

Parkside Community School

Revision Launchpad

The countdown to your exams has begun

Name: _____

Mentor group: _____

PD Teacher: _____



What's inside?

Contents

Page 3 – Mock Exam Pre-Mortem – Where are you currently?

Page 4 – How do I learn and revise effectively?

Page 6 – Where should I revise?

Page 7 – When should I revise?

Page 9 – What doesn't work?

Page 10 – What does work?

Page 11 – What else matters?

Page 12 – Beating the Blues – Exam Worries

Page 14 – Revision Strategies: Flash Cards

Page 16 – Revision Strategies: Brain Dumps

Page 17 – Revision Strategies: Self Quizzing

Page 19 – Revision Strategies: Exam Questions

Page 20 – How do I decide what to revise?

Page 22 – Final Reflections

Page 22 - Useful links and resources

Page 23 - Notes



Mock Exam Pre-Mortem – Where are you currently?

Mock exams are important. They give you a realistic exam experience, making the real thing less scary. They also help you, and your teachers, understand where the gaps in your learning are and how we can work together to fill those gaps before the summer. The mock exams are a chance to practice, not preparing for them seriously means you and your teachers won't be able to spot the gaps in your learning. This means those gaps will remain for the real exams. This can have a negative impact on your GCSE results, and also your post-16 plans.

What subjects do you study?	What is your target grade?	What grade are you currently predicted to achieve?

The mock exams directly impact your predicted grades. How could a set of predicted grades that don't reflect your true ability affect your plans for life after Parkside?

How confident are you that you will be able to achieve your target grades or improve on your predicted grades in the upcoming mock exams? (please circle)

Not
Confident

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Extremely
Confident

Briefly explain why you gave yourself this grade?

What obstacles are stopping you from reaching your potential in the mock exams?

How could you overcome these obstacles or minimise their impact on your results?



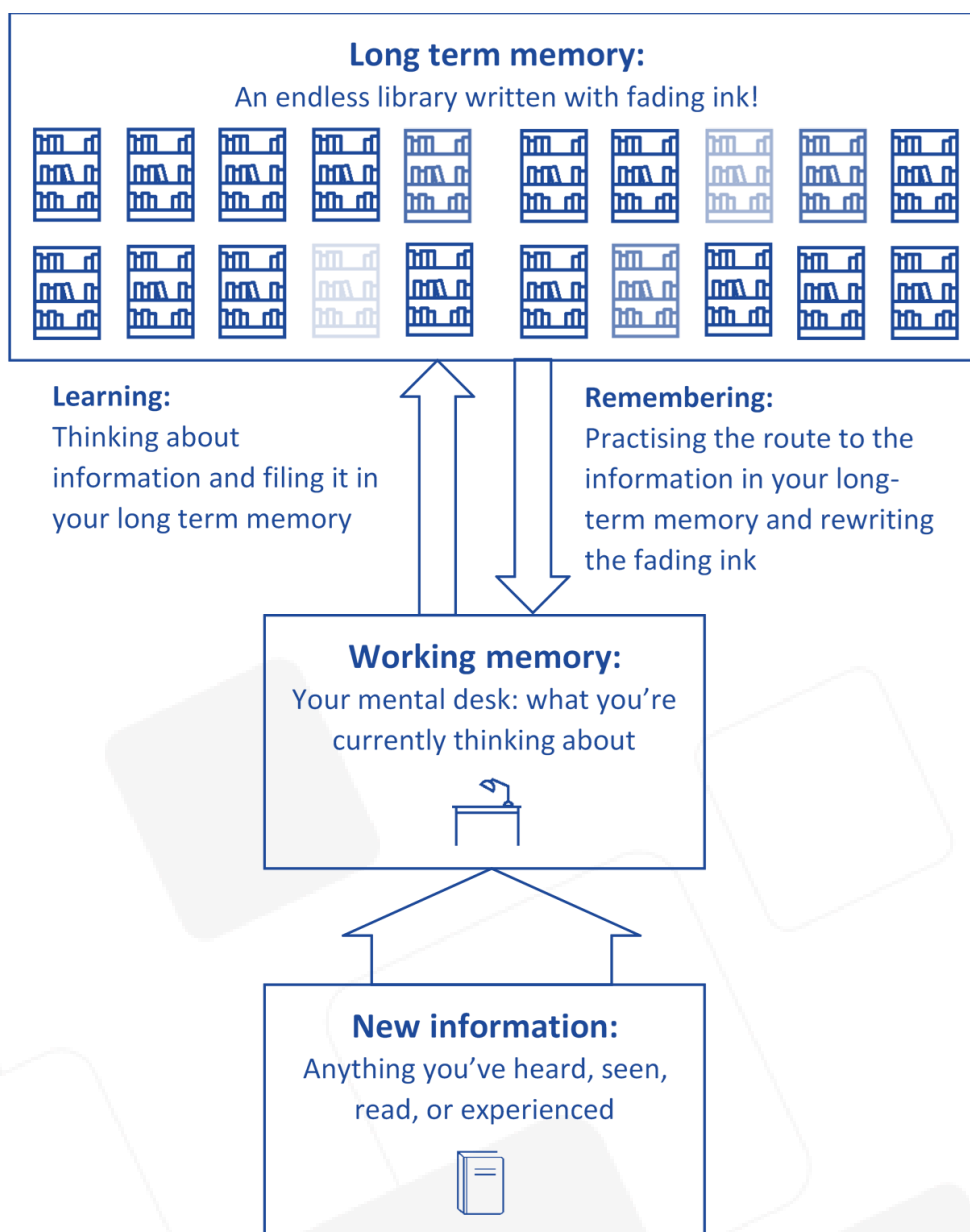
How do I learn and revise effectively?

Learning is the process of understanding information and being able to remember it over a long period of time.

Revising is the process of revisiting information which you have already been taught to ensure that you have learned it and to ensure that you can easily use it in exams.

To remember a lot of knowledge quickly, that knowledge needs to be securely stored in your long term memory.

To make sure knowledge goes into your long term memory, stays there, and to make sure you can find it quickly, you need to spend time thinking hard about that knowledge in your working memory.



