your top five facts, statistics and quotations for each topic. Ask your study buddy to test you on them.

8 Multiple choice

Use the multiple choice quizzes to help with your assessment

5 Exam papers and past questions

If you know what the end game is going to be, make your warm up exactly the same! Use specific parts of exam questions to target your knowledge. Complete them in exam conditions even if at home.

6 Write a test

Write your own test (using exam style questions when you can) about a topic covering all the key concepts - it is harder than you think but well worth it!

7 True or false or quiz questions

Ask your study buddy to use your notes and present you with a load of true or false statements or quick fire quiz questions.

9 Revision websites

BBC Bitesize and others have on-line testing tools (remember only to test yourself on what you need to know and only the relevant exam board).

3:00

EXERCISE APTITUDE TEST

This three-minute test has been designed to help you with your exams. Please complete it independently and DO NOT help anyone else. Let them learn for themselves.

- 1 Read everything before doing anything.
- 2 Put your name in the upper left-hand corner of the page.
- 3 Circle the word "name" in the second question.
- 4 Draw five small squares in the upper right-hand corner of this page.
- 5 Put an X in each square mentioned in number 4.
- 6 Put a circle around each square.
- 7 Sign your name at the bottom of this page.
- 8 After your signature write YES YES YES.
- 9 Put a circle around number 1.
- 10 Put an X in the lower left-hand corner of the page.
- 11 Draw a triangle around the circle you just drew.
- 12 On the side of this page multiply 70×30 .
- 13 Draw a circle around the word "page" in sentence number 4.
- 14 Loudly call out your first name when you come to this point in the test.
- 15 If you think you have carefully followed directions, call out "I HAVE".
- 16 On the side of this page add 107 and 278.
- 17 Put a circle around your answer to the last problem.
- 18 Count in your normal speaking voice from 1 to 10 - backwards.
- 19 If you are the first person to get this far call out loudly, *"I am the leader in following directions"*.
- 20 Underline all even numbers on the left hand side of this page.
- 21 Now that you have finished reading carefully, do only question two.

EXAM DAY

the night before the exam

- Refresh and remind yourself of any information that you feel is important. Last minute revision is useful!
- Get your uniform ready!
- Make sure that you have all the necessary equipment that you will need for the exam - including a calculator and spare black pens and pencils.
- Have a healthy, filling evening meal.
- Go to bed at a reasonable hour to ensure that you get plenty of sleep.

the morning of the exam

- Make sure you eat a good breakfast that will give you enough energy to concentrate through the exam.
- Make sure that you are at the school at least half an hour before the exam starts so that you have time to relax.
- Eat a banana
- 'Sip' some water
- Be careful who you liaise with, you need wait with people that help boost your confidence.



during the exam

- Read the instructions on the front of the paper carefully.
- Make sure that you answer the questions that have actually been asked.
- For longer questions, take time to plan what you would like to include before you start to the question.
- Look at how many marks each question is worth as this will give you a guide of how much detail you need to include.
- Identify command words such as 'what', 'how', 'describe', 'explain', 'suggest', 'compare', 'contrast' and ensure that you have addressed these in the correct way.
- If your mind goes blank or you start to feel stressed, try some deep breathing exercises to calm you down.
- If you are running out of time at the end of an exam, complete the questions in note form to ensure you get all the key points.
- Always check back through the paper, reading your answers thoroughly to make sure you haven't made any mistakes.
- NEVER close the paper and stop. Keep checking and comparing until you are told to stop.

an exam prayer

Loving God

I ask that you are with me now as I sit this exam.

I ask that your Holy Spirit

Calms my nerves and anxieties,

Motivates me to do my very best,

Inspires me to remember all that I have studied and
been taught,

Gives me the wisdom to check all my answers and
the energy to work until the very last minute of this
exam.

In the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Amen.

**GOOD LUCK TO
YOU AND ALL
OUR STUDENTS**

useful websites

www.gcseguide.co.uk Lists revision guides available

www.positivelymad.co.uk Fun ideas for remembering information

www.gcse.com Helps with revision techniques

www.hotcourses.com Select 'schools' and 'revision'

www.s-school.co.uk Click on 'revision tips'

www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebiteize

www.s-cool.co.uk

Your teachers will advise you on the best websites and apps to use for your subjects.

I would highly recommend that you access the website for the exam board that you will be using for each subject.

A list of these can be found on:

www.projecteducation.co.uk/gcse

Exam Board	Website	Exam Code
WJEC	www.wjec.co.uk	40
AQA	www.edexcel.org.uk	10
OCR	www.ocr.org.uk	01



St Joseph's RC High School
Ysgol Uwchradd Gatholig Joseff Sant