

KS3 REVISION SUPPORT BOOKLET



**GUIDANCE FOR STUDENTS
AND PARENTS**



INTRODUCTION



This booklet is designed to offer guidance on study skills and exam preparation. Different revision strategies work better for different individuals - use this opportunity to experiment with a wide range to see what works best for your learning in each subject area.

Remember that just re-reading and highlighting your notes has very little impact on your long-term learning.

WELLBEING

The exam period can be a busy and stressful time so it is important that you do all you can to look after your mental and physical health.

Eat – Diet is important so don't neglect it during the exam period. Don't skip meals as it will reduce your concentration.

Sleep – Staying up late to revise is not a good idea. Sleep deprivation can have a very negative impact on concentration, performance and memory.

Exercise – Take regular breaks from your revision and do some exercise.

Relax – It is essential that you make the time to switch off and have a break.

WHEN REVISING – DOs AND DON'Ts

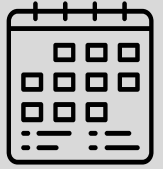
Do create a clutter and distraction free area for you to study in. **Do** get into a regular routine, revise in short chunks of 30 minutes and take breaks. **Do** put away your mobile phone or turn off notifications.

Don't revise late at night or when you are tired. **Don't** revise for long periods of time with no break. **Don't** listen to music with lyrics when revising as it will distract you.

ON THE DAY OF AN EXAM

- Try to get a good night's **sleep** before the exam.
- Have **breakfast**, even if it's just a banana on the way to the bus!
- Check you have all the **equipment** you need.
- After the exam don't dwell on your performance, instead focus on what you can do for the next exam.

REVISION TIMETABLE



Creating an effective revision timetable and starting early is crucial to being well prepared for your exams.

Subject audit – to see which areas may need more focus:

1. List all of your subjects.
2. Rank your subjects from number 1-9 (1 being your strongest subject).
3. Then re-write your list in the order of the subjects you have numbered.
4. The subjects nearer the bottom of your list need more time allocating to them on your revision timetable.

You can do this with topics too, RAG rating each one (green very confident, amber ok, red a concern) and then start with the red topics.

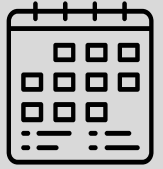
Writing a revision timetable

1. Create a timetable running from now until your final exam.
2. Add in any extra-curricular commitments you have.
3. Write in the subjects you are going to cover and when in 30-minute sessions. Be specific about which topics you will study each time. Subjects with more content to learn or that you are less confident in may require more time allocated to them.
4. Look at when your exams are and ensure you include time the day before to do a last-minute recap.
5. Not every space needs to be filled – leave yourself time to relax.

Interleaving is a process where you revise more than one topic from a subject in each revision session. This is proven to be very effective in improving learning.

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 key topics you need to learn for each subject.
3. Build interleaving into your revision timetable.

DELIBERATE PRACTICE



Deliberate practice is when you practice something you are almost able to do, but not quite yet so you become an expert. It includes the following:

SPACED PRACTICE

Spacing is regularly revisiting material so that you are doing little and often instead of all at once. Doing a little amount regularly is more effective than doing a lot all at once. This is because the time in between allows you to forget and re-learn the information, which helps it stick in your long-term memory.

Tips

Start early and set aside a little bit of revision time every day.

Each day review new information but also study older information so it stays fresh in your memory.

Divide your revision into short manageable chunks of time (30 minutes).

Research suggests there is an 'optimal gap' between revision sessions so you can retain the information:

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

RETRIEVAL PRACTICE

Retrieval practice is when you practice bringing information to mind. Repeatedly recalling information helps to test what you know and the effort of remembering helps to strengthen your memory. Therefore, it is particularly useful for effective exam performance.

Examples of retrieval methods

- Short quizzes and tests
- Flash cards
- Brain dumps

QUIZZING



Quizzing is a great way to introduce self-testing into your revision, which research shows is very effective at helping you retrieve and embed your knowledge. The process of forgetting and then remembering is excellent for building long-term memory of knowledge.

Tips

Write your own questions and get someone to test you.

Alternatively, there are lots of online resources which can produce quizzes on topics for you e.g. [Quizlet](#), [Educake](#), [BBC Bitesize](#), [Seneca](#).

Don't just answer in your head – write your answers down.

1. **Identify knowledge** – what you wish to cover.
2. **Review and create** – spend 5-10 minutes reviewing content (use notes/knowledge organiser/revision guide) then create 10 quiz questions or use an online resource.
3. **Cover and answer** – answer the questions from memory
4. **Self-mark and reflect** – go over the answers and mark in green pen.
5. **Next time** – revisit the areas where there were gaps in knowledge.

TEACHING

This is a good technique which works well with quizzing and retrieval practice. One of the best ways to consolidate knowledge is to teach somebody it. You are forced to select and organise the most important information so that your teaching is as straightforward as possible. Having someone to interact with and ask you questions also strengthens your learning. This is also an effective way to revise with friends.

