



DEAN CLOSE
SCHOOL
CHELTENHAM

REMOVE
GCSE REVISION
ADVICE BOOKLET

2023

GCSE REVISION TOP TEN TIPS

1. Stick to the same location for revision: researchers found that pupils who often changed location took more time to settle and were less focused. A uniform revision zone also can be habit forming in regard to attention and cognitive associations made whilst revising.
2. Try to keep a tidy and organised revision zone. It can help maintain attention, avoid elements of distraction, and lessen cognitive drain.
3. Consider banning mobile phones, laptops and certain music during revision sessions, as they can be **serious distractions**. Replicating what it will be like in the exam hall is useful. For some pupils, especially neurodivergent learners, music can aid attention, however.
4. Consider putting your clock away, don't wear a watch, and use an electronic timer to time revision sessions. Once set, put the timer in a drawer or behind you: awareness of time breaks concentration. Do have a drink of water on your desk.
5. Keep notes and materials organised, check them the evening before to make sure everything is together and in the right sequence. Notes need to be clear and useful. Otherwise, it can limit your ability to revise well.
6. Revision needs to be active, not passive. Use a variety of techniques, even those that feel awkward at first: flashcards, mind-maps, whiteboards, post-it notes, past papers etc.
7. Stick your Revision Planner on the wall. Be brave and share copies with parents. Make a public commitment to lock into your plan – this does help.
8. Over breaks, consider front-loading your revision in the morning. Start work early after a good breakfast and work in 25-45 min sessions with a 5-minute break between. Use these sessions for learning & overlearning material. Afternoon / evening sessions can be used for review activities, e.g. being tested by a parent, testing on revision websites, doing a past paper. **Prepare and tidy workspaces for the next revision session.**
9. It takes 4 or 5 times of recall to embed to long-term memory. Learning and retention will be more effective if you vocalise material aloud. Test yourself again out loud after a period of time, and then ask someone else to test you after more time has lapsed.
10. Don't break the chain! Tick off each revision session on your planner as you finish and build your confidence as you complete each task.

THE POMODORO TECHNIQUE®

A SIMPLE METHOD TO BALANCE FOCUS WITH DELIBERATE BREAKS

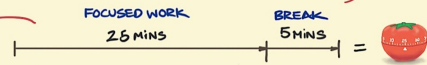


- 1 PLAN YOUR TASKS
How many pomodoros might you need?

- 2 DO 1 POMODORO
Time for 25 mins then take a 5 min break

NO SNEAKY WORKING!

PROTECT YOUR POMODORO!



- 3 REPEAT x 4 POMODOROS
Then take a longer break



CONCEIVED BY FRANCESCO CIRILLO

sketchplanations

HOW LONG IS YOUR FOCUS?

Measure it early on.

apps to try

<https://pomodor.app/timer>

<https://www.marinaratimer.com/>

<https://www.forestapp.cc/>

MOST SUCCESSFUL REVISION PROCESS

ESTABLISHING KNOWLEDGE (forming foundational memories):

- Reviewing (textbooks, revision guides, class folders)
- Taking & summarising notes (on paper, flashcards)

'CLOSED BOOK' ACTIVITIES

(adding features to existing memories):

- Elaboration
- Examples
- Drawing & annotating diagrams

CHECKING & UPDATING

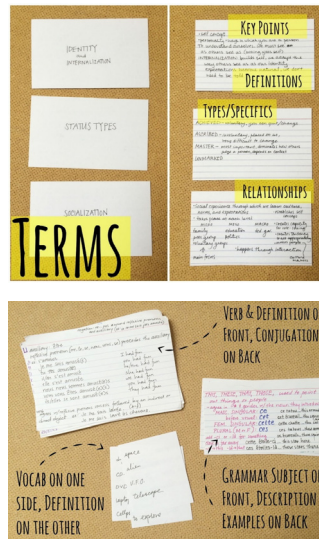
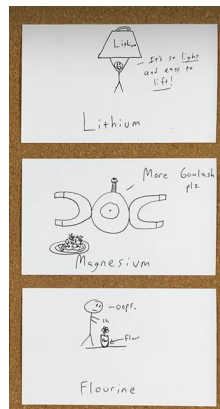
PRACTICING & APPLYING RECALL (strengthening recall & memory usage)

