

Study Skills Guide for Parents

Dear Parent / Guardian,

The purpose of this revision booklet is to give you and your child a variety of ideas and practical ways to revise on a daily basis. The vast majority of GCSE exams are now linear, meaning that students will sit a large number of final exams in the May and June of year 11 and coursework is disappearing in most subjects. In order to succeed and meet their potential they need to practice and fine tune how best to revise as early as possible.

Studies show that we retain:

- 90% of what we learn when we teach someone else or use immediately.
- 75% of what we learn when we practice.
- 50% of what we learn when engaged in a group discussion.
- 30% of what we learn when we see a demonstration.
- 20% of what we learn from audio-visual.
- 10% of what we learn from reading.
- 5% of what we learn from lecture.

Your child can and should get into the habit of revising regularly **NOW** and you will be surprised at the number of ways you can help them. This booklet should give you some ideas to put into practice. It might be a good idea to try the revision activities that look the most interesting to your child first and then decide how effective it was. Through trial and error, you should find a few ways that really help your child to progress.

Good Luck!

Create a video.

Help your child to create a video of a topic that they're finding tricky to remember.

Support their research by ensuring accurate information – they can use exercise books, text books and the net.

Free apps include:



30 hands

Favourite Places

Put any revision notes/post-its around the house especially in your favourite places like on the fridge, the backs of doors or mirrors. When you pass them, stop and consider what's on the note and expand and explain it to yourself in more detail.

Note Cards

Use small note cards to record your revision. There should be only one topic on each card. You could use key words, ideas, symbols or pictures – that depends on you and your preferences. The hard part will be reducing the notes from a number of pages onto a small card. The other side might have a worked problem or a question with some hints on how to answer it. Regularly expand the notes into a fuller explanation, either by writing it down or verbally.

Straight Away

As you read through your work, start to make notes straight away – don't wait for it to become clear. Get your thoughts and ideas down quickly as you read and just record the small details. At the end you may look back over what you have done to look for patterns or bigger pictures.

Flashcards

These can be made for all sorts of topics and can be quite small. The idea here is to put key words and ideas on the cards. Finally, shuffle the cards and then turn them over, one at a time, explaining each key word or idea out loud, to someone else if possible.

Teach someone else

Allow your child to teach you:

- how to do a key question from an exam
- how the circulatory system works
- how to conjugate a verb in Spanish



Draw spider diagrams

These are not as organised as mind maps, but for getting all of your ideas down to start with they are excellent. You can then organise your ideas from your spider diagram onto your mind map.

Mimes

Make up mimes for key words, concepts, people or places. You need to think through what mimes are suitable for the work that you are revising. Each character in a book can have a mime that fits them. A chemical group could have a linked mime to remember all the elements in it.

Make revision cards



Tips:

Information on one side, and questions on the other.

Use them to test your child and ask them to develop their answers!

Flash cards can include:

- The meanings/definitions of key words
- Diagrams
- Worked examples of calculations
- Q and A

Concept Mapping

Go through a topic and pick out key words, ideas, symbols or pictures and transfer them onto different pieces of paper or post-its. Group them together if they have any connections. Arrange them on a bigger sheet of paper using blue tack so that you can re-arrange them. Use arrows to link words and add phrases along them to show the connections.

Make up funny stories

If you can introduce humour into your learning it will be more memorable. You can just imagine the image in your head, write it down or draw it.

Post-Its

Write information on post-it notes and place them on the wall, door or large sheets of paper. You can then re-arrange them according to a variety of ideas:

- Categorise items into similar groups.
- Organise them into what you know and don't know, re-arrange as you learn more to show your progress.
- Follow trends or themes.

Create gap-fill exercises

Go through your notes and recreate them leaving _____ key words. Then see if you can fill in the gaps later. If you _____ the exercise you can print copies regularly and keep testing yourself. You _____ wish to change where the gaps appear.

(out / type / may)

Make lists

- bullet point them
- 1. number them
- a) letter them

Do this according to what suits you best. Numbers will definitely suit those who like using numbers, letters for those who prefer reading and writing, but if you have no strong preference, try all of them.