Whenever you revise, you are doing one of three things:



1. Finding and closing gaps in your knowledge.



2. Strengthening fading knowledge in your long term memory.



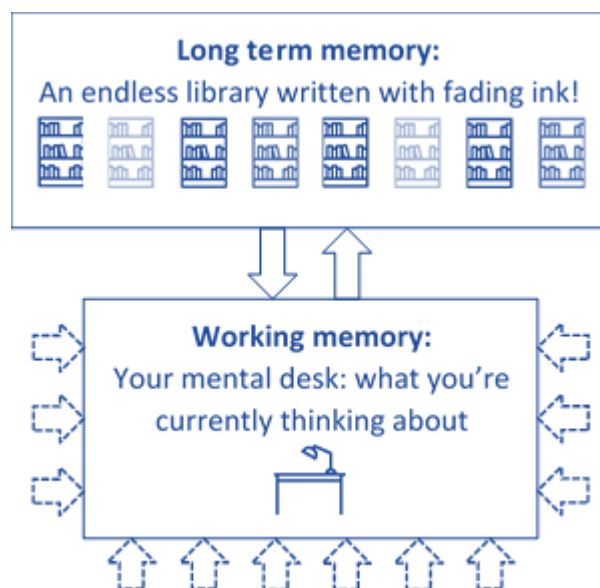
3. Practising recalling knowledge quickly.



When you revise effectively, you pull information from your long term memory and strengthen it in your working memory. You may also be finding gaps in your long term memory and closing them by thinking hard about new information in your working memory.

Your working memory can only hold a small amount of information at once. In order to revise and learn effectively, you should use techniques which stop your working memory from becoming overwhelmed.

Anything that you are currently experiencing or paying attention to takes up space in your working memory. One way that you can free up space in your working memory is by working in an environment which is free from distractions.



When creating a space to revise...

Do:

- ✓ ...work in a tidy environment where you have the tools you need to revise effectively.
- ✓ ...work in a quiet environment.
- ✓ ...put your phone in another room or use an app on your which blocks social media.
- ✓ ...work in a space which you only use for home study, schoolwork or revision.

Don't:

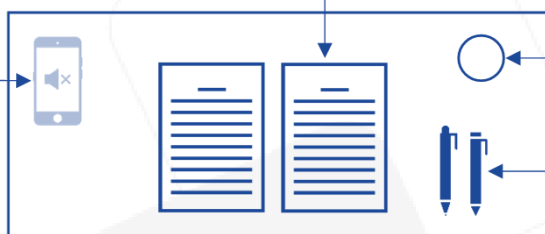
- X ...work in a cluttered environment.
- X ...distract yourself with (loud) music or noise.
- X ...work near your phone or other devices which can access social media.
- X ...work in the same space where you relax.

An example of an effective revision space:



A quiet environment, such as a classroom or library

Put your phone on silent if you will need to use it or put it in another room.



The resources you will need to revise using your chosen method

A drink, such as a glass of water

The pens and pencils you will need to revise

A chair which is similar to the chair you use at school (not a sofa or bed)



Do you have somewhere at home to study and revise? YES / NO

Where do you normally do your home study and your revision?

I normally study/revise in_____

Use the scorecard below to rate the quality of your learning environment: tick all that are true for yourself

My chosen environment is quiet (e.g. There is no music playing and there are no conversations happening in the background.).	
I am unlikely to be disturbed in my chosen environment (e.g. It is unlikely that I will be asked to move so the table can be used for something else.).	
I only use my chosen environment for home study or revision.	
I don't have my phone with me while I complete my home study.	
I don't have other possible distractions near me when I complete my home study (e.g. games consoles).	
I use a desk which is similar to the desk I use in lessons.	
I have an office chair or a chair which is similar to the chairs I use in lesson (not a sofa or bed).	
I usually have the equipment I need with me when I complete home study (e.g. a computer)	
TOTAL	

How did you do?

6-8	This is likely to be a positive learning environment. Working in this environment will allow you complete your home study and revision effectively and efficiently. In theory, this will mean that you will have more time for yourself to relax.
3-5	This is likely to be a reasonably positive learning environment. However, it is still likely that you will be distracted while you are completing home study and revision. This will mean that it may take you longer to complete home study and you may need to complete more independent revision than expected in order to be successful. You should make some tweaks to your learning environment and, if these tweaks aren't possible, you should attend study base.
0-2	This is likely to be an ineffective learning environment. Working in this environment may mean that you have to spend a lot more time to complete your home study and revision. It may also mean that you complete your home study and revision to a much lower quality, meaning you will have to do more revision in order to be successful. You should make some major changes to your learning environment and/or attend study base.

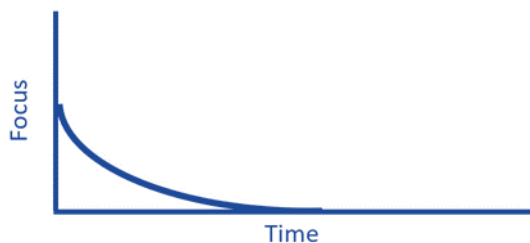
Reflection

What changes are you going to make to improve your learning environment to ensure your revision has maximum impact?

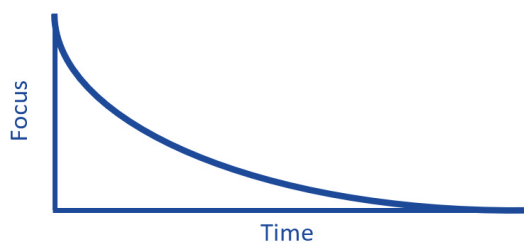
- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



In order to revise effectively, you have to think hard. Thinking hard is tiring. Therefore, when you revise, you should choose a time when you find it easiest to focus. This should be a time when you are well-rested and when you are used to working.

