



SUMMER 2009 REVISION GUIDANCE

GENERAL IDEAS

Although individual subject teachers may advise about the best way to revise for their specialist subjects, this note contains a few general tips and revision ideas. Revision at school is a constant activity, embedded in both the way the curriculum is delivered by teachers and in the programmes of study. The method of 'little and often' rather than last minute cramming is always more effective. At best, the revision activity should be stimulating and interesting. Boring revision is usually pointless revision. One should not revise the day before the exams as it is important to give the mind time to relax and internalise the knowledge.

REVISION TECHNIQUES

Make a Revision Timetable:

- A timetable should give a pupil set times to revise all their subjects in a structured way
- A revision session should not exceed 25 minutes and a 10 minute break should occur between sessions

Making Notes:

- Reading through exercise books, notes and textbooks and listing key points under topic or subject headings.
- Writing in different colours or using highlighters to make important points or headings stand out.
- Making your revision notes short and clear, also ensuring that they keep to the subject.
- Once notes are completed it may be useful to rewrite them and keep a copy on index cards. These can be carried in a pocket and revised when you have a spare moment

Using Mind Maps:

- 'Mind Maps' are diagrammatic representations of information. Many of us naturally 'key' into a visual reference which helps to embed the information being learned
- For more information on Mind Mapping see the books of Tony Buzan
- Mind maps can use colours and drawings to reinforce the knowledge

Revise with your friends:

- Revising with a friend can be very helpful
- It makes revision a fun activity rather than a solitary slog
- Working with others can also help fill in the gaps of their understanding or knowledge
- Demonstrating or teaching something to someone else has been proved to be the most effective way of learning

Test Yourself:

- Working with someone else (whether a fellow pupil or a parent) allows you to test each other
- Tests can be both written and oral

Using a Tape:

- Revision notes can be dictated onto tape and then played back to aid memory and recall

Using Mnemonics:

- A Mnemonic is a way of helping to remember information using abbreviations, words or phrases.
- The funnier the mnemonic is the more likely a pupil is to remember it.
- For example, to remember the colours of the visible spectrum in order, you might use the mnemonic: Richard of York Gave Battle in Vain – this uses the initial letters of each word to remember (in the right order) the colours of the: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet.

Bedtime/First thing in the Morning:

- Revise your notes just before you go to sleep and then read them through just after waking. This seems to sink the understanding into the long-term memory