

Getting Ready for Study

1. Have a minimum of 8 hours of sleep every night;
2. Have a healthy breakfast;
3. Study at the same time each day;
4. Switch off any distractions;
5. Complete five minutes of warm up exercise;
6. Complete one minute of calm breathing;
7. Study in 15 minutes chunks (15 minutes study/5 minute break);
8. Eat small amounts of dark chocolate/berries/peppermint to stay alert;
9. Use music to block out distractions;
10. Reflect on what you have learned at the end of the revision session.



Dear Year 11s

The purpose of this revision booklet is to give you a variety of ideas and practical ways to memorise things and revise for your GCSEs. You need to start revising **NOW** and this should give you the tools to go home and put your revision timetable into practice. Try the revision activities that look the most interesting to you, the more you want to do something the more impact it will have on your revision.

GCSEPod

GCSEPod has over 3,500 teacher-written, audio-visual podcasts produced specifically for mobile devices and containing all the right facts, quotes, keywords, dates and annotated diagrams that you need for your GCSE. The podcasts are mapped to the curriculum and are designed to support students during exam time. The GCSEPod website can be viewed on mobiles, tablets and PCs and the podcasts can be downloaded for offline viewing.

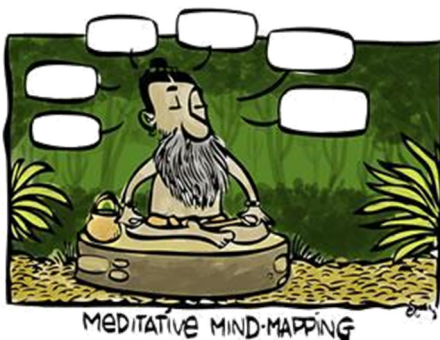
Make your watching active by writing bullet points as you go. Or watch it lots of times, create a gap exercise from it and then watch it again.



Mind Maps

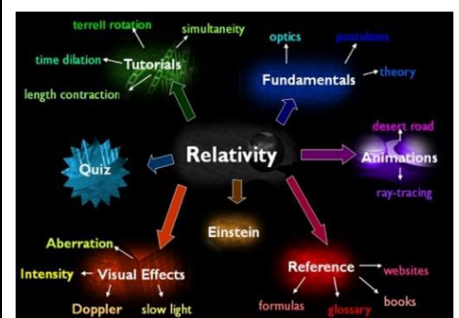
Take a topic and create a mind map onto one page. make sure you follow the basic rules:

- Plain Paper
- Landscape
- Central Images
- Key words only
- Symbols
- Pictures
- Branches going out



Concept Mapping

Go through a topic and pick out key words / ideas / symbols / pictures and write them on different pieces of paper or post-its. Group them together if they have any connections. Arrange them on a sheet of A3 with blue tack so you can rearrange them. Add arrows between words and add phrases along them to show the connections.



Draw spider diagrams

These are not as organised as mind maps. However they are excellent for getting all your ideas down to start with. You can then organise your ideas from your spider diagram onto your mind map.



Use Colour

Your brain just adores colour and will remember things much more easily if you use it. e.g. **put all important words in red, the importance concepts in green, the important dates in purple** etc.



Highlighters

As you read through your notes use different coloured highlighters to pick out key words /themes/ideas/points... You could try a different colour for each theme or topic. There are revision websites where you can read revision notes and highlight as you go. You can use very small post-its to highlight things as well.

Underlining

As you read through the work in you exercise book underline keywords. You could come up with a predicted list before you start or you could make a list of the key words at the end. You could underline in different colours, patterns or lines like wiggly, thick...

Underlined



Post-its

Write information on post-it notes and place them on the wall, door, large sheets of paper... You can re-arrange them according to a variety of ideas:

- Group various things together
- Organise them into what you know and don't know, re-arrange as you learn more
- Follow trends or themes

Note Cards

Use small note cards to record your revision notes. There should be only one topic on one card. There could be key words/ideas/symbols/pictures on it – depends on you. The hard part will be reducing the notes from a number of pages onto a small card. The other side could have a worked problem(s)/answer(s)/hints(s).