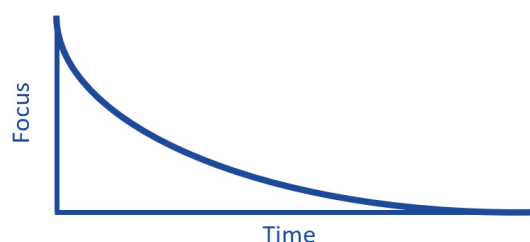


Revising when your are tired

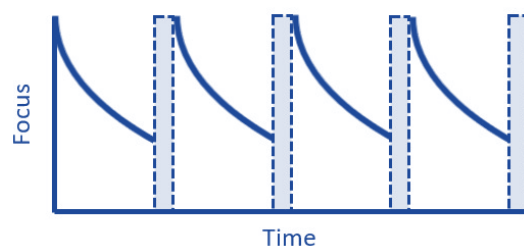


Revising when your are well-rested

You should also take regular breaks when you revise. These breaks can be structured using a method called the **Pomodoro technique**.



Revising without a break



Revising with small regular breaks

When revising...

Do:

- ✓ ...get into a routine of revising at a particular point every day.
- ✓ ...revise when you are well-rested or at a time when you are used to working.
- ✓ ...revise for short 20-30 minute bursts, with regular but short breaks.

Don't:

- X ...depend on when you want to revise.
- X ...revise late at night or when you are tired.
- X ...try to force yourself to work for long periods of time without a break.

Planning revision sessions using the Pomodoro Technique:

1. Choose a time when you are well-rested and used to working.
2. Decide the specific task you are going to complete (e.g. I will complete a Science revision module about electrolysis of aqueous substances).
3. Set up your study area (See "Where should I revise?").
4. Decide on how many 25-minute slots you will need to complete the task.
5. Remove your phone and any other distractions from your working space.
6. Set a timer for 25 minutes. Ideally use a digital timer which is *not* on your phone.
7. Spend the *entire* 25 minutes working. If you have spare time at the end, start another task.
8. When the timer goes off, leave your working area and take a 5-minute break.
9. Repeat. Take a longer break after every 3x25-minute sessions.



Answer the questions below to see how easily you will be able to use the Pomodoro technique:

1. Do you have a clock or a timer which would allow you to time Pomodoros without using your phone?

If you said "no", you should either purchase a kitchen timer or complete your revision and home study at study base; there are clocks in study base and teachers who will be able to time sessions for you.

2. Do you rely on your phone to complete online home study and revision, such as Sparx or Bedrock?

If you said "yes", you should use study base to complete your home study and revision; study base is held in a computer room which will mean you can complete your home study and revision with a much lower risk of getting distracted.

3. Who could you give your phone to while you complete Pomodoros?

If you said "I don't know" or "no one", consider asking your parents or close friends. If you would rather not give your phone to these people, you should complete your home study and revision in study base; you aren't allowed to use your phone in school anyway and, if needed, you could give your phone to a teacher.

4. Do you have a positive learning environment? (See 'Where should I work and revise?')

If you said "no", you should return to the "Where should I work and revise?" and follow the guidance to create a positive learning environment. If you can't create a positive learning environment at home, you should complete your home study and revision at study base; study base is held in an environment where you are used to working, making it more likely that you will be productive.

5. When do you do your home study and revision? (e.g. "When I've finished gaming for the night" or "As soon I get home")

If the time when you study does not have a set routine or if you've said that you do your home study whenever you've done everything else you want to do, you should set yourself a specific time for home study and revision. Ideally, this should be as soon as you get home; your brain will still be in 'school mode', making it more likely that you will be productive.

If you find it difficult to get motivated to do home study or revision at home, you should work at study base.

Give three things which you are going to do to make it likely that you will revise using Pomodoros:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



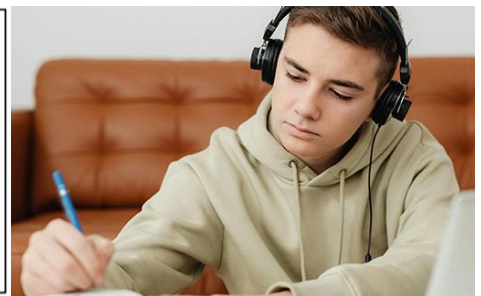
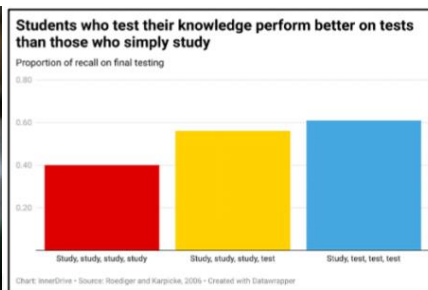
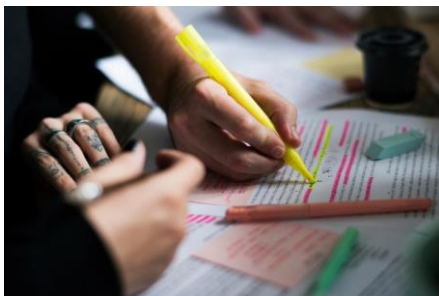
Re-reading notes and highlighting key points

According to research, 84% of students admit to using this technique to revise, and 55% claim it is their favourite technique. But is it really effective? Reading a whole chapter of a textbook, or reading through 3 previous essays, is quite a lot of work, so surely it's beneficial? But how much do you actually remember the next day, next week, next month?

What does the research say?

A study in 2006 (Roediger and Karpicke) compared the learning of three groups who used a combination of re-reading and retrieval practice to prepare for a test. When asked, those who just relied on re-reading believed it was an effective strategy for learning and felt really confident about the final test. The results said the opposite, those who used retrieval practice did at least 30% better in the final test.

Another study in 2016 (Smith et al) took similar groups and subjected half of them to stressful environments before testing how much they could remember. Students who had just re-read their notes performed 32% worse in stressful situations, whereas students who had used retrieval practice were not negatively affected by increased stress. This is clearly beneficial in exam situations.



Listening to music when revising

Music can be beneficial for certain tasks-it can improve our mood, boost our motivation and increase creativity. But is it helpful when revising? According to research, 47% of students believe music helps them concentrate and 29% claim it keeps them calm.

What does the research say?

A 2014 study (Perham and Currie) compared four study groups: one group working in silence; another revising to songs they liked; a third group revising to songs they didn't like; the final group listening to music without lyrics. Those revising in silence performed significantly better than those listening to songs with lyrics, and it made no difference if they liked the songs!

Despite what many students think, listening to your favourite song is not the best way to revise; music takes up processing space in the brain, leaving less space to process revision materials.

