

# REVISION STRATEGIES

## INTRODUCTION

These notes contain some ideas to help you revise. You may find some of the ideas particularly helpful. It is important to choose methods of revision which suit you and your needs. However, it is important that you tackle your revision systematically. This booklet is designed to help you do just that.

- Ask your teachers for help.
- Attend revision classes in school.
- Make a conscious effort to plan your revision effectively.
- Be imaginative in your revision – use flash cards, make coloured posters, design mind-maps, use the Internet (see the end of this booklet for some useful Internet sites).
- Involve your parents.

Be ambitious! Turn those mock Ds into Cs, Cs into Bs, Bs to As and As to A\*s!

# REVISION STRATEGY

## EXAMS

Early to bed. Get to the exam early

Test yourself with exam papers in exam conditions.

Find out how your exam papers are organised.

Make a pattern note, or an outline note, for each section of your work.

Scan the year's work and use the *Exam Countdown* revision planner chart.

Review each section of work immediately after it is completed, and every half term.

Use the *Study Year Planner Chart*.

## YOUR YEAR'S WORK.

Spare pen, ruler,  
pencil and other  
materials.

- time
- materials allowed  
eg calculators
- information provided
- choice and no. of questions
- no. of marks

# VARYING REVISION STYLES

Use **REVISION GROUPS** – groups of friends who help one another to revise by supporting, explaining, discussion and testing.

Use **AUDIO-TAPING**

Test your recall of topics by recording your answers on tape and playing back. Plan answers to questions from past papers and do the same.

Attend lunchtime and after-school revision classes.

Using your **ENVIRONMENT**

Display Revision Sheets, Mind Maps and Revision Timetables on the walls of your room.

# PLANNING YOUR REVISION

## How many hours a week should I be working?

You should at this stage be aiming for 20 hours a week. This may include homework as well as revision but, as your GCSE courses finish, more of this time can be given over for revision.

Suggested work pattern: Monday – Friday 2.5 – 3.0 hours per night

Weekend 5.0 – 7.5 hours over Saturday and Sunday

## Questions to ask yourself before you make your revision plan.

1. Have you got all the notes/information you need?
2. Are all your notes for each topic together and in order?
3. Which are your weakest/strongest topics?
4. Which topics do you need to get help with?
5. In what order are you going to revise the topics in?  
(Weakest first or last? Weakest more than once? Most recent topics first or last?)

## Decide on your revision technique (over page).

## You can now plan your revision schedule.

1. Decide on your time slots.
2. Work out how many weeks there are before the examinations begin.
3. Look at which exams are first and last.
4. Work out how many weeks and sessions to allow for each subject.
5. Work out how many sessions to allow for each topic.
6. Do you need to spend the same amount of time on each topic?
7. Write in the work you are going to do in each session. Try to be as specific as possible. For example, Monday session 1 – 1996 Maths Paper 2, Questions 1,2 and 3.

Try to balance your time between your subjects.

# SETTING UP A REVISION TIMETABLE

- Create a Revision Timetable. However, be prepared to change it and keep it flexible.
- Research suggests that the most effective revision takes place at the beginning and end of sessions. So don't revise for 2 hours solid. Adopt patterns like the following:-

Revise for 30 minutes

*Break for 10 minutes*

Revise for 30 minutes

*Break for 10 minutes*

Revise for 30 minutes

*Break for 10 minutes.*

In this way there are three beginnings and three ends.

- Research suggests that you should follow up revision sessions the next night and the next week. For example:-

Tuesday                Revise Science topic for 1 hour.

Wednesday            Recap same Science topic for 10 minutes.

One week later        Recap same Science topic for 5 minutes.

Buzan describes this as moving the recall from the SHORT-TERM to the LONG-TERM memory.

# WEEKLY REVISION PLAN

Name:

Form:

Week Beginning:

	Time:	Time:	Time:	Time:
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				
Saturday				
Sunday				

# TOP TIPS FOR REVISION

## Quality not quantity

## Revise in short bursts

In each hour of revision, work for 30 minutes and then have 5 minutes break. This is much more effective than working for one hour solidly.