Favourite Places

Put any revision notes/post-its around the house especially in your favourite places liked the fridge, backs of doors... When you pass these places stop and consider what's on the notes.

Mnemonics

First Letter Mnemonics: This technique uses a phrase to help you remember the first letters of a sequence of key words. (e.g. **R**ichard **O**f **Y**ork **G**ave **B**attle **I**n **V**ain for the colours of the spectrum **R**ed, **O**range, **Y**ellow, **G**reen, **B**lue, **I**ndigo, **V**iolet.)

Using pictures: Connecting words with an image often helps to make the words easier to remember. Your brain uses the image memory to prompt the word memory. This technique is often used with flashcards, for example when learning words in another language.



1	scout	11	mob
2	lunch	12	prison
3	tyre	13	balcony
4	trousers	14	court
5	watch	15	tea
6	soap	16	escape
7	church	17	Halloween
8	sister	18	ham
9	rabid	19	knife
10	rifle	20	boo



This technique might seem to be taking a while at first, but it is something you get quicker at with practice.

Weird Pairs

This technique will enable you to remember a list of things in order. You need to link each pair of words on the list in some memorable way. For example, with the list on the left you can link the first two words by thinking of **scouts** having **lunch**. Then you link the second word with the third. For example, this woman is tucking into a tasty **lunch** of **tyre**. And so on, the next link could be **tyre trousers**. The weirder the link, the easier it is to remember!

Number Pairs

This technique is like the weird pairs technique except that you use numbers instead of links between each pair. Numbers aren't very easy to make strong visual links to, so the number pairs system converts them into words. The list opposite uses words that rhyme with numbers.

Try it out

Using number pairs

GCSE History specifications often require students to understand the ways the Nazis used propaganda to control and influence attitudes in 1933-39. Here are five ways you might remember:

- 1 Nazis took control of the media, including all radio broadcasts.
- 2 They used films and posters to spread propaganda messages.
- 3 They organised rallies – huge spectacles of support for the regime.
- 4 They used the 1936 Berlin Olympics for international propaganda.
- 5 All writers, artists, journalists and musicians had to register with the Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda to get their work approved.

You then combine the number rhymes with the things on the list, as with weird pairs. For example:

- 1 Number one is **bun** so pair one from the list could be a bun squashing a radio (because number 1 on the list above is bun).
- 2 Number two is **shoe** so pair two from the list could be a film projector showing shoes marching.
- 3 Number three is **tree** so pair three from the list could be a Nazi rally with every supporter holding a tree.

Come up with your own pairs for numbers four and five – you don't need to draw them; the drawings here are just to give you the idea.

- 1 = Bun
- 2 = Shoe
- 3 = Tree
- 4 = Door
- 5 = Hive
- 6 = Sticks
- 7 = Heaven
- 8 = Plate
- 9 = Line
- 10 = Hen



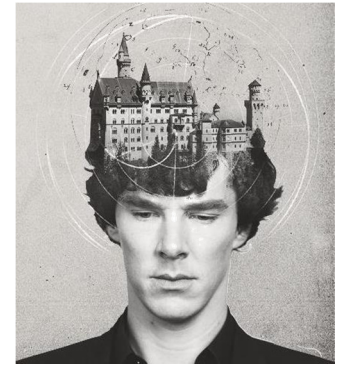


The Journey Technique

For this technique you need a journey you know very well, for example your trip to school. Picture the trip in your mind and take notes of points along the route that stand out for you: a bus stop, perhaps or a shop or a friend's house. You can then use this familiar journey and these points to help you remember things in order. As with the weird pairs you think of a strong visual image for each thing on the list. "Stick" the image for the first thing on your list onto the first point on your route. Do the same with everything on the list. Every item on the list gets stuck onto a point on your route. Review the journey when you need to remember the list of things.