Order/Sequence

Make notes, cut them into sections and then try to order or sequence them. Check against the original work to see how well you have done.

Visuals

Make good use of drawings and diagrams in your revision. Use different colours. Replace key words, ideas, people or places with pictures.

Posters

Make a poster of each topic. After reading all the information, condense it onto one poster. Use lots of different colours and pictures, but limit the number of words. Think carefully about which words you will use before you start.

Rhymes

Think of words that are similar to or rhyme with the words you are trying to learn. You only have to think how you still know nursery rhymes or the words of songs to know that this works.

Games

Use guessing games as part of your revision. Things like Pictionary, Scrabble and Taboo work as well. You have to change the rules so that you can only use words that are linked to the topic you are learning. You will need to make your own cards to play some of these games.

Model making



- What does it look like?
- How does it fit together?
- How does it work?
- Your child can explain it to you whilst they create and afterwards.

Sound-alike

You can split harder words up and have a series of pictures, for example, chromatogram = crow – mat - gram a crow sitting on a mat with a gram weight all on a colour strip of paper.

Reading out loud

Read your revision notes out loud to a particular rhythm – this could be set by music playing in the background or tapping your foot or by walking calmly and steadily. This is a sort of walk and talk.

Record yourself

- Record your child or yourself reading key information.
- Play it back to over and over.
- Pause it at key points and have your child continue the explanation “live”.
- Encourage them to transcribe their explanation.
- Have them listen, make brief notes and then explain it back to you in their own words using their notes.



Question and Answer (Q&A)

Devise questions and answers about a topic and quiz each other. You could create a version of ‘Who Wants To Be A Millionaire’ where the questions are graded according to the difficulty that you choose.

Underlining and highlighting

As you read through the work in your exercise book underline or **highlight** keywords. You could come up with a predicted list of what you are expecting to read before you start or you could make a list of the key words as you work through the notes.

Use Colour

Most people like colour and will remember things much more easily if they use it. For example, you might want to make notes, putting **all important words in red**, **the importance concepts in green** and **the important dates in purple**.

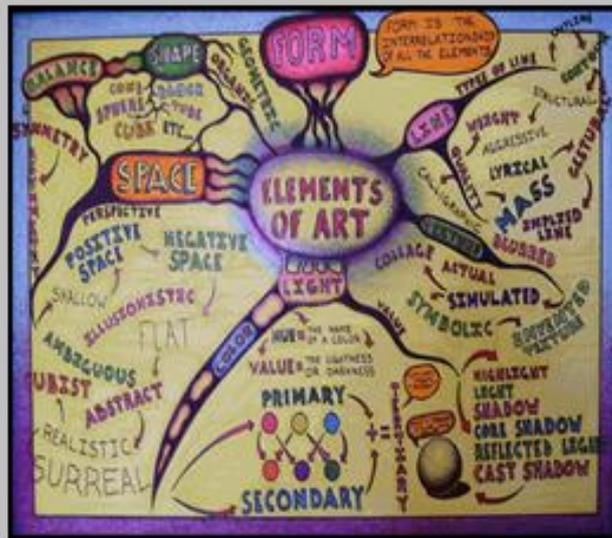
Grouping

Try to group, categorise or put revision notes into hierarchies. Sort your notes or note cards into particular groupings based on bigger themes.