- Retrieval practice textbook questions, past papers, made-up questions
- Dual-coding

MARKING & UPDATING

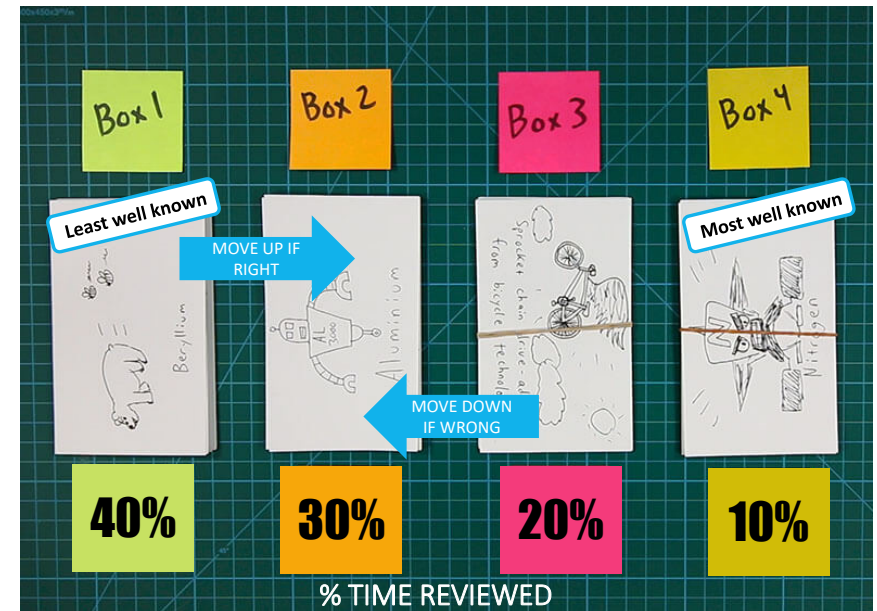
FLASH CARDS

1. Make your own flash cards
2. Mix pictures and words
3. Use Mnemonic Devices to create mental connections
4. Break complex concepts into multiple questions
5. Say your answers out loud when studying
6. Study your flash cards in both directions

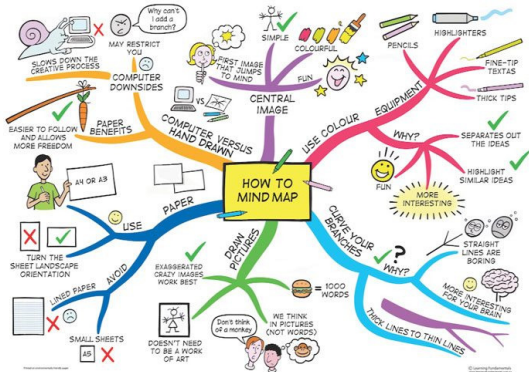


Thomas Frank, <https://collegeinofgeek.com/flash-card-study-tips/>

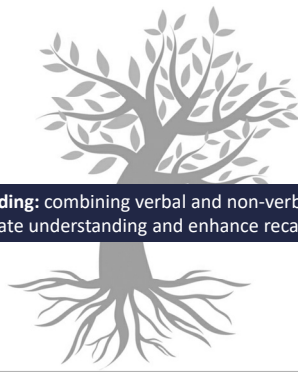
ACTIVITY: THE LEITNER BOX



ACTIVITY: GRAPHIC ORGANISERS



Dual-Coding: combining verbal and non-verbal elements to facilitate understanding and enhance recall.