The Memory Palace

You can also use the journey technique without leaving your house. Imagine a trip through your front door, into the hall, along to the kitchen... Note things along the way you could use to stick your list of items on to. You can even create whole memory palaces made of imaginary rooms and mentally walk around them to remember a vast amount of information.



Flashcards

These can be done for all sorts of topics and can be quite small. The idea here is to put key words/ideas on the cards. At the end you can shuffle them and then turn them over quickly one at a time explaining each key word or idea quickly out loud to someone else.

Make lists

- Bullet point them
- 1. or number them
- a. or letter them

According to what suits you best. Numbers will definitely suit those who like using numbers, letters for those who prefer reading and writing but if you have no strong preference try all of them.

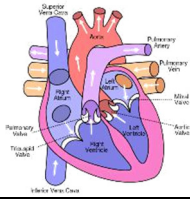


Order/Sequence

Have a look through your notes/books and order or sequence the notes. Place them in a logical sequence so you can see how things progress. You may find a more logical way of seeing things.

Grouping

Try to group revision notes into groups or categories and hierarchies. Order your notes or note cards into particular groupings based on bigger themes.



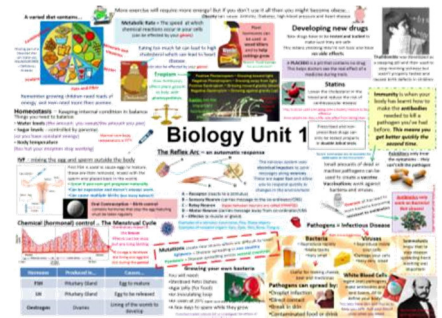
Visuals

Make good use of drawings/diagrams in your revision. Use different colours. Replace key words/ideas/people/places with pictures.

Posters

Make a poster of each topic – you pick the size A5-A1. After reading all the notes/information condense it all down onto one poster. Use lots of different colours and pictures but limit yourself to a number of words. Think before you start which words you will use.

Create and put posters up around your home.



Straightaway

As you read through your work, notes or exercise books start to make notes straight away – don't wait for it to become clear. Get your thoughts and ideas down quickly as you read and just record the small details. At the end, you may look back over what you have done to look for patterns or bigger things.

Syllabus

Get copies of the syllabus or key learning points or anything from your teacher that outlines what you need to know. Get your notes and check them against this information. Check for gaps, repetition of information, too much detail...

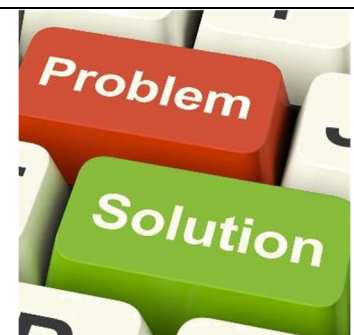


The real world

Look at a topic and think about how that topic relates to the real world. You may want to think before you start any revision, about the context of the topic and how the issues it deals with impacts on the world around you. Is there an environmental or social issue it addresses?

Problem page

Before you start to revise a topic make a list of the typical problems you think other students would have. Make a note of them. Now go through your notes and try to find answers to them. Once you think you have some ideas, try to compose an answer that would make everything seem clear.





Questions

Ask questions before you revise anything. Think about the topics you need to study and take some time out to think about the questions you would like to have someone answer for you. Write them down and, as you read through your notes, write down any answers that you find. The brain likes looking for answers. Go and get help for any answers you do not find.

What I know

Spend some time before your revision to record what you already know. This could be in the form of a brainstorm or a mind map or list etc. As you read through your notes and revise, check what you thought you knew. Are there things you have forgotten? If so, add them in. Are there things that aren't right? If so, correct them.



Why?

Try to find out why you are learning this particular topic. Then try to make it more interesting for yourself. In other words, find out why it is important. Find a context for learning it.

