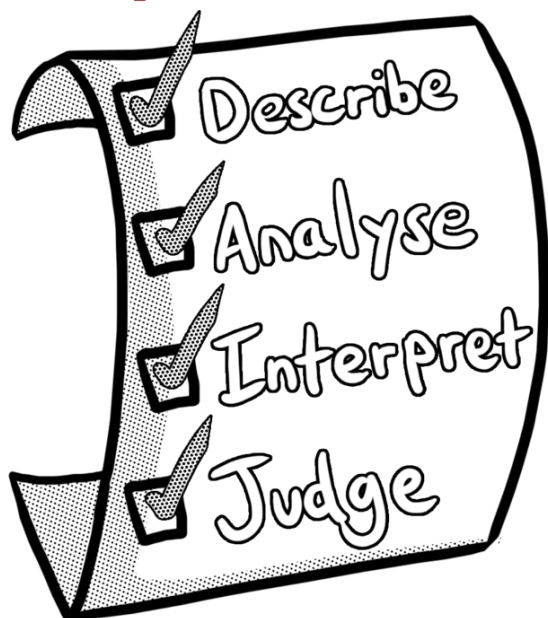


Did you know?



‘Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach him **how** to fish, and you feed him for a lifetime.’ You may have heard this ancient Chinese proverb, and it explains precisely why we want to develop students as independent learners.

Research by the Higher Education Academy has highlighted its importance: ‘Helping students to learn independently is critical to their future success’, Professor Stephanie Marshall, Chief Executive, HEA.



What can you do?

- Students need to understand that there are benefits to moving out of their comfort zones, and they will make mistakes when learning to work independently – encourage this because we learn from our mistakes and failures.
- Encourage your son/daughter to sign up for MOOCS. MOOCS are online courses that are offered, free of charge, by universities across the world and will give them a taster of what studying at university is like.
- Your child should be tracking what they do know and what they do not know in each of their subjects so they can work on their areas of weakness.
- There are many opportunities to enter academic competitions, some of which are run by universities. You could encourage your child to enter these – they look impressive on university and apprenticeship applications.
- One important aspect of being an independent learner is knowing when to ask for help – your child should always ask their teacher if they need support.
- Encourage your son or daughter to share/discuss the work that they are doing, and the progress they are making. Think about setting an example and signing up for a MOOC that interests you. Check some out on www.futurelearn.com.
- Encourage your child to have a tidy space to work in - it can reduce stress and improve productivity. Another way to maximise opportunities for work and reduce distractions is to ensure the space is organised with everything needed for studying: laptop, books, pens and any other equipment.

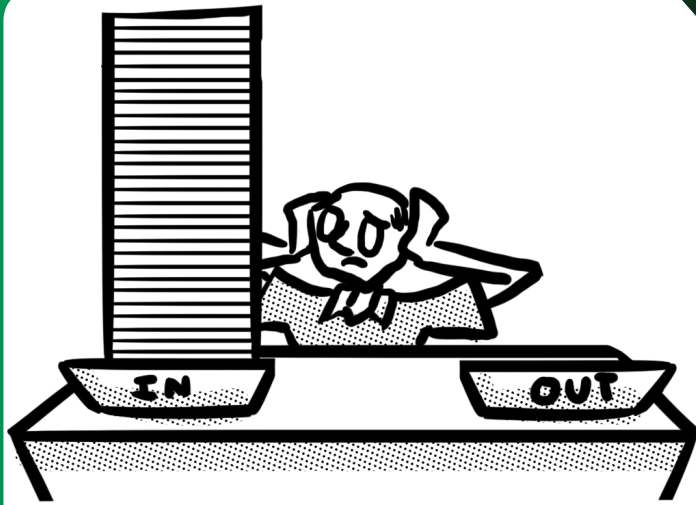
Chunking Technique

Information for Students

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What is it?



- It is a technique which can improve your memory
- Chunking is the process of taking individual pieces of information (chunks) and grouping them into larger units

The power of chunking to help you learn

- Your memory system becomes far more efficient
- It helps you to recall the relevant information in your exams
- Information becomes easier to retain and recall
- It improves your creativity

Top Tips

1. Practice:

Challenge yourself to remember lists of things, whether a shopping list, vocabulary words or important dates.

As you become better at remembering larger chunks of information, continue to challenge yourself to remember even more.

2. Look for Connections:

As you are creating groupings, look for ways to relate them to each other in meaningful ways.

Think about what they have in common and what makes sense.

3. Associate:

Linking groups of items to things from your memory can also help make things more memorable.

4. Incorporate other Memory Strategies:

For example, you might use mnemonics as a way to chunk different units of information. If you need to remember a list of things—such as buying figs, lettuce, oranges, apples, and tomatoes—you can create a word out of the first letters – e.g. “FLOAT”.

Once you remember the keyword, you will then be better able to recall the items represented by each letter of the acronym.

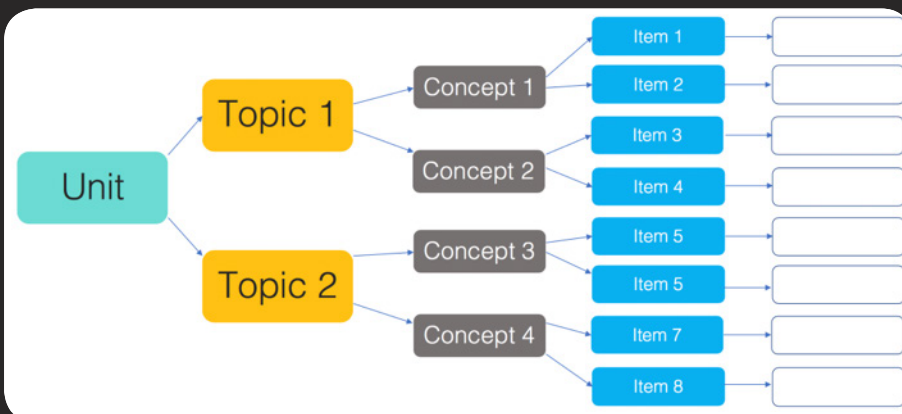
5. Separate your revision

Separating revision into relevant sections can help you digest everything and remember it more easily.

Creating links between different bits of information and putting them in meaningful categories can help you remember them better.

The Process

1. Break down larger amounts of information into smaller units.
2. Identify similarities or patterns.
3. Organise the information.
4. Group information into manageable units.



Use **HEADINGS** and **TITLES** for different sections

Use **TABLES** to summarise **LARGE AMOUNTS** of **DATA**

Use **BULLET POINTS** to summarise and **CLARIFY IMPORTANT POINTS**

Combine quick **ILLUSTRATIONS** with **TEXT** to create **VISUAL ASSOCIATIONS**

Are you ready?