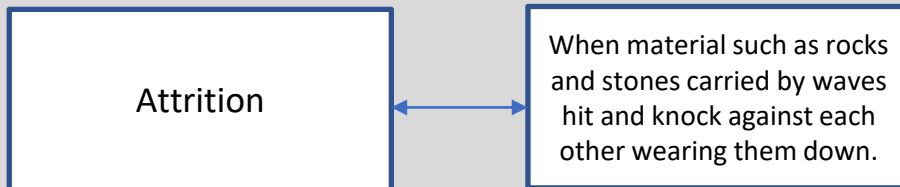
Teaching somebody else a topic draws on many different successful revision strategies such as summarising, quizzing, mind-mapping and thinking hard.



FLASH CARDS



Flashcards are very effective for self-testing. Use both sides of the card with the question/key concept on one side and the answer on the other. Keep it simple and short so it's easier to remember.



Tips

Creating your own cards is better than buying them as it helps you retrieve knowledge.

Try adding pictures to make them more memorable.

Use colour coding to organise different topics.

Try recalling the information out loud or writing it down before checking the card (research shows that just answering it in your head is not very effective for remembering).

Use your flash cards in both directions.

Get friends and family to test you with the cards.

Use the Leitner system to recall knowledge over different time intervals:

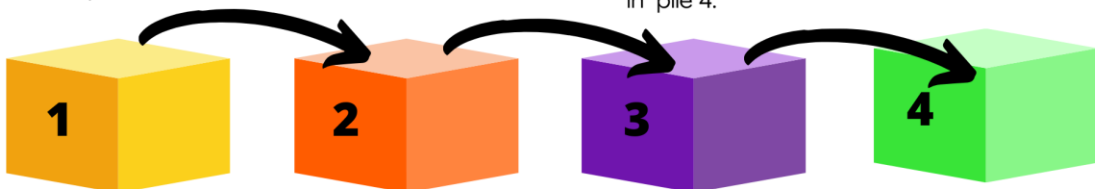
Introducing the Leitner System

All flash cards start off in pile 1 .
As you review the cards, each card you answer **correctly** goes into pile 2.

If you give the wrong answer the card stays in pile 1.

When you review cards in pile 2, if you **get it right** you move the card to pile 3 and so on until all cards are in pile 4.

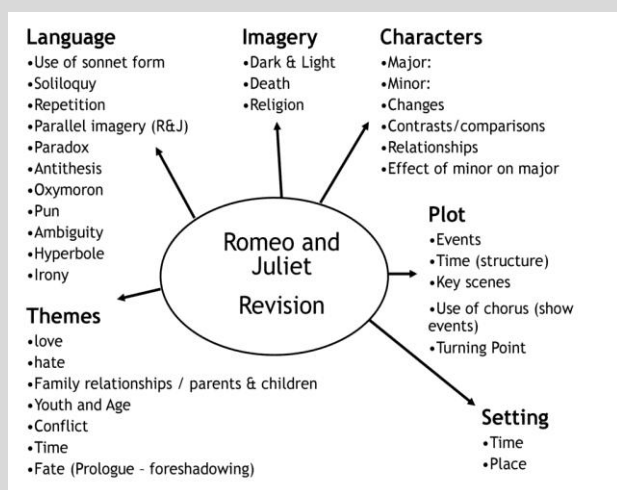
If you answer a card incorrectly in any pile it moves back to pile 1 for you to go over again.



MIND MAPS



Sometimes also known as concept or knowledge maps, mind maps allow you to map out the main points of a topic and then elaborate with further detail e.g. facts or quotes. They help you memorise information and see the connections between different ideas.



1. Identify knowledge
2. Identify subtopics
3. Branch off
4. Use image and colour
5. Put it somewhere visible

BRAIN DUMPS

Also known as recall revision, brain dumps are like mind maps but you only refer to your notes at certain points:

1. Read through your notes or revision guide/knowledge organiser on a topic and then put them away.
2. Write down everything you can remember on the topic in a set amount of time e.g. 15 minutes, without looking back at your notes.
3. Look back over your notes to see what information you have missed.
4. Put your notes away again and attempt to fill the gaps using a different colour pen.
5. Finally check your notes a third time and add in the missing information in another colour pen.
6. Each time you should find you can remember more.