Discussion

Which of these common mistakes have you done before?
Why do you think so many people continue to make them?
What could you do to make sure you don't make these mistakes again?

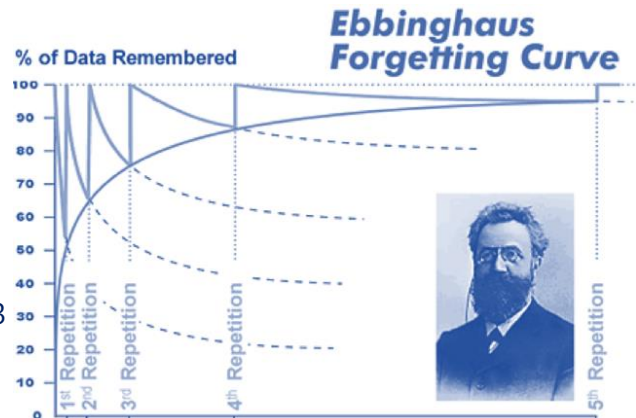


What does work?

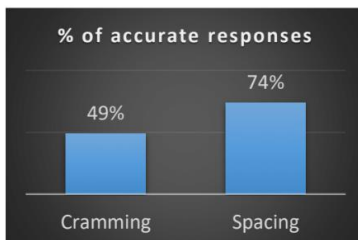
Retrieval practice - retrieval is trying to remember information you have previously learned, so you can access it easily at a later date. When we are asked a question, our brain makes connections to other things we know. By repeating the question regularly, those connections are strengthened, and eventually the information transfers to our long term memory.

What does the research say?

This is one of the most extensively researched areas of learning - dating back to Ebbinghaus in 1885. If we only learn something once, we are more than likely to forget it; we need to force ourselves to remember and re-learn the information if we want to cement it in our long term memory. Look back at the study on the previous page – those students who self-tested 3 times before the exam were far more successful than those who just re-read the text.

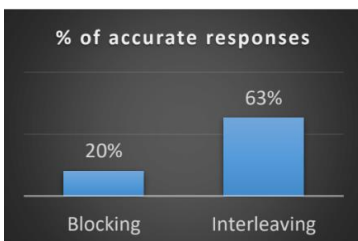


How can you make it even more effective?



Spacing

Cutting up your revision into smaller chunks and spacing them out over a period of time is much more beneficial than cramming an entire subject in a day. An hour of Physics each day for 5 days is much more effective than 5 hours in one day.



Interleaving

To improve your results further, also consider interleaving. This is where you mix up the subjects and topics you revise: 30 minutes of Shakespeare, 30 minutes of algebra, 30 minutes of Poetry, 30 minutes of Ratio - rather than an hour of English and an hour of Maths.

A 2007 study (Rohrer and Taylor) found that students who spaced out their revision over a week, compared to one sitting, achieved a much higher average mark in their final exams. In a second study, students were given a mock test after blocking or interleaving and another test a week later. Even though blocking was effective in the mock test the next day, the students who used interleaving did considerably better a week later in the final exam.

Summarise

Sum up the key information from this page in 4 bullet points

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.



Get some sleep

How many hours of sleep do you get each night? On average, teenagers claim to get 6-7 hours a night, when they should really be aiming for 9-10 hours. If you are only getting 6-7, you are depriving yourself of over 1000 hours of sleep each year. You must be exhausted!

What does the research say?

Put very simply, we experience two types of sleep: deep sleep, which helps our body to recover; and REM, which helps restore our mind. Without enough REM sleep, you are much more prone to anxiety, stress, lack of concentration, mood swings and poor decision making.

A 2009 study (van der Helm and Walker) found a 40% reduction in memory when sleep deprived. Not only that, but you are more likely to forget positive memories when tired, just recalling and retaining negative memories. Excessive sleep-loss therefore impacts on our mental health and stress levels.



Limit your screen time

Mobile phones can be great tools for learning but are they having a negative impact on your learning? Catching up with friends, social media, movies and box sets is great—but when is the best time to do these things?

What does the research say?

A 2014 study (Thornton et al) found that just having a mobile phone nearby can lead to a 20% reduction in attention, concentration and performance.

Another study in 2013 (Wood et al) found that the glare from phones and iPads tricks our brain into thinking it is daytime, therefore stopping melatonin (the sleep hormone) being triggered. Two hours on your phone or iPad at night results in 20% less melatonin being released. At the very least, dim your screen prior to bedtime—or better still, don't use it at all.



Look after yourself

Being kind to yourself each day can have a big impact on your performance during revision and exams. Take a break and get some exercise. Aim to start the day with cereal or toast – but be sure to treat yourself later on in the day. Find time to do the things you love. Reward yourself for your hard work.

What does the research say?

A range of studies in 2016 (Miller and Krizen) found that students who took a 12 minute walk reported a 20% increase in happiness, attentiveness and confidence, compared to those who spent that time sitting down. Even taking a 5 minute walk resulted in similar benefits. Break up your study sessions with a quick stroll and see for yourself.





A 'normal' level of anxiety is what most of us experience when we think about preparing for and sitting exams but when that level becomes elevated, it can impact how and what we learn as we revise, and what we can recall when we complete the paper.

Give yourself the best chance of doing well, by using the power of your brain and back this up by fuelling and resting your body properly.

Here are some tips and resources to help! Good luck!



Preparing for exams:

- Schedule your study periods in advance, to help you feel that you have greater control over exams. There are apps that can help with this!
- Study for short bursts ('manageable chunks'), across several consecutive nights before the exam, rather than cramming for hours the night before – you may need to do this with a timer, some source of noise in the background (e.g. music), a focus object to look when you find your mind wandering, quick movement breaks every 15-20 minutes, etc.
- Making a list and ticking things off is rewarding and will help you keep track of your progress. It will help you see that even if you did get distracted during your revision session, you still achieved something and managed to tick it off your to-do list.
- If you are worried about how you will focus and concentrate in a long exam, rehearse at least a couple of times how you will have to work under exam conditions with practice test papers, for up to 30 minutes at a time – and extend beyond this amount of time as this can help you to see and believe that you can manage exams.