FOCUS

Chunking requires **YOUR** attention on the learning

UNDERSTANDING

You need to fully understand information before chunking material

CONTEXT

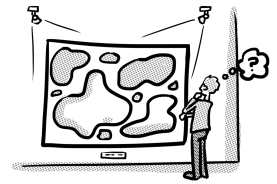
You need to go beyond understanding the initial problem or concept and seeing when, where and how to apply it

**Form Patterns. Develop your tactics.
Make connections.**

Cognitive Load Theory

Information for parents and carers

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Did you know?



Cognitive load theory is a handy model to understand challenge and how to learn information which isn't too hard, or too easy, but just right. (Sweller 1998) Cognitive load is the amount of information our working memory can hold at any one time. The capacity of our working load is limited and therefore students can maximise their working memory by practising a range of strategies.

Research shows that strategies for reducing cognitive load can assist the human brain to learn and store knowledge, boost confidence and improve memory retention.

Further research has identified that reducing the cognitive load can reduce stress and anxiety and the feeling of being overwhelmed with tasks.



What can you do?

Support your child to try out strategies to reduce the cognitive load. Examples include:

- Breaking down problems into smaller parts. This reduces the problem space and lightens the cognitive load, making learning more effective.
- Helping them to understand worked examples in order to work out how to complete tasks.
- Encouraging them to take advantage of auditory and visual channels in their working memory and supporting them to create stories to help remember information in accessible chunks.
- Working with them to simplify information and build on it. Students should avoid overloading their brain with too much information at any one time.

The learning environment is crucial to reducing cognitive load. Help your child to create a calming environment to work in with as few distractions as possible. Encourage them to turn off their phone, music or the TV whilst revising or doing homework. Distractions only add to our working memory.

Help and encourage your child to review information from their lessons as they go along because this will help improve their retention, adding knowledge to their long-term memory. Help them get into a routine which works for them.

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The Interleaving Technique

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Student
Success

What is it?



Interleaving is a method to use when revising, to help you remember more for the exam and to understand it better as well.

It is about what you do with your time when revising.

How does Interleaving work?

Learning is spread over time rather than in concentration on narrow topics one after the other.



What are the benefits?

It strengthens memory recall.

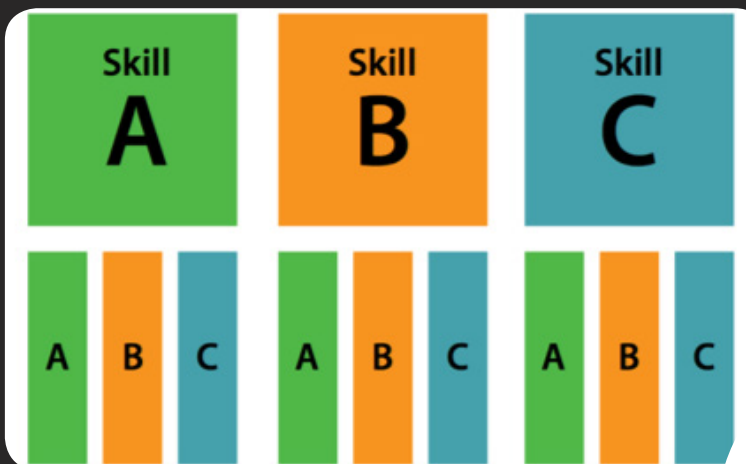
Your brain is continually changing focus and attempting to find different responses to bring into your short-term memory.

By revisiting material from each topic several times, in short bursts, you can increase the amount you remember in the exams.

Each time you revise information, it strengthens your memory recall

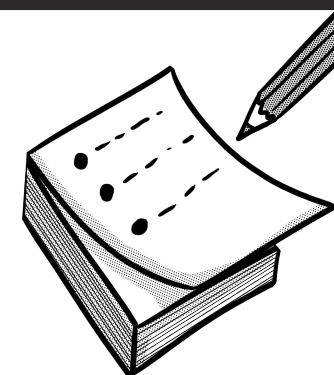


Blocking vs. Interleaving



Pan (2015) says, 'Mixing it up boosts learning' compared to more traditional methods of block learning where students master one topic before moving on to the next in preparation for exams.

How to apply it...



1. Break units down into small chunks and split these over a few days rather than revising one whole topic all at once.
2. Decide on the key topics you need to learn for each subject.
3. Create a revision timetable to organise your time and space your learning.

**Focus on quality and not quantity-
short targeted bursts are more
effective.**

**Do little and often, and mix it up
every day!**

The Interleaving technique

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Did you know?

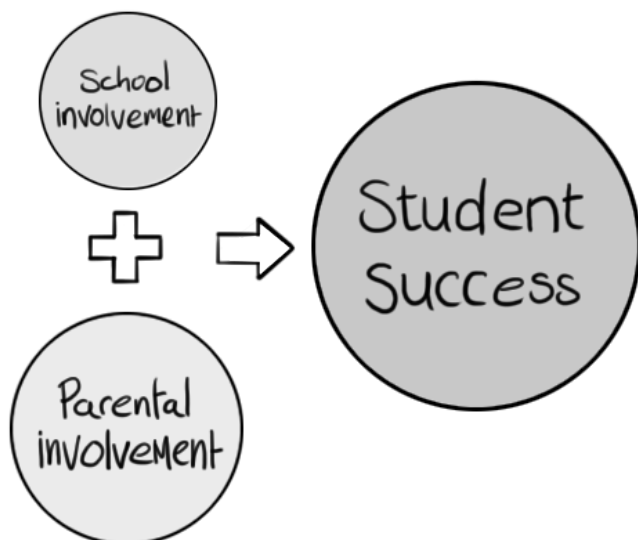
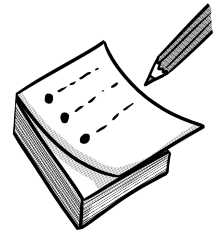


Interleaving is a method used to help students revise and remember more for the exam. It is about what students do with their time when they revise. With the interleaving technique, learning is spread over time, in smaller chunks, rather than dedicating a whole day for one subject or topic.

Research says 'Mixing it up boosts learning' when compared to more traditional methods of block learning where students master one topic before moving on to the next in preparation for exams. Studies have highlighted that students who use interleaving perform better on the examination if the examination was more than one day away.

Evidence highlights that interleaving strengthens memory recall because by revisiting material from each topic several times, in short bursts, students can increase the amount they remember in exams.

What can you do?