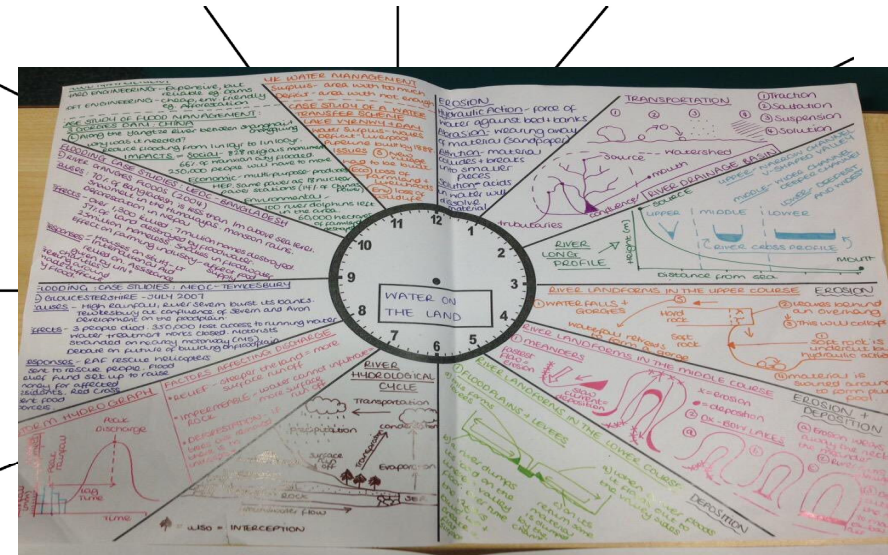
How about...?

A castle with separate turrets & a strong foundation.
Streams growing into a river & then a lake.
A village with a central square & streets around it.

Comparison table of similarities and differences.

Flow chart to summarise a process or series of events.

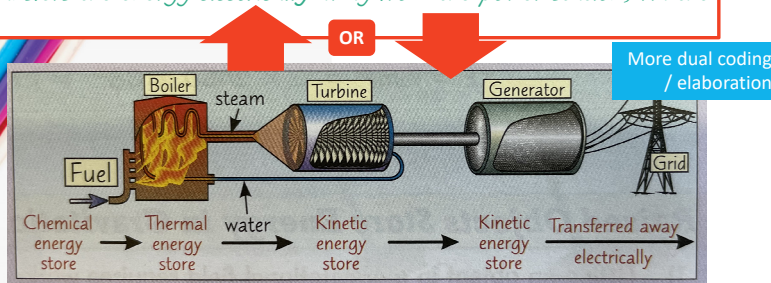
ACTIVITY: REVISION CLOCKS



ACTIVITY: TEXT ↔ GRAPHICS

Power stations use steam to drive a turbine:

1. As the fossil fuel burns (in oxygen) the energy in its chemical energy store is transferred to the thermal energy store of the water by heating.
2. The water boils to form steam, which turns a turbine, transferring mechanically to the kinetic energy store of the turbine.
3. As the turbine revolves, so does the generator, which produces an electric current.
4. The generator transfers the energy electrically away from the power station, via the national grid.

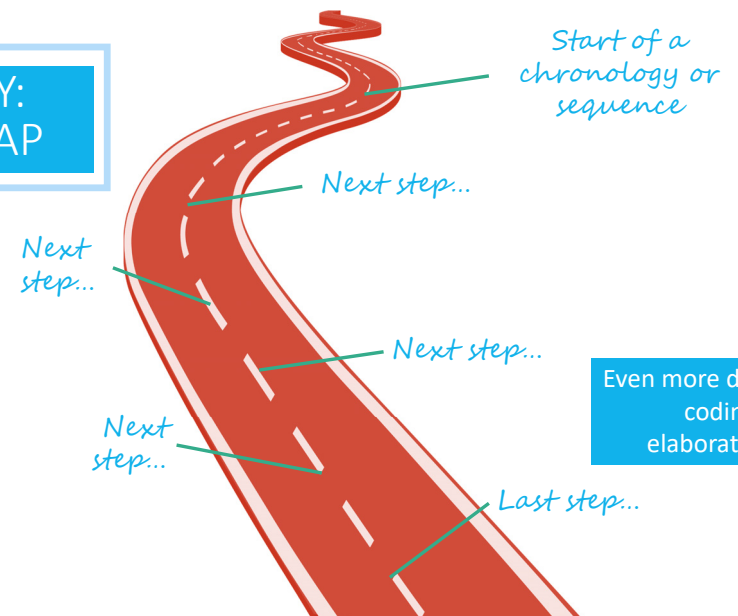


ACTIVITY: ROAD MAP

Suitable for anything with a start and end

e.g.