On the day of the exam, before you go into the exam hall:

- Eat and drink well, even if you don't feel like it. Breakfast on protein and carbohydrates – avoid sugar and energy drinks!
- Exercise, ideally in the morning (e.g. go for a run) and in any way you can while at school, even if it's just a walk to school, just before the exam starts.
- Visualise yourself doing something active or rewarding as soon as possible after the exam. The 'reward centre' of our brains respond to incentives and can change our focus from 'negative' worries to 'positive' thoughts about something we are looking forward to.
- Put in your pocket any very small allowable items that you can fidget with inside the pocket, e.g. a rubber band or a very small squeezable ball. This can help soothe any pre-exam nerves.

Takeaway Tips

What are your three key tips on how to beat exam worries from this page?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



During the exam:

- Remind yourself that this is just one exam; while important, it doesn't have the power to make or break the grand scheme of your life – it really doesn't!
- Look at the entire exam at the beginning and plan out in your mind the individual tasks that you need to do and quickly work out the small units of time required to do each task; it can be helpful to use a highlighter or different coloured pens to emphasise key words in questions/tasks, etc.
- Do some breathing exercises when you need to. Practice these outside exams so you can use them effectively when you need them. There are lots of apps and YouTube posts - just find one you like. You could try: clearfear app
- Leave time at the end to double check your answers when you finish to catch any mistakes.

After the exam:

- At the end of an exam, it can be tempting to avoid thinking (worrying) about how it went and move onto thinking about the next one! Before you do, take time to think about what worked well i.e. planning answers, keeping nerves in check, and identify what you will repeat next time and what you will change!
- Before you start preparing for your next exam, give yourself a reward for completing the last one!

Links to resources on exam stress (click or scan to view)



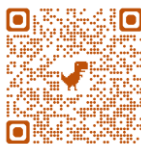
Clear Fear app - an app funded by teenage **mental health** charity stem4 to help manage the symptoms of anxiety.



YOUNGMINDS – guide on coping with exam pressures produced by the YOUNGMINDS charity



Understanding exam stress- guidance on exam stress by the Charity MIND



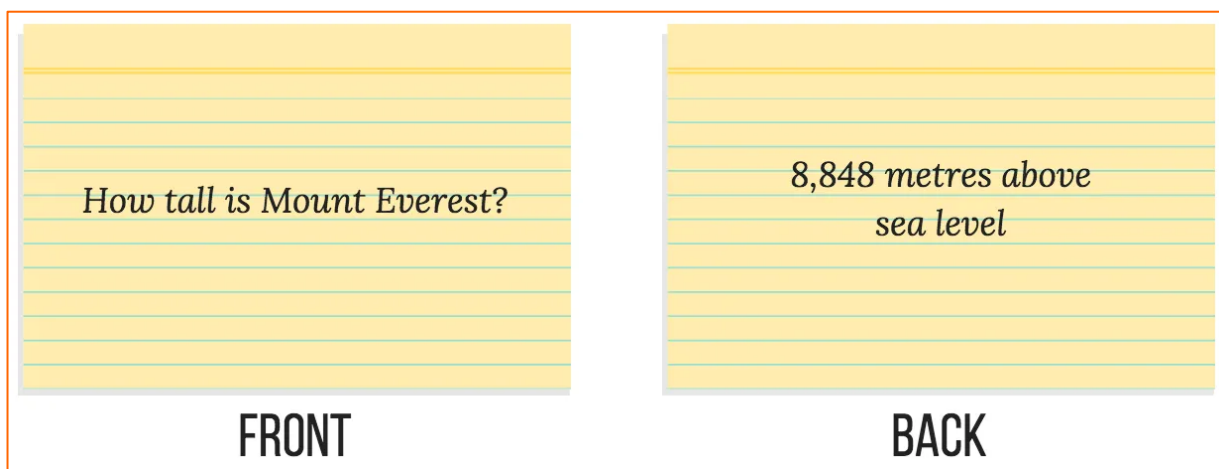
CHILDLINE – tips and videos on how to beat the exam blues.

Helping each other

If your best friend was suffering exam anxiety, what would be your advice to them?



Flashcards are small sheets of paper or card with matching pieces of information on either side. They are a useful tool for learning facts and allow you to quickly check whether you have remembered something correctly.



When making flashcards:

Do:

- ✓ ...make flashcards quickly.
- ✓ ...put a single piece of information of each flashcard.
- ✓ ...sort your flashcards according to your confidence with them (see below).

Don't:

- X ...spend more time *making* flashcards than actually using them.
- X ...put lots of information onto each flashcard.
- X ...revise the flashcards in the same order every time that you use them.
- X ...only read through flashcards.

How to make flashcards:

1. If you can, get a set of flashcards from your teacher or from a website such as Quizlet!
2. If you can't find pre-made flashcards, find the information you want to put onto flashcards using your existing revision resources (e.g. a knowledge organiser).
3. Fold a piece of A4 paper into 8.
4. Cut along the folds
5. Write the questions on one side of the paper.
6. Write the answers on the other side of the paper.

Useful resources (click or scan to view)



Quizlet – interactive flashcards and study activities.



Brainscape – Flashcards for serious learners, find and make electronic flashcards.



Revisely – AI powered flashcards, a must use website and app!!



AnkiApp – mobile and desktop flashcard app.

Discussion

Do flashcards lend themselves to all subjects?

