

# A PARENTS GUIDE TO...

## Revision and Examination Preparation

### What every parent needs to tell their child about revision

To begin to understand how to revise, you need to first consider with your child what type of learner they are. **There are many ways to revise and learn, and you need to find out what works best for them.**

Most people remember things **visually** - in other words, they remember a **picture** of what they saw when they read the page. If you're one of these people, try writing notes or equations onto one piece of paper and then colouring them in, adding curly bits, trees, animals and anything else that makes it stick in your mind. If this is you, you're likely to find mind maps a really helpful trick.

Or maybe your mind works more on **auditory** recall - you remember **sounds**. If this is you, and you like to have music playing when you work, try noticing what music is playing on the radio when you revise each bit, and this ought to help you remember the information you're revising. Say things out loud, perhaps record your voice and listen to it later. Or you could get adventurous and make up songs or rhymes to help you remember. Listen to audio books or watch videos/ listen to CDs with people speaking in a foreign language to appreciate the accent and experience the correct pronunciation of words.

Other people remember "**kinaesthetically**" - they remember the **muscle movements** they made when they did something. So write things out on a sheet of paper, cut them out to make a jigsaw, then sort the jigsaw out. Practice your jigsaw each evening - with practice it'll only take a minute or so. In the exam, cast your mind back to that jigsaw, and the information should come flooding back. If this is you, then **moving around** as you work may help you to remember, as will any kind of cutting-and-sticking.

### Top tips for effective revision

1. Start revising early. Have plenty of sleep and find a quiet work space.
2. Set up a revision timetable so it is clear and structured. Chunk revision, 40 minutes study at a time. Have plenty of snacks for energy.
3. Find the best ways of revision to suit your learning style.
4. Consider exam techniques– reading the question carefully, underlining key words, looking at the command words in the question.
5. Practice with past papers and exam style questions.

# Revision Techniques

**FLASH CARDS**-Write ideas and facts on to cards to use as 'prompts' The idea is to carry them with you, and look at them when you have a spare moment (lunch queues, break times, on the bus...) You could put headings/keywords on one side and definitions on the other. These cards are excellent for looking at on the morning of the exam.

**MEMORY AIDS**-Create diagrams and mnemonics to remember key facts. The sillier the better as these are easier to remember. Try to relate them to familiar things.

**ADDITIONAL INFO**-Gather together all the relevant material you have on a certain topic. You can find more information from the internet/textbooks to supplement your class notes. You should begin revising each topic with all the information in front of you not with gaps in your notes.

**BREAK THE TOPIC DOWN INTO SMALLER CHUNKS**-Write a list of all the relevant areas/topics you need to cover for the exam and then split them up into separate parts. This will allow you to see all the material you need to cover and by breaking it down it will become less daunting to tackle. Make manageable revision chunks.

**USE YOUR HOUSE**-Write down key ideas or pictures and display them around the house. If you see these pictures repeatedly as you go about your day to day life they will go into your memory easier. It's about having as much exposure to the topic as possible! Choose areas you look at each day, the fridge, bathroom cabinet or above a mirror.

**REVISION TIMETABLE**-Plan your revision time as you build up to the exams. You want to start well in advance and slowly build up to the day of the exam. Cramming is never a good idea! Include on the revision timetable both time at home and free periods at school when you can revise. You may find you can be very productive at school if you set aside some time for revision as people around you will be working and you can find all the resources you need.

**LISTEN**-Record yourself talking through your notes and listen back. Listen to explanations on the internet, audio books and CDs which relate to your topic. Most curriculum literature books can be purchased on an audio book so you can listen as well as read your set text to ensure you understand it.

**STUDY BUDDY**-Study with friends to test each others knowledge, but remember you are meeting to revise rather than chat! Be realistic, revise and have a social time as a reward afterwards. Use friends during the later stages of your revision to test you on questions as the act of testing you will help there revision too!

**PAST PAPERS**-Work through past exam papers and exam questions. Use a watch to time yourself when you sit a mock exam so you can practise timing your answers. Past papers will show you the style of questions and the layout you should expect in the exam.

**STUDY GUIDES**-It's not hard to find help with revision - as well as established published revision guides, there are hundreds of websites offering help and advice. The problem is not how to find such help, but how to judge which the best source for your needs is. Save valuable time and get recommendations from your teachers or friends, don't trust everything you see on the internet as it may be to advanced for your exam or be from a different exam board! Use the internet wisely, but don't waste time ploughing through useless websites!

**LOOK, COVER, WRITE, CHECK**- 1) read it, 2) hide it away, 3) write it out and 4) check to see if you got it right. This technique is good for spellings, diagrams, equations and lists of facts. Our brain needs repetition to put things into its memory store!

**BLANK DIAGRAMS**-Draw out the diagram you are trying to learn (i.e. the heart) but leave the labels missing. Then try to fill in the labels from memory. You can photocopy the blank diagram more than once to use at different stages of the revision process.

**HIGHLIGHTING**- Go through your books/notes highlighting key words etc. Not only does this make it easier to revise later, but the act of scanning through your books looking for the key information helps you to remember it.

**SUMMARY SHEETS**- Try to get the whole topic onto one side of A4 paper. It's the act of making the sheet which fixes the information in your mind. It can be displayed as a mind map, page of pictures.....

**MIND MAPS**-Highlight key words and the connections between them and allows you to create a visual memory trigger. Use pictures, keywords and colour to help fix it to memory.