## Look, Say, Cover, Write, Check

Learning is much more effective if you write information down as well as look at it.

## Pick out key information

Identify important key words, phrases and diagrams.

Make a summary of units of work.

## Use other people

Get someone else to test you, preferably a friend doing the same exam. Otherwise, use a brother, sister or even a parent!

## Get the environment right

Insist on a clear space in which to work.

Work at a table or desk.

Have all you need to revise nearby – so that you don't have to keep getting up!

Avoid noise.

## Make a revision plan

## Don't leave revision until the last minute!





# RIVERS

## PROCESSES

- A Corrasion: wearing down
- B Hydraulic action: force of water
- C Corrosion: chemical action
- D Attrition: wearing down particle size
- E Deposition: depositing material carried

Brief outline of notes. Use key words and important examples.

## ***NOTE MAKING***

STAGES	GRADIENT	FEATURES	PROCESSES
UPPER	steep	shape 	waterfall A, B, C
MIDDLE	average	meander 	flood plain A, B, C, D, E
LOWER	gentle	ox-bow  levee 	B, C, D, E

Include lists of main points in a topic

Use sketches where appropriate. They aid memory.

Use of small cards allows easy storage and reference.

# STUDY LEAVE

Most schools operate a system of 'study leave'. This is when you are not required to be in school unless you have an exam. It can be a very productive time but, on the other hand, it may be completely wasted.

Here are a few hints for study leave:

- **It is a break in normal routine. Most of us rely on a routine in order to keep ourselves organised and if we vary in that routine we can cause complications for ourselves.**

*If you can manage to get up at the normal time and do a normal day's work it can be most productive. If you rely on someone else to get you up and they have left the house there is a great temptation to lie in or a danger of oversleeping. This is not too drastic when you do not have an exam but can be disastrous if you do.*

- **It is generally more difficult to keep motivated when we are not being checked upon by anyone but ourselves.**

*If you have a friend who you are happy to work with, it can ease the burden and be more productive to work together. You can then keep an eye on each other.  
CAUTION – choose your friends wisely.*

- **It is very easy to think of an excuse not to work.**

*It is important to avoid noise and distractions, as has already been said. The same point applies here but it is even more important with study leave as there is more time to waste.*

- **A work schedule is essential to make productive use of the time available.**

*Include study leave in your student planner. As there is a lot of time available it can be a valuable resource.*

- **Teachers are not on hand to give instant advice.**

*If you do come across a problem during your planning that you think your teacher can help you with, make a note of it and ask the next time you are in school. It is all too easy to hope a problem will just sort itself out or go away; this is not the case - it needs solving.*

# **TOP TIPS FOR AVOIDING STRESS**

## **Realise that we all get anxious at times**

Talk to someone – a parent, brother or sister, friend or teacher.

## **Face up to the situation – don't avoid it**

Write down your worries and talk to someone you trust.

## **Make a priority list**

Make a list of urgent tasks and those that can wait. Stick to your list.

## **Set realistic goals**

## **Take time out to relax**

Each day take some time to relax.

Eat healthy food, get more sleep.

Take more exercise.

## **Think positively – don't be over critical**

## **Accept praise for the things you do well**

**If you really feel that you can't cope seek help from your doctor or a local counselling centre.**

TOP  
TIPS  
FOR  
EXAM TECHNIQUE

Scan all the questions.

Mark the questions you could answer.

If there is a choice, choose the correct number of questions in each section.

Read these questions carefully – more than once!

Decide on an order – best answers first!

Divide up your time – allow time at the end to re-read your answers, stick to your time plan!

Underline the key words in the question.

Plan your answer – look at the marks available for each part of the answer.

Stick to the point of the question.

Write your answer.

Use the plan at every stage of your answer.

Check your answer against your plan – look for mistakes.

Allow time to re-read all your answers.

# IN THE EXAM ROOM

You'd probably be mad if you weren't a bit nervous – everybody will be.