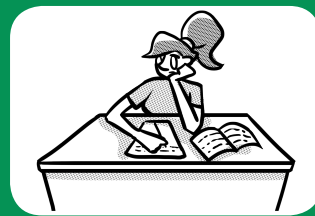


Watch this video with your child to understand more about how interleaving works - <https://youtu.be/WbDpYMp8F6o>

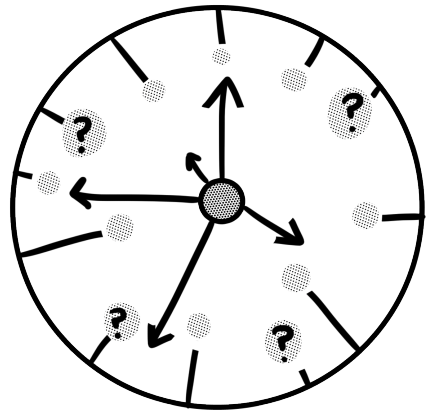
Help your child to decide on the key topics they need to learn for each subject. Work with your child to create a revision timetable which spaces their topics out across a good period of time.

Short bursts of revision are more effective than long sessions so encourage your child to mix topics up and do little and often as quality is better than quantity. Encourage them to take regular breaks in their revision and not to focus on the same topic for a whole day!

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What is it?



Spacing is a revision technique which is all about spacing out your revision so you don't get swamped and overwhelmed.

It means introducing time intervals into your revision sessions, as well as spacing out the days which you use to revise for topics.

To commit something to memory, it takes time and repetition.

Optimum Spacing

- Research suggests there is an 'optimal gap' between revision sessions so you can retain the information
- If the test is in a month, you should review the information around once a week; if the test is in a week, create time once a day

Time to the test	Revision Gap
1 Week	1-2 days
1 Month	1 week
3 Months	2 weeks
6 Months	3 weeks
1 Year	1 month

To commit something to memory, it takes time and repetition.

How can it help you? Top Tips for time!

- Doing something little and often – spacing – beats doing it at once, or cramming
 - The time in between revision allows you to forget and re-learn the information, which cements it in your long-term memory
 - It cements information into your long-term memory
 - We can learn more information over time than in one longer session
 - It helps you revise more efficiently
1. Know what your revision goals are and set aside blocks of time.
 2. Don't work too much – work smarter, not harder.
 3. Establish good habits and a structured revision routine.
 4. Don't procrastinate- don't waste precious time worrying or thinking about what to do –just do it!
 5. Review your work – prompt your brain with short review exercises.

Did you know? The brain requires a physical “prompt” in order to keep something in long-term memory. Otherwise, it is designed to let it go.

Create the perfect revision plan

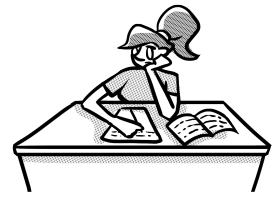
1. Organisation: determine where you need to focus your time – e.g. which subjects, topics, what you know, what you struggle with etc.
2. Planning: map out what you are going to revise and when. Use a timetable or revision planner to do this. Choose a mixture of a subject's topics to focus on each day to make sure you are spacing them out.
3. Review: build in different revision techniques to help you do some quick 5–10 minute reviews of your topics throughout your revision plan - e.g. reading through notes, highlighting information, making post-it notes.
4. Transformation task: these are 30 minute activities to help you take in information - e.g. writing summary sheets, flashcards or mind maps for topics.
5. Practice testing: test yourself on the area that you have reviewed, such as with quizzes or by testing yourself with a friend.
6. Exam questions: complete an exam question or questions on the area you have reviewed and mark this yourself, using a mark scheme.

Five hours of time, spent in smaller chunks and spaced periodically, is a far more effective way to learn something than five hours spent the night before.

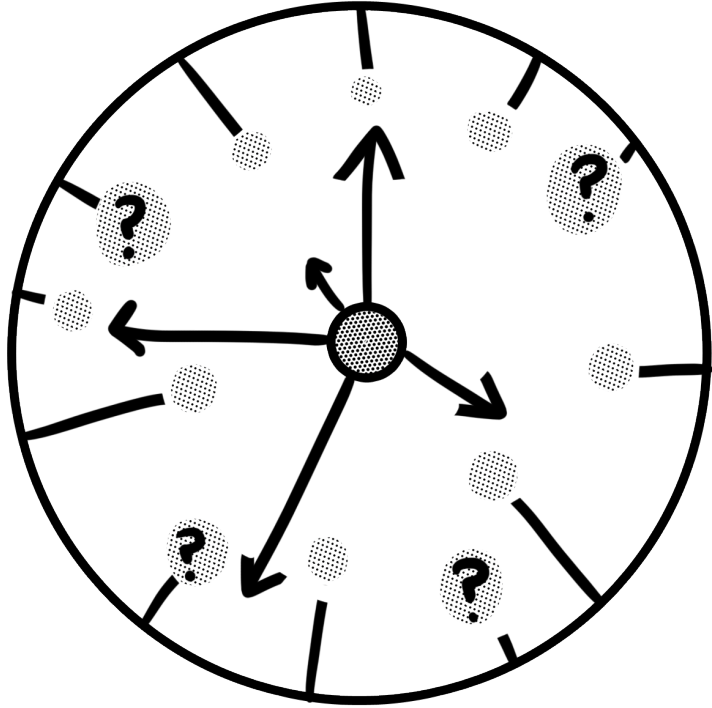
Spacing and Timing of Revision

Information for parents and carers

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Did you know?

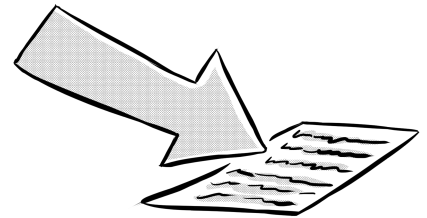


Spacing is a revision technique which is all about spacing revision so students don't get swamped and overwhelmed. It means introducing time intervals into their revision sessions as well as spacing out the days on which they revise for topics.

Research shows that doing something little and often is better than doing it at once, or cramming. For example, revising for eight hours in one day is not as effective as doing one hour of revision for eight days. This is because the time in between revising allows students to forget and re-learn the information, which cements it in their long-term memory.

The 'Spacing Effect' is one of the longest and most enduring findings in cognitive psychology. Research suggests there is an 'optimal gap' between revision sessions for students to retain information. In some studies, using spacing instead of cramming has resulted in a 10% to 30% difference in final test results.

What can you do?



Help your child create a revision plan which maps out what they are going to revise and when. Help them to choose a mixture of subject topics to focus on each day to make sure they are spacing them out.

Encourage them to review information using different revision techniques to help them carry out some 5-10-minute reviews of topics, such as reading through notes, highlighting information or making post-it notes. Students can also transform their learning by doing 30-minute activities, such as writing summary sheets, flash cards or mind maps for topics.