DUAL CODING



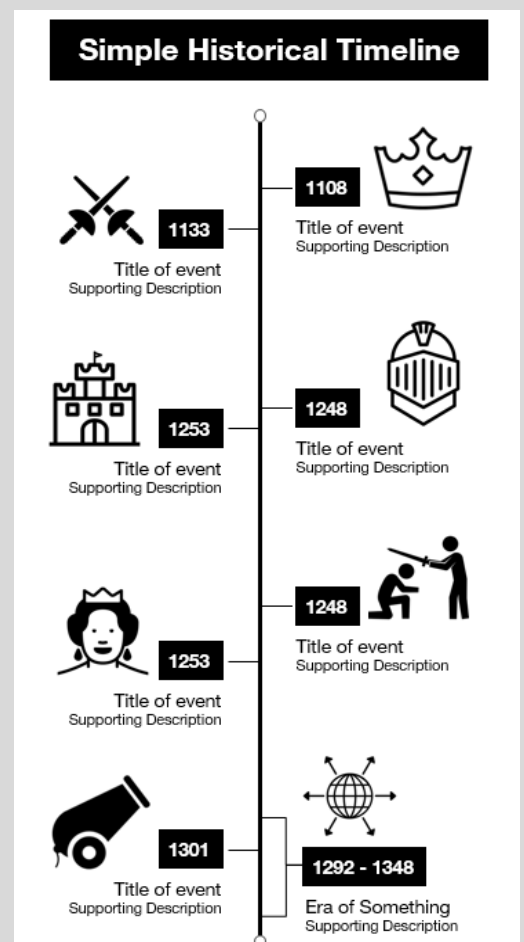
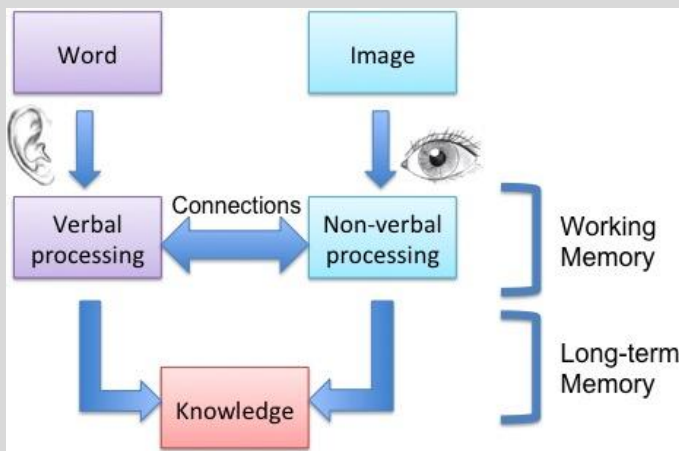
Dual coding works well with mind mapping as it involves you combining words and images. This provides you with two ways to understand and remember information and helps move knowledge from your working memory to your long-term memory.

Tips

Take information that you are trying to learn and draw visuals to go with it. Use existing visuals and add words to explain them in more detail.

Try to produce different ways to represent the information e.g. infographics, timelines, cartoons, diagrams, symbols.

Work your way up to drawing or writing what you know from memory.



EXAM VOCABULARY



There are subject-specific key terms that you need to learn for each of your subjects. However, below are a range of common command words used in exams. Make sure you understand what the exam question is asking you by knowing what these words mean. Command words can vary across subjects so ensure you understand the context too.

Analyse - Examine something in detail and try to explain or interpret it.

Annotate - Add to a diagram, image or piece of text to illustrate or describe features rather than just identify them which is labelling.

Assess - Consider different options/arguments/factors and weigh them up to reach a conclusion about their effectiveness or validity.

Calculate - Work out the value of something.

Compare - Give a point-by-point identification of similarities and differences.

Define - This means what is meant by “.....” give the precise meaning of a term or concept.

Describe - Provide an account in detail of an event/individual/concept etc.

Discuss - Set out both sides of an argument and reach a conclusion, including evidence.

Evaluate - Consider different options/factors and reach a conclusion about their importance/impact/value/worth.

Examine - Consider carefully and provide a detailed account of the topic.

Explain - Provide a detailed description or interpretation of a term/concept etc.

Identify - Point out and name from a number of possibilities.

Illustrate - Refer to a specific case study or example (not illustrate as in draw).

Label - Point out specific features on a diagram, image or piece of text.

Justify - Explain why your selected choice/judgement is better than other options.

Summarise - Sum up the main points/arguments (this can be similar to outline).

USEFUL WEBSITES



GENERAL REVISION TIPS AND VIDEOS

- [Tips for beating exam stress](#)
- [How to revise](#)
- [Revision tips](#)
- [Revision tips by students](#)
- [How to write a revision timetable](#)
- [The importance of spaced learning](#)
- [How to use retrieval practice](#)
- [How to improve your memory](#)
- [How to develop memory techniques](#)
- [How to create and use quizzes](#)
- [How to use flash cards](#)
- [How to create mind maps](#)
- [How to use dual coding](#)

SUBJECT REVISION RESOURCES

- [Getrevising](#)
- [Seneca](#)
- [BBC Bitesize](#)
- [Oak National Academy](#)
- [Educake](#)
- [Corbett Maths](#)
- [Dr Frost Maths](#)
- [Sparknotes](#)
- [Quizlet](#)
- [Kahoot](#)

COLLATED INFORMATION

- [UCC website student revision area](#)

NOTES



A large, empty rectangular box with a blue border, intended for writing notes.

***“Education is the passport to the future, for tomorrow
belongs to those who prepare for it today.”
Malcolm X***



RESPECT

HONESTY

KINDNESS