Create a Rap, a Song or a Poem

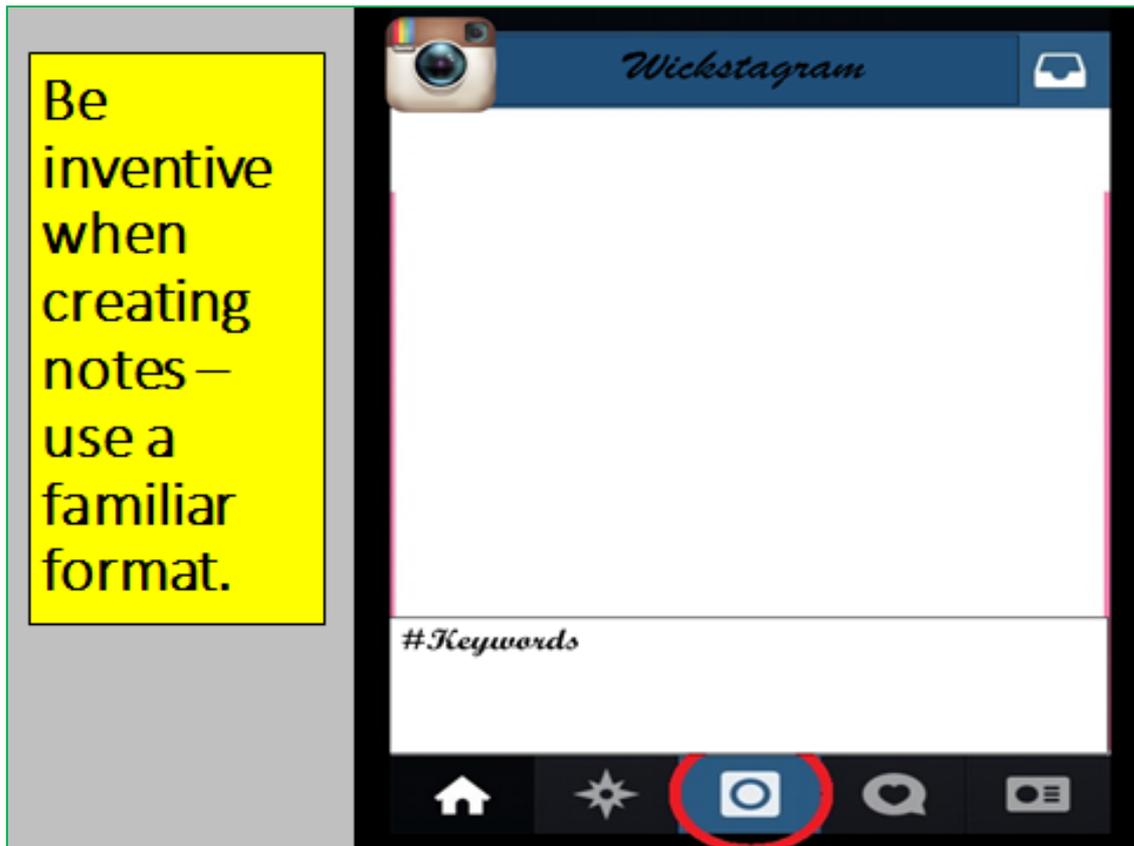
If you like music, the rhythm of these sorts of activities will help you to learn. Get used to singing or talking your work to a set rhythm, perhaps use different rhythms for different topics.

Mind-maps linking information - focus on exploring why and making connections



Questions

Ask questions before you revise anything. Think about the topic to be studied and take some time out to think about the questions you would like to have someone answer for you. Write them down and as you read through your notes jot down any answers that you find. The brain likes looking for answers. When done, research carefully for the answers that you cannot find.



Card Games

Make up a card game to test your knowledge about a topic. It could be based on an existing card game, with a tweak to the rules, or made up completely. It could involve collecting sets like rummy, or memory games where you have the cards face down and have to find linked pairs.

Symbols and Abbreviations

Look at all the key words in a particular topic and come up with a symbol or abbreviation instead – think hard about each word and match to an appropriate symbol or abbreviation. Write out revision notes using these instead of the key words.

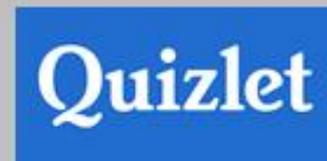
Role-Play

Get together with a group of friends and create a role-play, perhaps for part of a novel that you are trying to learn or to re-enact a poem. You can try this on less likely topics, for example role-play the water cycle for Science or Geography.

Take a revision guide and challenge your child with a quiz



- Setting your child a mini-quiz for each section can help to check how well they know a particular topic.
- *Write these on cards, so you can then use them to test regularly.*
- Keep them in colourful packs for each unit of the course to return to and revise ***'a little, but often'***.



Useful revision sites