Teach it

Take a topic and prepare to teach it to a friend. Put yourself in the position of the teacher, think about how your friend learns best and decide how you could do it. Plan it and then if possible teach it to your friend.



Create gap exercises

Go through your notes and recreate them leaving _____ for key words. Then see if you can fill in the missing words later. If you Word P_____ the gap exercise, you can print off lots of copies and keep testing yourself. You _____ wish to change where the gaps appear.

Question and Answer (Q&A)

Devise questions and answers about a topic for other people and quiz each other. You could think of doing a 'Who wants to be a millionaire' where the questions are graded according to the difficulty you choose.



Role-Play

Get together with a group of friends and create a role-play perhaps for part of a novel you are trying to learn or to enact a poem. You could also for example role-play the water cycle for Science or Geography.

Card Games

Make up a card game to test your knowledge about a topic. It could be based on an existing card game, with a tweak to the rules, or made up completely. It could involve collecting sets like rummy or pelanism where you have the cards face down and have to find pairs.



Games

Use guessing games as part of your revision. Things like Pictionary, Scrabble and Taboo works as well. You have to change the rules so that you can only use words that are linked to the topic you are learning. For example you can make your own cards to play Taboo, or you can use ordinary Scrabble letters and just spell words relevant to the topic you are revising.

Make up funny stories

If you can introduce humour into your learning. It will be more memorable. You can just imagine the image in your head, write it down or draw it.



Symbols/abbreviations

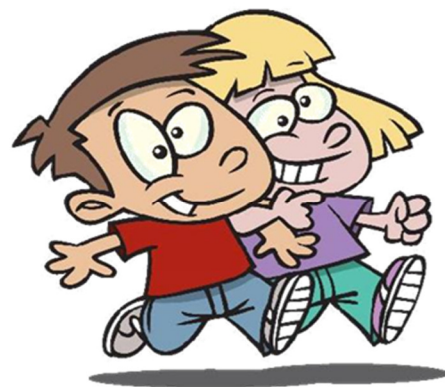
Look at all the key words in a particular topic and come up with a symbol or abbreviation instead – think hard about each word and an appropriate symbol or abbreviation. Write out revision notes using these symbols/abbreviations instead of the key words.

Walking

Make your notes onto small note cards that fit into your pockets and go for a walk in the fresh air. You can read as you walk by looking at the card then putting it away and then trying to:

- recite the ideas out loud
- picture it in your head
- think through the ideas

Try this when travelling in the car or on the bus.



Mimes

This sounds very silly, but try and make up some silly mimes for key words, people, places etc. You need to think through what mimes are suitable for the work you are revising. Each character in a book can have an overall mime that fits them. A chemical group could have a linked mime to remember all the elements in it.

Reading out loud

Read your revision notes out loud to a particular rhythm – this could be set by music playing in the background or tapping your foot or by walking calmly and steadily. This is a sort of walk and talk.



Rhymes

Think of words that are similar to or rhyme with the words you are trying to learn. You only have to think how you still know nursery rhymes or the words of songs to know that this works.

Sound Recording

Make a sound recording for you to revise from. It could be you reading your notes aloud. It could be you singing your notes. It could be you reading and then stopping to summarise what you have read (key words, ideas, phrases, quotations) or asking questions on what you have covered. Listen to the recording as you lie in bed, walk to school, travel on the bus.



Sound-alike

Use sound-alikes when trying to revise a foreign language e.g. French, for rabbit is lapin so remember a rabbit lapping and try to picture it doing this. You can split words up and have a series of pictures e.g. chromatogram = crow/mat/gram a crow sitting on a mat with a gram weight all on a colour strip of paper.

Create a rap, a song or a poem

If you like music, the rhythm of these sorts of activities will help you learn, but even if you do not, rhythm and pattern help all of us learn to some extent. Get used to singing/talking your work through to a set rhythm. Perhaps use different rhythms for different topics