Work with your child to practise testing them on different topics and to help them complete exam questions. Remind your child that five hours of time, spent in smaller chunks and spaced periodically, is a far more effective way to learn something than five hours spent the night before.

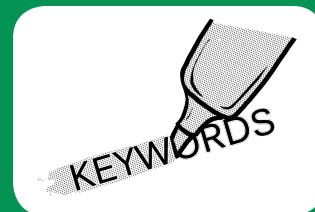


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Using Flashcards

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How do they help?



- They engage you in 'active recall' – this creates stronger connections for your memory to recall information
- They promote self-reflection – also known as metacognition, which firmly commits knowledge to your memory
- Metacognition - When you make and use flashcards, you take control of your own learning. You have to decide what to put on each card, how often you're going to use them, and then evaluate how well you know the information on each card
- They can help you memorise facts quickly
- Drilling - flashcards help you to practise the same information over and over again - and as we know, practice makes perfect

Being Smart

Use spaced repetition - review your cards at specific, increasing intervals: for example, on Day 1, Day 2, Day 4, Day 8 and so on. Spaced repetition works because it activates your long-term memory, while leaving small breaks in between studying uses your short-term memory.

Make sure you have a 'thinking pause' after picking the card up and reading the question, then turn it over to read the information.

Once you get an answer right using your flashcard – DO NOT DISCARD IT! You need to keep repeating the question even if you get it

right multiple times – otherwise it will 'fall' out of your memory.

As well as retrieving your knowledge, try writing the answer or definition in your own words and giving examples; this will help your learning and recall.

Try 'interleaving': once you have several decks of flashcards for different subjects and topics, try mixing them up. This will test your knowledge across subjects in a single session. Make sure you are confident enough to do this every so often.

How to make them...

1. Ensure that the flashcards have a question or key term on one side and the answer or definition on the other:

- The flashcard must work the memory.
- If flashcards only contain notes then no retrieval practice will be happening.

2. Ensure the right questions and knowledge are on the cards.

3. Keep information as short as possible.

4. Write clearly. You should be able to read what you wrote at a very quick glance.

5. Use different coloured cards or pens to categorise your flashcards. For example, use a different colour for each subject or topic. This can help your brain to categorise information better.

6. Make your flashcards as soon as you've learnt the topic in class.

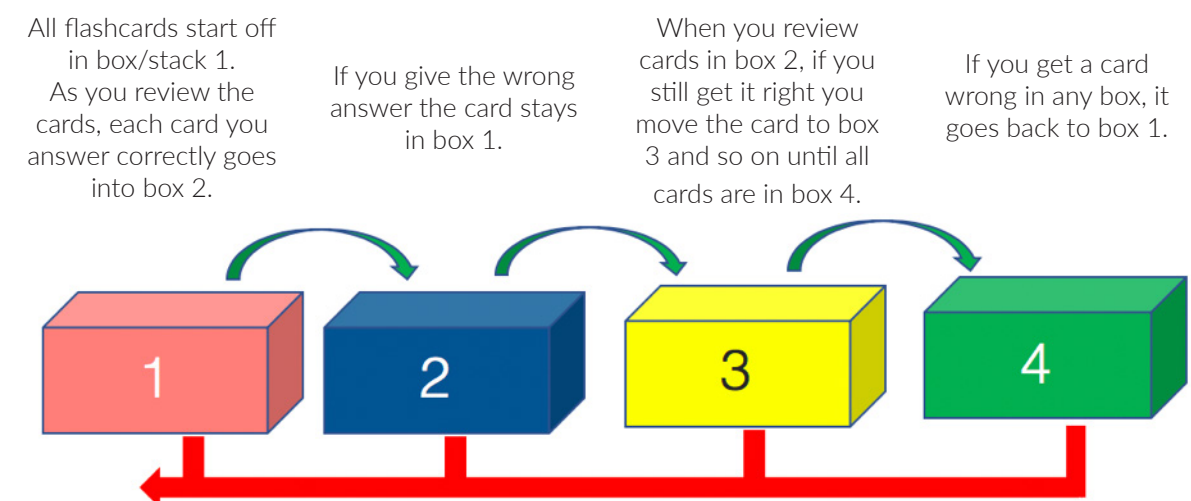
Using Flashcards

- Using flashcards is a repetition strategy
- They are a simple 'cue' on the front and an 'answer' on the back
- Flashcards engage "active recall"

Studies have found that it's more effective to review a whole stack of cards in one sitting rather than to carry them around with you and glance at them every so often!

Using a system...

The Leitner system is a well-known and very effective method of using flashcards. It's a form of spaced repetition that helps you study the cards you don't know more often than the cards you already know well.

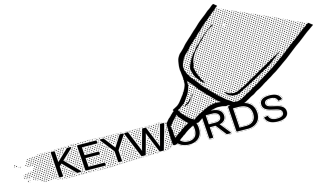


- The key is that the cards you know less well are reviewed more frequently than the cards in the higher boxes.
- You now must choose the frequency at which you review each box. For example - Box 1: Every day, Box 2: Every 2 days, Box 3: Every 3 days, Box 4: Every 4 days

Using Flashcards

Information for parents and carers

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Did you know?



Using flashcards is a repetition strategy. They are a simple 'cue' on the front and an 'answer' on the back. Flashcards engage students in "active recall", which means they are creating connections with their memory.

Research shows that using flashcards can enhance long-term learning and help students to memorise facts quickly. Flashcards are not an effective method for last-minute cramming!

Studies have found that it's more effective to review a whole stack of cards in one sitting rather than to carry them around and have students glance at them every so often.

What can you do?

Encourage your child to make flashcards as part of their revision strategy. The key is to have a question or key term on one side and the answer or definition on the other. Suggest using different colours for topics to help categorise information and to keep them neat. Flashcards containing just notes are not effective.

Try testing your child using the flashcards and give them time to digest the question before answering. If they get the answer right, don't discard the card – they need to keep repeating it again and over time.

When using the flashcards, help your child review their cards using a system. With your child, read

through this article which explains how to use flashcards effectively using a system approach:
<https://www.parent24.com/Learn/School-exams/watch-how-to-study-using-flashcards-20160825>



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Don't Break the Chain

Information for parents and carers

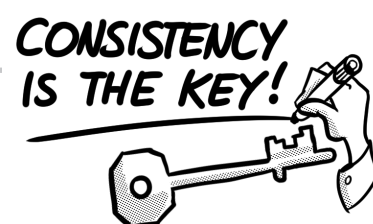
Did you know?