the Moroccan crises
the carbon cycle
Jane Eyre red room scene



ACTIVITY: THE BLANK PAGE

Put away class materials and **write or sketch everything you know about a topic.**

Be as thorough as possible.

retrieval

Then, **check your class materials for accuracy and add any important points you missed.**

elaboration



You're the teacher.

Prepare and teach a topic to a friend / parent.

Set them an exam question. For you to succeed, they have to be able to answer it.

Mark it and feedback.

ACTIVITY: PREPARE TO TEACH

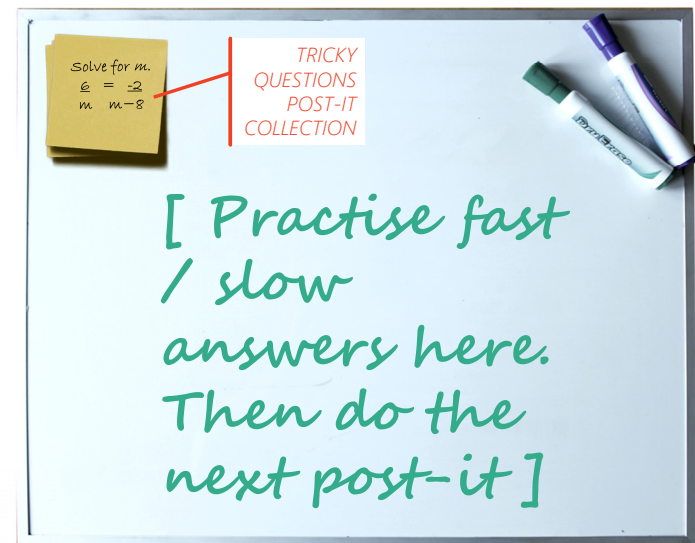
ACTIVITY: TWO SLOW, ONE FAST



GO SLOW - equivalent of a sporting drill - paying attention to **what you do**. e.g. 20mins on a History 8-marker or 15 mins on a Maths 5-marker. **DO TWO**.

GO FAST - this is a 'game' situation - try to perform a different question at the same level, but **under pressure of exam time**.

ACTIVITY: WHITEBOARD JUMBLE



THE DAY BEFORE

Check you know the time and place for your exam.

Make sure you know how many questions you need to answer and how long you are planning to spend on each part of the paper.

Make sure you have pens, cartridges, highlighters and any other equipment you need.

Read through your notes but don't work too late.

Get some fresh air. Don't stay inside all day.



THE NIGHT BEFORE

Last minute cramming increases anxiety and tires you out.

Go to bed at a sensible hour.

If you can't sleep, don't worry - your body is still resting.



ON THE DAY

Get up in plenty of time.

Eat breakfast, even if you are not hungry. Research shows students who eat breakfast perform better in exams.

Check you have all your equipment.

Don't be put off by other students who are panicking.

Stay hydrated. Drink plenty of water to aid concentration.

IN THE EXAM

Read the instructions carefully.

Make sure you read to the end of the paper and turn over every page in the booklet - including blank pages.

Put your watch on the table and keep an eye on the time.

Spend time reading the questions carefully. Underline key words. Plan your answers.

If your mind goes blank, breathe! Look away from the paper and try to visualise your classroom for that subject, your notes and key words from that topic.

If you feel anxious, breathe in to the count of 7 and out to the count of 11.

If you do run out of time, jot down some bullet points. You may pick up some extra marks.