

Revision Techniques

...or how to pass exams

Let's start with what *not* to do!

- Don't imagine you can learn everything you need to know the night before the exam. Your memory won't cope and, apart from anything else, it may well turn out that you have more than one exam on the same day. What then?



- Don't imagine that life will go on as 'normal' during important examinations. It won't. This is a critical time in your life, possibly with HUGE implications for your future. You must be prepared to make some sacrifices to make sure that you do the very best that you can.



- Don't be negative about what you think you can achieve. Revising thoroughly and receiving the help and support of the people around you will make all the difference. So, don't tell yourself you "can't do it anyway" – that's just opting out.



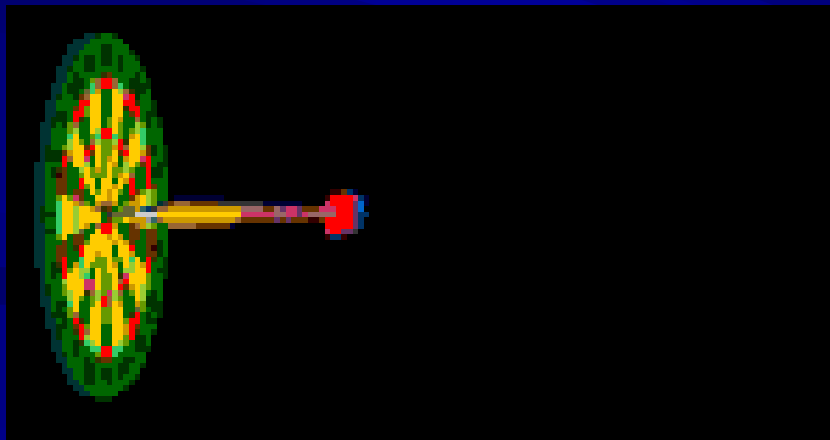
- Don't think it will be enough simply to read through your notes. It won't. Very few of us have a photographic memory. You will need to employ other techniques.



OK, so let's be positive. How can we make certain that we are fully prepared for exams?

- Come to school!
- Listen in class and complete all your class and homework to the best of your ability.
- Make sure that your coursework is completed on time and, again, to the best of your ability.

- Make sure that you know what your target grades or levels are and, most importantly, *what you need to do to achieve them.*
- Check this against your own work. Identify with your teacher what you need to focus on to improve your work and increase your chances of improving your target grade.



Give yourself the best chance you can.

- Go to revision classes offered by your teachers!
- Revision needs to be planned. As soon as you know when your examinations will take place, draw up a revision timetable. Be specific: don't just write in '*maths*' – write in '*maths, algebra*', for example.
- Stick to your timetable, but build in room for manoeuvre. Make sure that all areas of each subject are covered within your timetable.

- Avoid the temptation to focus on what you are good at or what you most enjoy. We all do this to make ourselves feel successful, it's human nature.
- Make sure you devote extra time to those areas you find more difficult and, possibly, less interesting. You can bet your life that these things will crop up on an exam paper.

- Plan your revision in half hour chunks with built-in breaks of at least 5 minutes. Every couple of hours, take a slightly longer break of, say, 15 minutes. During your break, forget about revision – have a drink and a snack. Talk to your family!

After all, your friends will be unavailable...they'll all be revising!

- Revise in a quiet environment. Close the door. Ask your friends not to call, text or e-mail you and tell your brothers and sisters to stay out!



- Examination time is not a good time to go on a diet!
- Eat breakfast!
- Eat lunch!
- Eat dinner!
- Eat healthy snacks!
- Your brain needs and uses energy and burns calories. So feed it!



So, how will you learn?

What techniques will you use?

- We all have different learning styles, but a mixture of all of them suits most of us best. Here are some you might like to try:
- You will need to write things down. You may need to do this more than once to get it into your head.
- Complete practice papers. Your teachers will be only too happy to mark them and give you advice.

- Learn and use the key words for each of your subjects. It is important to spell these words correctly, so take time to learn them if you need to. Use the 'look, say, cover, write , check' method.
- For really tricky words, write your own mnemonic to help you remember.
- BECAUSE is easy to remember, because:

- Big
- Elephants
- Can
- Always
- Understand
- Small
- Elephants



- Use post-it notes, strategically placed around your home, to remind you of tricky facts.
- This is a good place...



You need to choose places you go to regularly.

- Ask someone in your family to test you.
- Be the teacher! Once you have revised a topic, try teaching it to someone else.
- You might try recording your own notes and listening to them last thing at night.
- Upload your recording to your MP3 or MP4 and listen to it on the way to and from school etc.
- If you are musically inclined, set your notes to the tune of your favourite tune and sing them!

- Don't forget the internet! If you have a computer at home, there are many excellent revision websites, not least the school's own website. Your teachers will be able to advise you of the best places to look.