'Don't Break the Chain' is a method of success originally created by Jerry Seinfeld. Jerry placed an X on a calendar for every day he completed writing new material. After a few days a chain of X's form and the goal is to NOT break the chain by carrying out work for every day of the year.

Research shows that habits can transform any part of our lives. Getting the right habits in place prior to exams can make a huge difference to pupils' success. The 'Don't Break the Chain' strategy is a constant reminder which can help pupils stay disciplined, be determined and keep motivated.

Pupils can set their own goals and targets, which may be to complete revision or homework every other day, exercise four times times per week or drink two litres of water a day. The chain could be colour-coded for each activity or goal they set themselves and the key is to mark it off and not to break the chain they have set themselves to achieve.



What can you do?

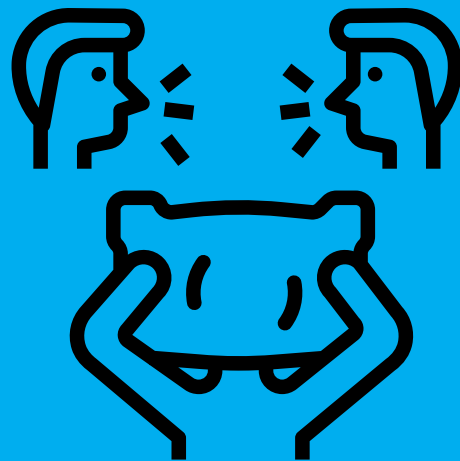
- Print off and have a calendar displayed for your child to use. Work with your child to set realistic goals and milestones. Offer them some mini-rewards when they achieve them to help keep them focused and motivated to carry on and succeed.
- Encourage and work with your child to get into positive daily routines to keep the chain connected for a few weeks at least. Consistency is the key so encourage your child to keep it simple and manageable. Eventually, routines will become a habit and your child could add in new goals.
- Try the 'Don't Break the Chain' habit yourself so you are involved in the challenge as well and can support your child to stay on track. Encourage your child to stay on track using positive reinforcement. Make sure your child reflects on their progress every week or so to see where they are and if they need to change some of the habits they have decided to work on.

Did you know?

You may find that your child is often attempting to multi-task when they are doing their work, whether this is home learning, revision or attending a live lesson or online course. Did you know that it takes on average around 25 minutes to return concentration to an original task after an interruption, according to Gloria Mark who teaches on digital distraction in the USA.

Distractions cause a problem at the time of the interruption but then continue to impact your concentration for up to half an hour afterwards, if you are interrupted again within that time, you can see how it would have a knock-on effect. 20 seconds to look at Instagram isn't just 20 seconds – it is 25 minutes and 20 seconds. Sometimes just having the phone in the room next to them, ready to light up, can cause a distraction.

Distraction also has other downsides – higher stress, lower productivity and a bad mood are some of them, according to research. None of this makes you feel good. Your child may be sitting 'doing work' for a long period of time but is it 'deep work', where they are fully present?



How can you help?

- Encourage your child to put their phone away and not switch between open tabs on the computer.
- Ask them to concentrate in short bursts of 30 minutes - where they can get absorbed in their work.
- Get them to identify one thing at a time they are working on, not several things at the same time.
- Ask them to prioritise what it is they need to do first.
- If they want to check social media, make the time to do that separately, perhaps suggest they set a timer so they are aware of the time they are spending.

Did you know?

Over a third of UK young people use the internet for six or more hours a day, with most of that time dedicated to social networking sites. A US study of people aged 18 to 24 found that in 2018, 41% of social media users thought it made them feel sad, anxious, or depressed.

Research suggests that being on a screen within an hour of going to bed can cause disrupted sleep.

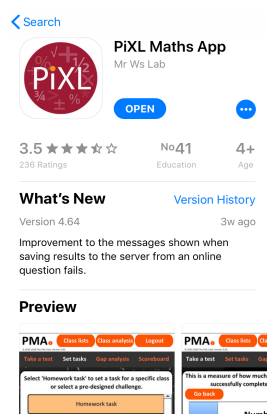
The young also check their phones every 8.6 minutes, more often than any other age group.

In Apple's App Store there are 2,000,000 available apps! There are a wealth of apps available to support students' learning. We recommend directing your son/daughter's screen-time towards something that can help their studies.

Apps to Aid Learning

There are a range of apps that can be used in lessons and can encourage students to work independently. They can be used in any place, at any time. They are good for low stakes quizzing and for acquiring knowledge, and often give feedback about areas of development.

PiXL Maths Apps



There are two PiXL Maths apps that we use: one for GCSE resit students and the other for A level Maths. They contain online questions, papers, video tutorials...They are assessment programmes that accurately identify strengths and areas to develop. Teachers will have an overview of students' progress.

Quizlet

Quizlet is an excellent tool for reinforcing learning and for revisiting. Students can create personalised study plans that guide them through what they have to learn and then build in review periods. Students receive study reminders and make progress with short and actionable study sessions – a very effective way to revise.

SENECA

Seneca allows students to revise, and it is suggested that they will learn twice as fast with the app than would happen with a usual revision guide. When students get a question wrong, the content will be repeated in different formats a few questions later. The app currently covers Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Economics, English Literature, Geography, History, Politics and Psychology.



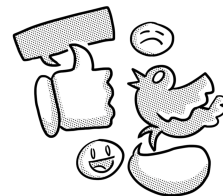
PiXL Unlock App

This is designed to help students learn, revise and explore vocabulary in a range of ways, as well as develop their reading for meaning skills. One benefit of using this app is that we will be increasing the ability of students to be able to fully understand the demands of questions on the exam papers and understand the vocabulary they are reading in lessons.

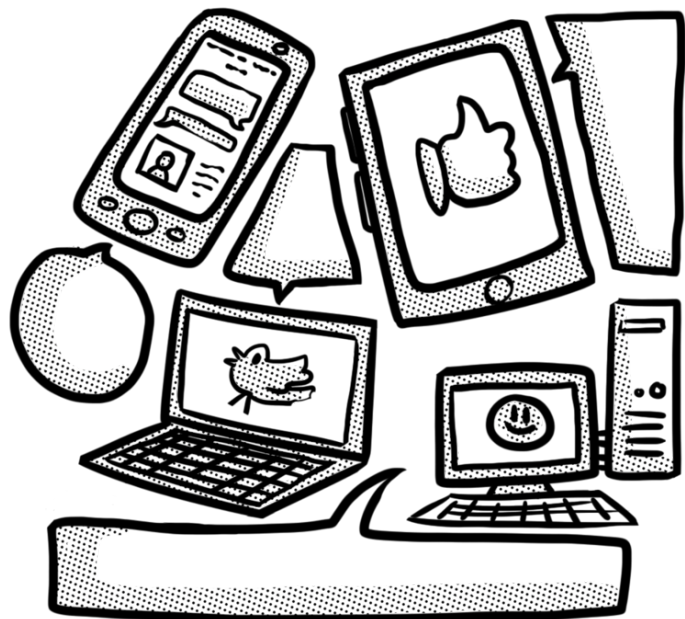
Dealing with Social Media

Information for parents and carers

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Did you know?