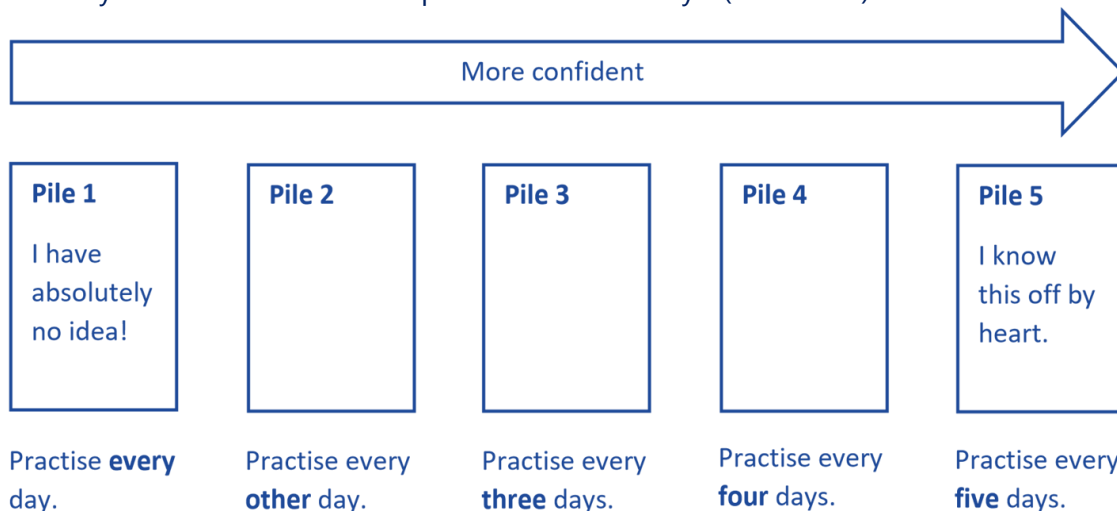
Which subjects or even topics would be best covered by flashcards?

What issues might occur if you only use flashcards to revise?

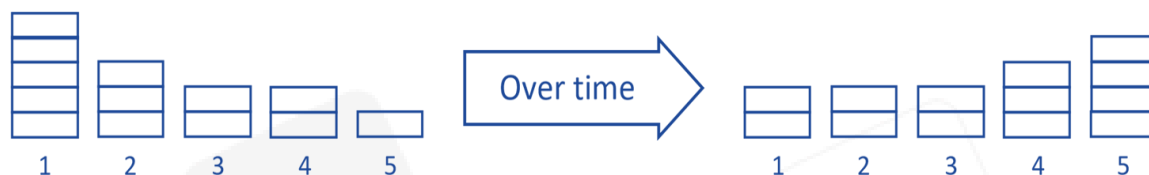


How to use flashcards:

1. Test yourself using the flashcards by reading the questions and trying to think of the answer.
2. As you test yourself, sort the flashcards into up to five piles according to how confident you are with the content. This could be done a similar way with three piles.
3. Put the piles in different envelopes, or use an elastic band to hold each pile together.
4. Test yourself on the different piles on different days. (see below)



5. As you test yourself on the different piles, move the cards into different piles as you become more confident.



Helpful videos on how to make and use flashcards (click or scan to view)



How to use flashcards



How to use Quizlet to make flashcards



Ultimate step by step tutorial on how to make flashcards.



How to use Anki to make flashcards



Anki vs Quizlet – help deciding which app is best for you, or if you need an app at all.



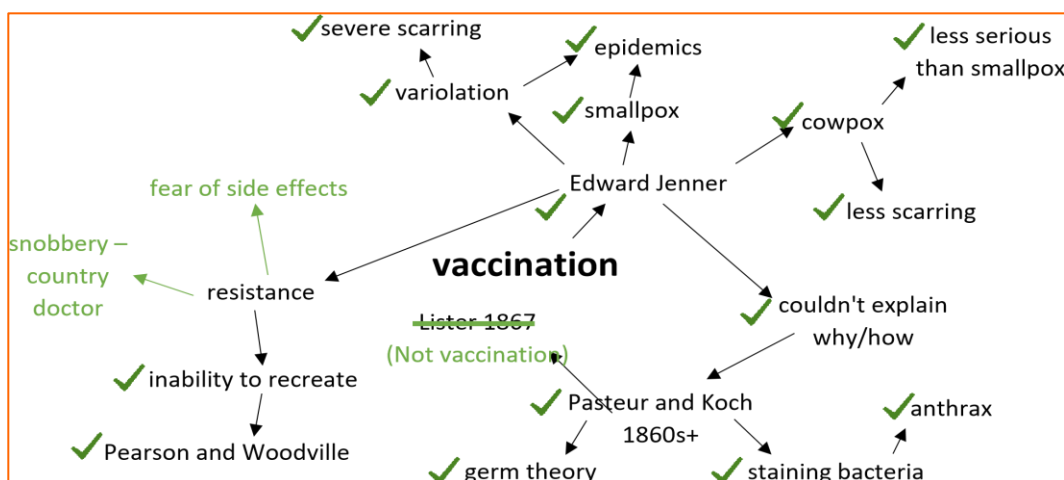
How to study effectively with flashcards

Your Turn

Now go and make some flashcards and try out the tips suggested. If you have some already made, return to them and test yourself further. If you can, try and look at some of the videos and apps.



A brain dump is when you write down everything you can remember about a topic. They are a useful tool for finding out what you know and where the gaps are in your knowledge.



When writing a Brain Dump:

Do:

- ✓ ...write from memory.
- ✓ ...check what you have written against a textbook or knowledge organiser.
- ✓ ...connect information together in a spider diagram format (see below). This will allow you to remember more.

Don't:

- X ...copy information from textbooks and knowledge organisers.
- X ...assume that everything you have written is correct.
- X ...write a list (see below).

How to write a Brain dump:

1. Use an empty piece of paper and write the date at the top of the page.
2. Without any support, write down the first thing you can remember about the topic you have chosen. Use single words or phrases.
3. As this fact triggers more information, write those facts down. Connect the facts together with lines or arrows.
4. Once you can't remember anything else about the area you started writing about, try to remember another fact to start another 'web' of knowledge. Stop once you can't remember anything else.
5. Using a knowledge organiser or textbook, check and correct your knowledge using a different coloured pen.
6. Keep your knowledge dump. This will allow you to compare knowledge dumps over time so you can see your success.
7. Note down what you corrected or added. Practise these gaps using flashcards or quizzing.

The brain dump technique is also similar to some of the techniques you may have used in class already, such as revision clocks.

Helpful videos on Brain Dumps

(click or scan to view)



How to write a Brain Dump

Your Turn

Choose a subject/topic and have a go at producing your own brain dump. Make sure you correct and add information in a different colour. If you completed one recently, you may wish to repeat the exercise and see if you can remember more about the topic this time around.



Self-quizzing is when you answer a series of questions about a topic from memory. It is a useful tool for finding specific gaps in your knowledge within a topic and it allows you to quickly check whether you have remembered something correctly.

Self-quizzing can be completed in lots of different ways. For example, you could answer specific questions, you could complete gap fill-activities, or you could fill in a diagram from memory.