Action checklist to calm your nerves!

- Do get out all the equipment that you will need for this exam and arrange it on your desk.
- Do take your watch off and check the time against the exam room clock; put it on your desk so that you can easily see it.
- Do fill in the relevant sections on the front of your exam script, including your centre number and candidate number in the boxes provided for them.
- Do read your exam paper. Make sure that you read the instructions – underline important points.
- Do read the exam paper twice over. Ten minutes now can save errors later on.
- Do underline important words, in the questions.
- Do work out how much time you have for each question.
- Do decide which question you can do best and do it first – this helps to boost your confidence.
- Do make sure that you have at least five minutes at the end of the exam to go over what you have done.
- Don't panic if your mind appears to go blank. Once you start answering questions your memory will start to work again – look at key words in the question, this will help.
- Don't waste time thinking and worrying about losing an odd mark in part of a question you don't know the answer to. Leave it. Come back to it later, if you have time.
- Don't forget to include all your workings – you could get plenty of marks for them.
- Don't let your handwriting let you down – if they can't read it, examiners can't give you marks.

## KEYWORDS EXPLAINED

<b>Compare:</b>	Are the things very alike (similar) or are there important differences? Which do you think is best? Why?	<b>Explain:</b>	Make clear.
<b>Contrast:</b>	Look for differences.	<b>Illustrate:</b>	Give examples which make the point clear.
<b>Criticise:</b>	Use evidence to support your opinion on the value or merit of theories, facts or views of others.	<b>Interpret:</b>	Explain the meaning in your own words, for example you may be asked to interpret a graph.
<b>Define:</b>	Give the meaning.	<b>Justify:</b>	Give reasons to support an argument or action.
<b>Describe:</b>	Write in detail.	<b>Outline:</b>	Choose the most important aspects of a topic. Ignore the minor detail.
<b>Differentiate:</b>	Explain the difference.	<b>Relate:</b>	Show the connection between things.
<b>Discuss:</b>	Write about the important aspects of the topic, are there two sides to the question? Consider the arguments for and against.	<b>State:</b>	Write briefly the main points.
<b>Distinguish:</b>	Explain the difference.	<b>Summarise:</b>	Bring together the main points.
<b>Evaluate:</b>	Judge the importance or success.	<b>Trace:</b>	Show how something has developed from beginning to end.



# SPELLING, PUNCTUATION AND GRAMMAR

Since 1994, GCSE marking and grading has had to take into account a candidate's accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar. For each written component, 5% of the total marks available must be allocated to spelling, punctuation and grammar.

This regulation is applicable to most subjects although there are some for which it is inappropriate, Art (Draw and Paint) for example.

How is this done?

There are three general performance levels.

1. **Threshold**      Candidates spell, punctuate and use the rules of grammar with reasonable accuracy; they use a limited range of specialist terms appropriately.
2. **Intermediate**      Candidates spell, punctuate and use the rules of grammar with considerable accuracy; they use a good range of specialist terms with facility.
3. **High**              Candidates spell, punctuate and use the rules of grammar with almost faultless accuracy, deploying a range of grammatical constructions; they use a wide range of specialist terms adeptly and with precision.

Based on where you fit in with the above, you are given a level of 0-3. This is then combined with the marks for the rest of the component so that it counts for 5% of the total marks given for each component.

Sounds complicated doesn't it?

Good spelling, punctuation and grammar are important and must be considered but keep it in perspective. I prefer to look at it as the icing on the cake but it is worth remembering that only one mark separates the top of one grade from the bottom of another.

## ONCE THE EXAMS ARE OVER

Let your hair down and party – you deserve it!

The important thing now is not to worry – there is little point in worrying about something you cannot change. It is not the end of the world – there are always opportunities.

The worst that can happen, if you don't get the grades you hoped for, is that you may have to re-sit some subjects or amend your plans.

Be positive – go in to the exam thinking about passing with good grades. Never go in to an exam afraid that you might fail. After all – you've worked hard, so you deserve a good grade!

*GOOD LUCK!!*