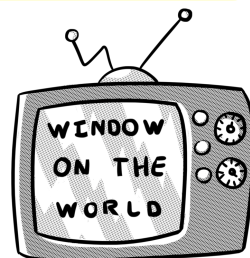


According to OFCOM, a fifth of 16-25 year olds spend more than seven hours a day online every day of the week (August, 2018). This is the equivalent to over two full 24-hour days a week. And we're guessing that it's not all for studying.

Have a look at this video from YouTube, and perhaps discuss it with your son or daughter. It brings home the impact of over-reliance on social media – by us all. There are many other videos there that you could discuss as well: https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=45&v=i9uydDEez3c

The internet is a wonderful thing, and can really support students, parents and teachers. Sometimes, though, there can be issues that arise that need to be addressed.

What can you do?



These are the kind of things you may want to talk to your son/daughter about:

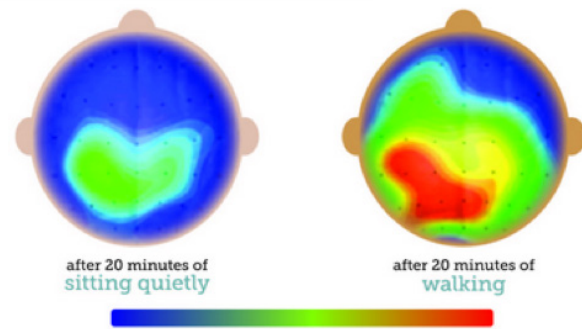
- **Future employers** may well track their use of social media and, depending upon what they discover, this could have an impact on whether a job is offered – or even kept.
- **A mind to be kind**...highlighting the importance of not being a 'keyboard warrior' and thinking about the impact of comments and posts.
- **Being savvy**...how not to fall for financial scams, especially now that our young people are starting to have their own financial independence.
- **Bullying and harassment**...what to do if this happens, now or in the future.
- **Being vigilant**...reminding our students of 'stranger danger'. It's not just for the little ones.
- **Talk** to with your son/daughter about the positives and negatives of social media. Most young people are very aware of these and know that there are changes they could make to use the internet in general in a healthier way. Being upfront about our own habits (even any unhealthy ones!) and setting goals together can sometimes help to avoid making it a source of conflict. One key aspect of this is discussing how social media can affect our reputation through the digital footprint we create for anyone to access.
- There are lots of Ted Talks that show the way in which our phones and devices can take over our lives, and what we can do to take control - encourage your son/daughter to watch some of those.

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How can it help?

BRAIN SCANS OF STUDENTS TAKING A TEST:



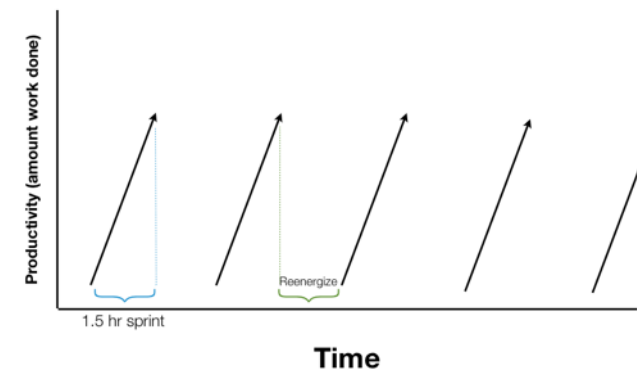
Red areas are very active;
Blue areas are least active

- Boost your memory
- Improve your concentration
- Help reduce stress
- Lengthen attention span
- Improve cognitive brain function
- Improve your ability to focus for longer periods of time

Physically active students have more active brains.

How can I fit it in?

1. Schedule regular breaks during your revision. This could be 60 minutes of revision, followed by a 10-minute break. Exactly what schedule is best varies from person to person.
2. Use your break for something relaxing and refreshing, but which won't distract you from getting back to work.
3. Do something that involves getting up from where you're revising and moving around.



Your brain uses up more glucose than any other bodily activity. Typically, you will have used most of it after 60-90 minutes.

So take a break, get up, go for a walk, have a snack, and do something completely different to recharge.

It can even help in Exams!

Exercise triggers the release of various hormones and chemical compounds in the body.

Serotonin – involved in regulating your sleep cycles and boosting your mood.

Norepinephrine – affects motivation and mental stimulation

Dopamine – positively influences learning and your attention span

Why take breaks in Revision?

- You're less likely to get distracted while you are revising
- It's much better to spend 60 minutes revising well and 10 minutes on a break than to spend longer, with half the time revising and half playing with your phone.
- Breaks actually make you work more effectively. After all that mental work, your brain needs a rest.

Find a routine for you

Be flexible. Fit your exercise around your revision timetable, and find what works for you.

Shorter intense exercise is great during the exam period as it doesn't take too long.

Take regular walks during the day to help you stay fresh and active.

Top Tips

- Exercise regularly
- Eat well
- Sleep well
- Relax often
- Socialise and connect with others
- Take time out for you

Exercise helps to oxygenate the brain and release tension, helping you to keep calm, mentally relax and study more efficiently.

Keeping active during Revision

Information for parents and carers

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Did you know?



Research shows that physically active students have more active brains. Even walking for just 20 minutes can significantly increase activity in the brain. This means that it is really important for students to take regular breaks in their learning.

Exercise triggers the release of various hormones and chemical compounds in the body and has many benefits to learning:

- It improves cognitive brain function
- It improves students' ability to focus for longer periods of time
- It can reduce stress levels
- It can improve memory retention

Studies have shown that exercise helps to oxygenate the brain and release tension, helping students to keep calm, mentally relax and study more efficiently. Productive people often work smarter rather than harder and exercise has a huge part to play in this.

What can you do?



Support your child to take regular breaks so they are less likely to get distracted whilst revising. It's much better to spend 60 minutes revising well and 10 minutes on a break than for your child to spend longer half revising and half playing with their phone! Suggest to your child that they take breaks every 60-90 minutes when revising.

Encourage your child to do something active with their break, such as getting some fresh air, playing sport, going for a walk or a run, or doing housework. Remind them that exercise doesn't have to last for hours to count.