Public Health in the Industrial Revolution

Questions:

1. Give two reasons why people migrated to urban areas during the Industrial Revolution.
2. Why did increased population density increase the risk of epidemics in urban areas?
3. Give an example which shows that many public health systems in urban areas were overwhelmed during the Industrial Revolution.
4. Why did many people living in damp and overcrowded housing increase the risk of epidemics during the Industrial Revolution?
5. Why didn't the government in the early Industrial Revolution take steps to improve public health services and living conditions?
6. Give an example of a disease, caused by poor public health, of which there were epidemics during the Industrial Revolution.

Answers:

1. Improvements in agricultural technology and the invention of the factory ✓
2. Diseases could easily spread from person to person. ✓
3. Multiple families would share one overflowing cesspit. ✓
4. People had weak immune systems which made them less able to fight off diseases. ✓
5. The government had a laissez-faire attitude to public health, meaning that they did not think that improving public health should be their responsibility. ✓
6. The plague X Cholera or typhus (the plague was in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance)

5/6 (83%)

When answering quiz questions:

Do:

- ✓ ...answer every question, even if you are unsure.
- ✓ ...write the answers to the questions from memory.
- ✓ ...answer the questions in as much depth as you can.
- ✓ ...mark and correct your answers after you have finished.
- ✓ ...improve your knowledge of incorrect answers after you have marked your answers.
- ✓ ...keep a record of your scores.

Don't:

- X ...skip questions because you find them difficult or you are unsure about the answer.
- X ...answer the questions using textbooks or knowledge organisers.
- X ...write single word answers so you can answer the question as quickly as possible.
- X ...assume that your answers are correct.
- X ...throw the quiz away as soon as you have finished it.



How to write quiz questions:

1. If you can, get a set of questions from your teacher or from a website such as Quizlet!
2. If you can't find pre-made questions, find the information you want to convert into questions using your existing revision resources (e.g. a knowledge organiser).
3. Fold a piece of paper in half.
4. On the right-hand side of the page, write down the most important facts about your chosen topic. Use a knowledge organiser or textbook and write your facts in a numbered list. These are your answers.
5. For each numbered fact, write a matching question on the left-hand side of the page. Check that your questions don't accidentally give the answer away.

Topic	
Question 1	Answer 1
Question 2	Answer 2
Question 3	Answer 3
Question 4	Answer 4
Question 5	Answer 5
Question 6	Answer 6

How to answer quiz questions:

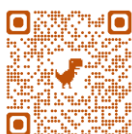
1. Cover up the answers to the questions you are answering.
2. Use an empty piece of paper.
3. Write the date at the top of the page.
4. Answer each question, even if you are unsure.
5. Once you have finished answering all of the questions, check and correct your answers using a different coloured pen.
6. Write down the total of correct answers at the bottom of your quiz.
7. Keep track of your scores. This will allow you to see your success over time.
8. Note down what you corrected or added. Practise these gaps using flashcards and further self-quizzing.

Topic	Score 4/6 correction
Question 1	Answer 1 X
Question 2	Answer 2 ✓
Question 3	Answer 3 ✓
Question 4	Answer 4 ✓
Question 5	Answer 5 ✓
Question 6	correction Answer 6 X

Helpful videos on self quizzing (click or scan to view)



Other self quizzing techniques



Quizlet – interactive flashcards and study activities.



Guide to self quizzing – a strategy



Quiz maker app

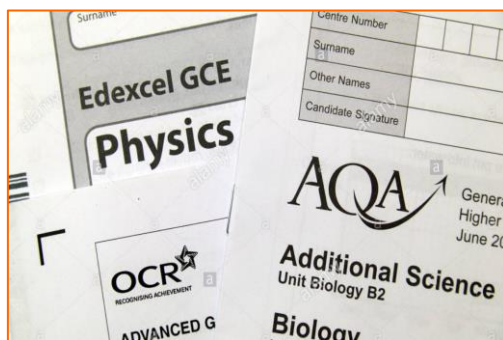
Your Turn

Grab a piece of paper and have a go at making a quiz and testing yourself. Don't forget to make corrections in a different coloured pen!



You remember what you think hard about. One of the best ways to think hard about knowledge you have learned is by completing exam questions. Practising exam questions will also allow you to practise exam techniques, such as writing in timed conditions or annotating questions.

Get exam questions from your teachers, or online, and complete them as close to real exam conditions as possible.



When answering practice exam questions:

Do:

- ✓ ...write from memory.
- ✓ ...write in timed conditions (ask your teacher how long you should take)
- ✓ ...ask your teacher to give you feedback or to give you a mark scheme so you can check your own answer.

Don't:

- X ...use textbooks or knowledge organisers while you're answering questions.
- X ...assume that everything you have written is correct.
- X ...type your answer if you won't be able to use a computer in your exam.

Helpful videos on using past exam questions (click or scan to view)



Great guide on how to use past papers and markschemes



Top tips for using past exam questions from Revision world

Your Turn

Find a past paper, or even just an exam question and give it a go. You can mark it yourself, or hand it in to a teacher for some feedback. Look at the markscheme, did you miss anything out? How could you fill the gap in your knowledge?

Reflection

What techniques do you feel have been the most effective for you?

What tips and advice are you keen to remember?

Jot down the things that you feel you must start doing to make your revision more effective



Whenever you revise, you are doing one of three things:

- 1. Finding and closing gaps in your knowledge.
- 2. Strengthening fading knowledge in your long-term memory.
- 3. Practising recalling knowledge quickly.

Whichever purpose your revision has, it is important that you focus on the weaknesses within your knowledge. It is tempting to revise topics you’re already good at. However, if you do this, you waste valuable revision time and you could get a nasty shock when you don’t do well in exams or assessments.

Before you start revising for a subject, you should decide what you need to focus on.



When deciding what to revise:

Do:

- ✓ ...gather information about the topics which you need to revise.
- ✓ ...break subjects and topics down into manageable chunks.
- ✓ ...revise topics which you don’t enjoy or which you find difficult.
- ✓ ...keep a record of the topics you have chosen to revise and the revision you have completed for those topics.