Work with your child to help them work efficiently and find a routine that works for them. They need to be flexible to work around their timetables and could do some exercise early in the morning, at lunchtimes or early evenings. Alongside exercising, help your child to take care of themselves by eating well, sleeping well, relaxing, socialising and having some down time.

e: enquiries@pixl.org.uk www.pixl.org.uk

Did you know?

Teenagers are often known for sleeping for a long time but perhaps at the 'wrong' times. Getting your child into a regular pattern of sleep is very important. Here is what the research says about sleep:

- It is better than any other performance-enhancing method
- It makes us live longer
- It improves our creativity
- It enhances our memory
- It can protect us from illnesses
- It makes us considerably happier
- If we get 8 hours, it reduces our reliance on sugary foods and caffeine
- Scientists have found that people who go to bed earlier and sleep for a regular number of hours have less negative thoughts
- It is free!



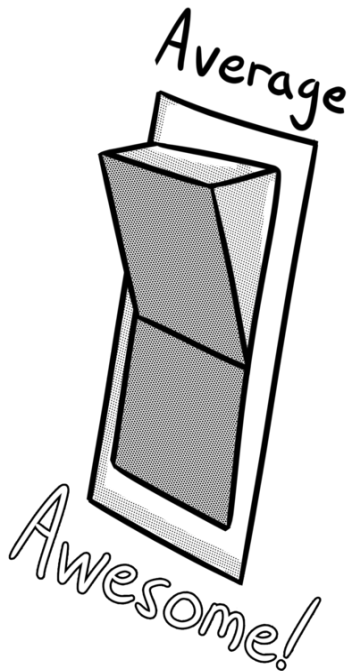
How can you help?

You may find your child rather resistant to any changes to their sleep patterns. We know that many teenagers are on their 'screens' for hours before bedtime and even check their phones during the night. The light that is given off the screen is not conducive for a good night's sleep. Here are some things you can suggest:

- Screens turned off and out of the bedroom an hour before bed
- A routine that helps wind down before sleeping
- A regular bedtime and 'getting up' time routine so that their body has a pattern
- No caffeine late at night (including energy drinks)
- A way of recording distracting thoughts - perhaps get them to write down what they are concerned about in a book next to their bed, so they are not dwelling on it all night.

Sleep solves so many issues, it is worth a conversation with your child to explain how important it is and there may also be some things in there that adults can adopt too!

Did you know?



Resilience is one of the greatest of attributes and learning how to be resilient can take our young people far. As Nelson Mandela said, 'Do not judge me by my success, judge me by how many times I fell down and got back up again.'

Your son/daughter will have to deal with a number of knockbacks when they are in Key Stage 5 as they prepare for their final exams – it is important to do everything that we can to ensure that they perform to the best of their ability.



What can you do?

There are three areas you can help them with:
Stamina, Preparing to Perform and Power to Perform.

Stamina

It is important that your son/daughter is able to handle the pressure of writing and thinking for a long period of time. Mocks (sometimes called PPEs) are important because it is similar to the real experience in the summer. Do encourage them to take these exams seriously – as if they were the real thing. Encouraging them to plan their revision is also really helpful.

Prepare to Perform

Leading up to mocks/PPEs or external exam periods, it is important that they are able to sleep well, switch off from work at least an hour before they go to sleep and keep their phones at a distance. The glare of phone screens does not aid restful sleep. One of the most helpful things you can do for your child is to help them get into a good winding down routine.

Power to Perform

Health and physical wellbeing is also really important. It is helpful if students can eat the type of food that will give them energy through an exam. If they eat lots of sugar before exams, their energy levels can easily drop in the exam. We have recipes and suggestions of appropriate snacks which will keep their energy levels consistent.

We have an accompanying Prepare to Perform leaflet for you.

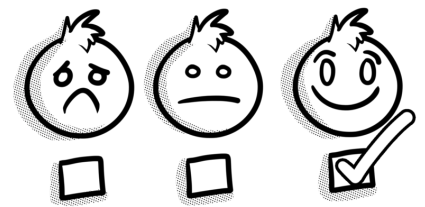
In summary:

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Being a role model | 6. Sleep patterns - keep regular |
| 2. Help them set goals | 7. Unplugging phones & devices |
| 3. Keep them active | 8. Staying cool and calm |
| 4. Healthy eating | 9. Belief |
| 5. Time out | 10. Be supportive |

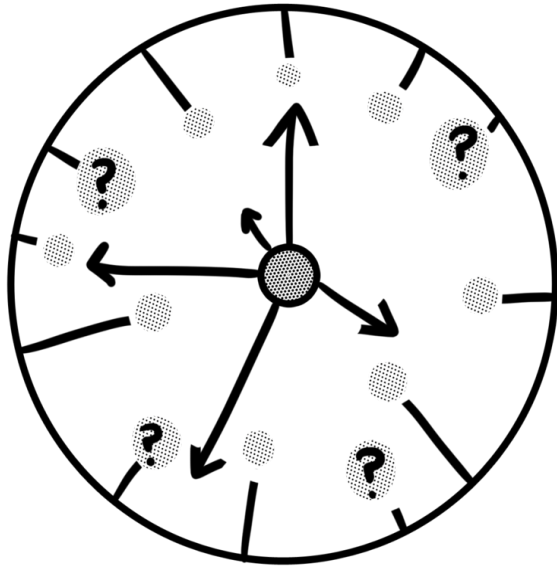
Dealing with Pressure

Information for parents and carers

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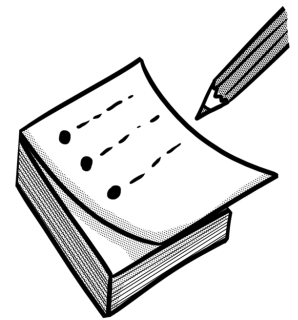


Did you know?



Increasing numbers of young people are seeking help because of exam-related stress and the pressures of doing well in their academic studies. The NSPCC has reported that there has been a sharp rise in the number of counselling sessions for 16-18 year olds, with many people worried about getting into universities and others concerned about their parents' reactions to results.

Reward effort more than grades - research shows that praising effort gets better results.



What can you do?

Your child's welfare is really important to us. Learning how to be independent at the same time as considering their own future can sometimes feel overwhelming. Here are some ways that you can help them.

- Sometimes, some quite basic things are really crucial in periods of pressure: your child's mental energy, quality of sleep, ability to rest and recover, how much physical activity they are doing, their nutrition and how they are able to handle stress.
- It is important that they develop a Growth Mindset, looking at goals, motivation, focus and self-belief and understanding that if they cannot do something at the moment, they can persevere and achieve.
- One of the key trigger points for high degrees of pressure is when students do not feel that they are in control of their work. Getting organised so that work is not last minute helps to reduce stress.
- The best way to revise is in short, manageable chunks with breaks in between.
- Although sometimes teenagers like to think they can handle very late nights, that is not what the evidence suggests. Lack of sleep will quickly lead to underperformance and feelings of stress and anxiety. Encourage them to get eight hours sleep a night.
- Research shows that high use of social media is linked to poor mental health. One recent study shows that young adults who used social media heavily were three times more likely to be depressed than occasional users. Another study discovered that young people who exceeded two hours of social media use per day were more likely to claim that their mental health was 'fair' or 'poor' than occasional users.
- Sometimes it is good to take your child out of the house for a break – go for a walk or for a drink, simply to get some fresh air. Experts say that this very simple act can make a difference to our mental health.

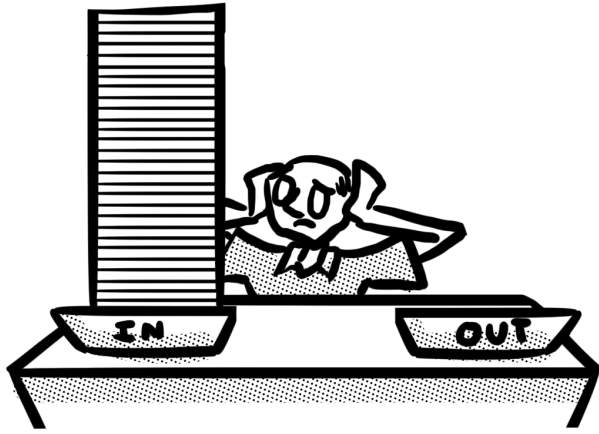
For support and advice, go to www.childline.org.uk

e: enquiries@pixl.org.uk www.pixl.org.uk

Night Before Exam Preparation

Information for parents and carers

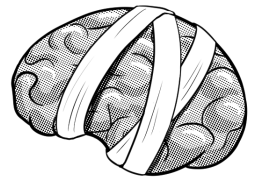
Did you know?



Research shows that the night before an exam is a stressful time and that cramming the night before an exam only leaves pupils feeling frustrated and anxious. Studies show that getting enough rest is vital to consolidate new information, so it is best that pupils get a good night's sleep and wake up feeling refreshed.

By the time it is the night before the exam, all revision should have been done. This is the perfect time for pupils to calm their nerves and make sure that they are ready to enter into their exam well-rested and confident in their ability.

Further research shows that limiting distractions can help pupils think better and reduce stress. Distractions include social media, technology, the internet, contact with people who may cause any upset etc. Research also shows that eating a nutritious meal, exercising or completing a relaxing activity the night before an exam can all contribute towards being in the right mindset to succeed.

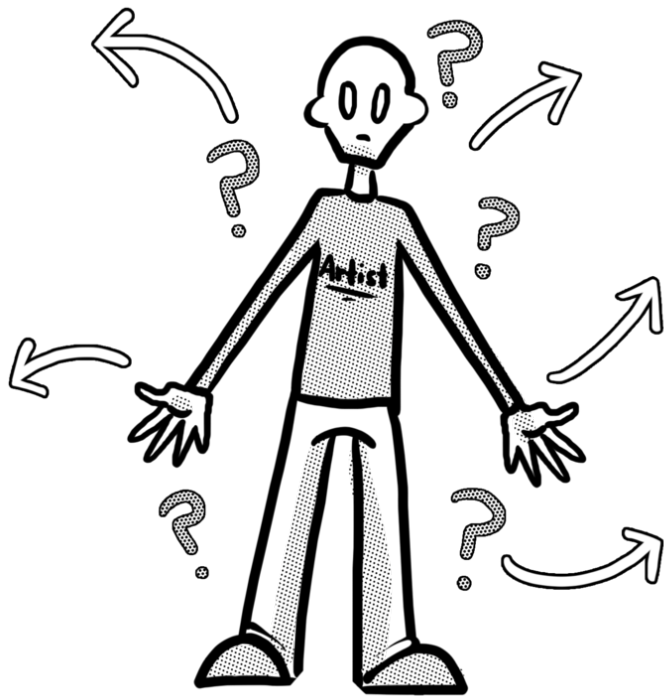


What can you do?

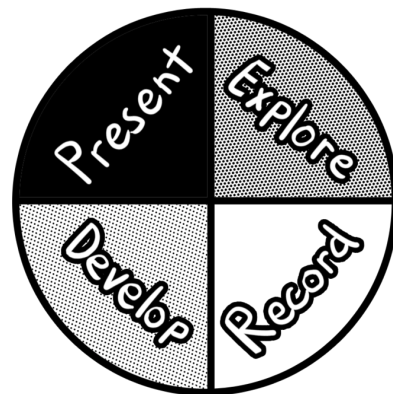
- Encourage your child to review their revision and notes, covering topics one by one. Late night revision will not be effective so help your child to refresh themselves with what they need to and then to take a break so they get a good night's sleep.
- Encourage your child to have a relaxing evening routine the night before an exam, which could include eating a good meal (but not to try anything new), reading a book, going for a walk together, doing some exercise or having a bath. Be mindful that your child will be feeling stressed: provide them with comfort and reassurance and support them to be as calm and relaxed as possible.
- Help your child to get everything ready in preparation for their exam, such as clothes they need to wear, bag, pens, equipment, revision notes, water bottle, snacks etc. This will eliminate any unwanted stress on the exam day. Make sure your child has a breakfast ready to eat the next day as well.



Did you know?



There is a school of thought that Year 11 to Year 12 is one of the hardest transitions for students to make. Students have to deal with a new way of working, learning and organisation - so it is really important that the transition into Y12, and the subsequent learning that takes place, is as good as it can be.



What can you do?

- One key difference between Year 11 and Year 12 is that students will have study periods, and these will need to be used wisely. Those of you familiar with Harry Potter will recollect that Hermione had it nailed: *"As Hermione had predicted, the sixth year's free periods were not the hours of blissful relaxation Ron had anticipated, but times in which to attempt to keep up with the vast amount of homework they were being set. Not only were they studying as though they had exams every day, but the lessons themselves had become more demanding than ever before."*
- One of the very important things is supporting students to deal with beginning a new course – and what happens when they get their first piece of work back. Usually, this will not be the type of grade that they were used to receiving by the end of Year 11. We are not expecting that students will achieve their end targets from September of Year 12.
- It is important to encourage your child to get into helpful routines as Year 12/13 is about them being independent and responsible. If they are given a homework diary then they should record what they need to do in there and when it is due. They need to plan out their time properly.
- To motivate them, it is often helpful if they gather some ideas of what they might do after their KS5 is over. There are so many options available for students post-18 and it is good for them to look at some of the options right at the start.