Don’t:

- X ...spend more time making lists of what to revise than actually revising.
- X ...write down entire subjects or topics as areas to revise.
- X ...revise topics you enjoy or topics in which you are already successful.
- X ...expect yourself to remember the areas which you need to revise.

How to decide what to revise:

1. Use information from a range of sources to find out where your weaknesses are.

What topics **don’t** I enjoy or feel success in?

What does my teacher think I need to revise?

What are my weakest areas on platforms like Sparx?

In which topics or questions did I struggle in my last assessment?

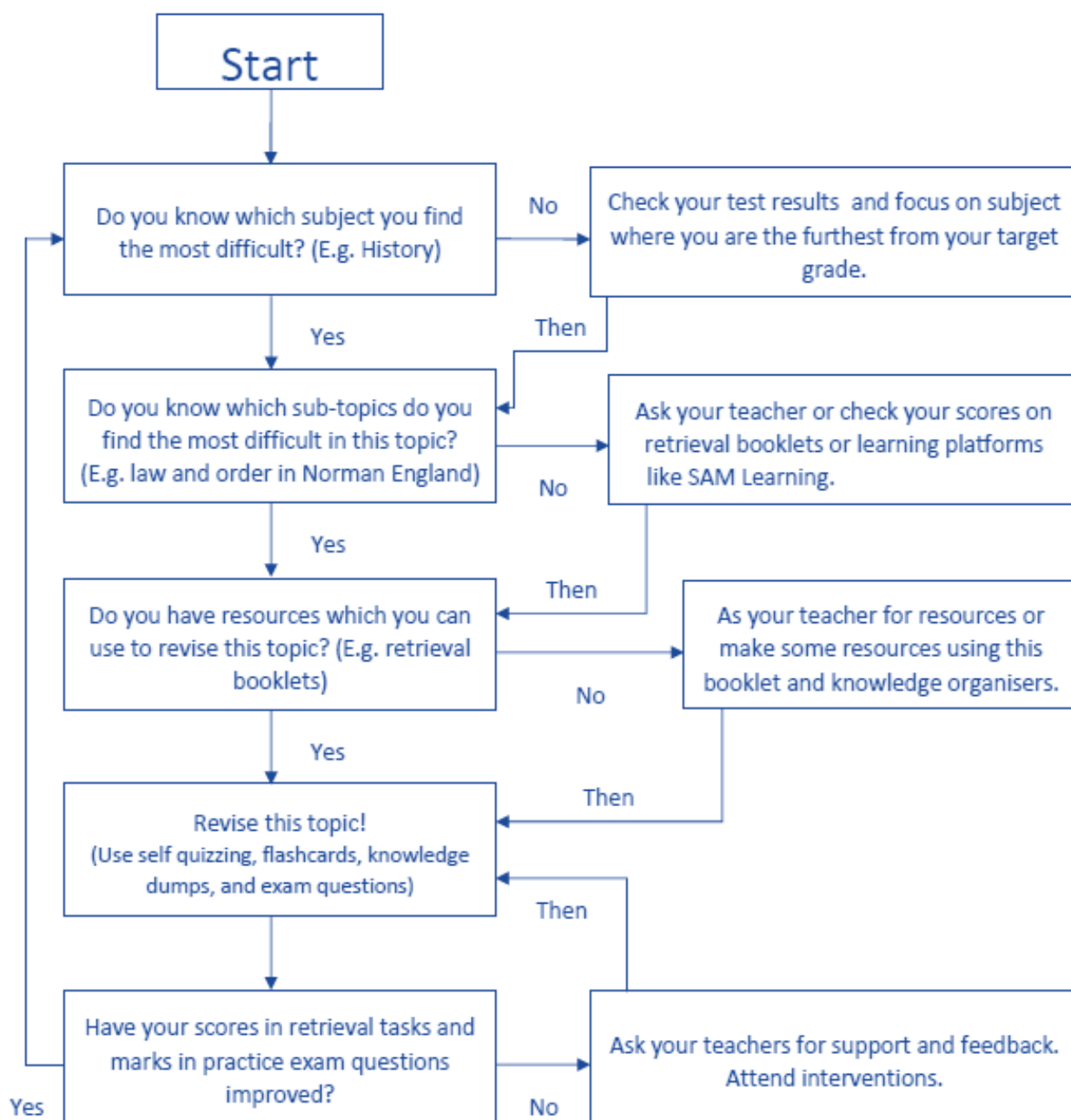
2. Create a table of topics and subjects on which you need to focus.

Topic:	Scores:					
Reasons why people migrated West in the 1840s	20%	15%	37%	45%	50%	
The Catholic Church and medicine in the Middle Ages	40%					
Clashes between Norman Kings and the Church	30%	33%				

3. As you complete revision on these topics, fill in your scores. This will allow you to see your success over time.
4. As you become more successful in the areas you have identified, go back to step one. This will allow you identify any gaps in new knowledge or any information which has faded since you made your first list.



Use the flowchart below to figure out one topic which you need to revise. This will only be one topic for one subject. You will then be able to use this method to help you decide what other topics should revise, both within the subject you choose and within other subjects. You can still use other methods.



Your Turn

Use the advice here to identify which subjects and topics within those subjects, you need to focus your revision on. Which strategies might you use to fill in the gaps in your learning?



Now you have studied this booklet, how would you rate your confidence at that you will be able to achieve your target grades or improve on your predicted grades in the upcoming mock exams?
(please circle)

Not Confident **1** **2** **3** **4** **5** **6** **7** **8** **9** **10** Extremely Confident

From what you have studied in this booklet, what three things do you wish to remember and use in your revision?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What obstacles to meeting your full potential in the mock exams remain?

How do you intend to overcome or minimise the impact of these obstacles?

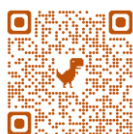
Useful links and resources (click or scan to view)



A guide on how to write Cornell notes, a useful notetaking technique.



Advice on active revision



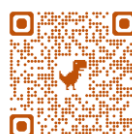
A guide on how to use the flip and fold revision technique



A guide on how to create a revision timetable



Advice on how to be productive after school.



A guide on how to create and use Mnemonics



Revision tips and tricks



Seneca



BBC Bitesize



Revision world – lots of advice and revision videos



