



# General Revision Guidance for Students

## Useful Information for Parents

Alcester Academy  
November 2021

# Revision and Examination Techniques

- Learning Environment
- Learning Styles
- Revision Techniques
- Examination Techniques
- General Advice



# Learning environment

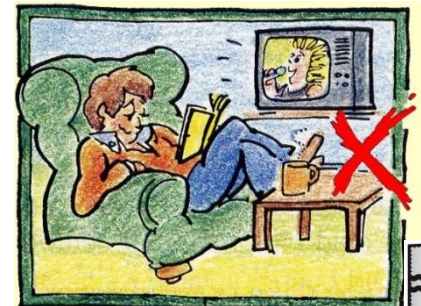
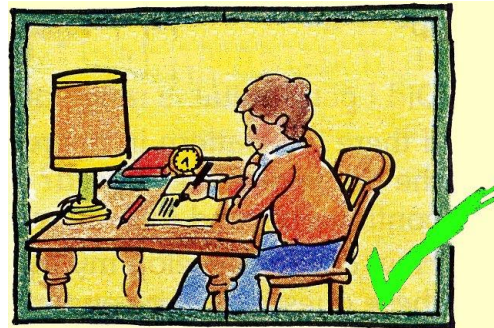


**Effective learning environments??**



# Learning environment

- \* Minimise distractions  
by trying to keep an area for learning that is
  - \* Organised
  - \* Not cluttered
  - \* Equipped with everything you need
  - \* Peaceful
  - \* Free from interruptions (mobile etc)
- \* Alternatives
  - \* Local Library
  - \* With friend



# Planning Revision

- \* **Set a target and time**

- \* Decide what you want to accomplish by the end of your study time and set little targets within this time. Try not to be unrealistic to avoid rushing and missing key points

- \* **Set a reward**

- \* When you have set a target and time frame think of a reward you can enjoy when, and only when, these are met. This could be anything from chocolate, playing a computer game or meeting up with friends

- \* **Choose a suitable place to revise**

- \* Only you know where you work best and won't be easily distracted, try to think of a place, or better a couple of places, where you will not be tempted to check Facebook, your phone or top up your drink, etc.

- \* **Plan in breaks**

- \* Plan breaks at sensible intervals when you can stretch your legs, get a drink and have a short change of scenery. Booking in your lunch break to have a shorter afternoon session than the morning session will make the time go faster. Also consider any programmes you may want to watch – Can you watch them another time on Iplayer?

- \* **How well did you do?**

- \* When your time is up look over your progress, have you accomplished all you set out to do? Is there anything you could add next session? Is it time for your reward?



# Before students start revision...

- \* Have you got all the subject notes?
- \* Do you know the topics you need to revise?
- \* Have you decided how you are going to revise? E.g:

*To Do -  
Chemistry:  
Acids and alkalis  
Rates of reaction  
Bonding  
Mole calculations*

- \* Make a **list** of the topics you still need to revise for each subject. Work out how many revision sessions you have in a particular subject, and divide up the work into that many sessions. For example, you can divide your chemistry into 12 topics; there are 5 weeks when you are either on holiday or study leave, until the beginning of June. Say you devote 2 sessions a week plus an extra weekend session in 2/5 weekends to chemistry revision. That gives you your 12 sessions.



# Continued...

- \* Plan a **week** at a time. Fill in which sessions you are going to use for which subjects/topics. You may find that some subjects need more time and that some don't need as much. That's all part of the planning you are doing now.
- \* Plan **reviewing** sessions for the week's work at some stage, at the end of the week. Just as you did in the term time timetable. Ideally, as each week passes, you should review past weeks work. This need only be a quick look - a few minutes worth - at the condensed revision notes that you have created in your revision sessions. this means that, you will remember the work that you revised at the start of your revision and not forgotten it by not looking at it for a month or more.
- \* When making your plan for a week, set **realistic** targets for yourself. However, once you have done the week's plan, don't think that it has to be followed to the letter. Allow a certain amount of flexibility, particularly at the start as you get used to how it works and how much you can get done in a session. If you don't complete a day as planned, don't abandon the timetable and think that it's not going to work. Get back to it the next day. Or change it if necessary. Once you get it working, try to stick to it.

# Do you know the topics you are going to revise?

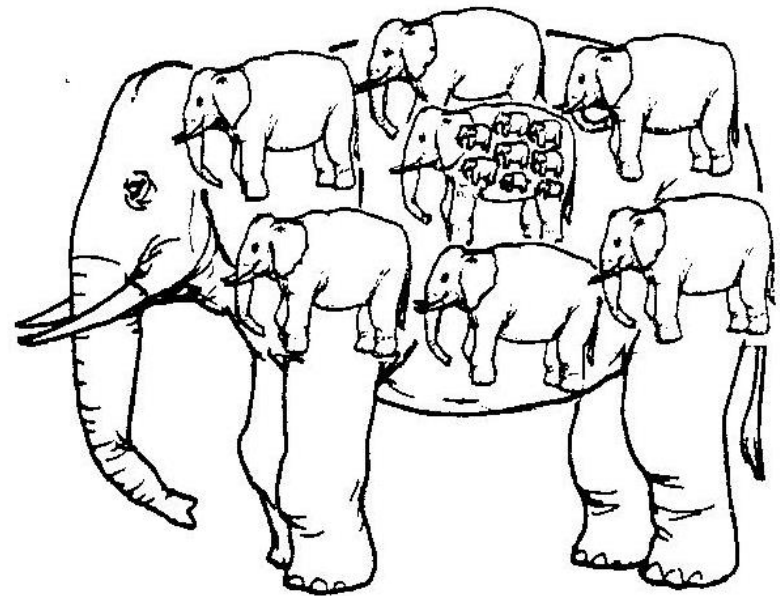
- \* Revision checklists
- \* Subject course specifications
- \* Textbook?
- \* Other exam board details e.g some exam boards recommend specific revision websites
- \* You should ask their teacher
- \* Some exams specify specific topics in advance e.g Food Technology Question 1





# How are you going to revise?

- \* Revise in chunks.
- \* You would not eat a whole elephant at once!
- \* You would break it up into chunks, wouldn't you.



# How are you going to revise?

1) How do you learn?  
Different learning styles e.g.

- \* Visual



- \* Auditory



- \* Kinaesthetic



**Preferred styles, not exclusive!**





# Visual Learners

- \* Prefer to see how to do things
- \* 29% of us prefer to learn by storing images in our brains.

## **Possible revision techniques:**

- \* use pictures, mind maps, computers, diagrams, flowcharts, key words, posters, timelines
- \* Videos
- \* Mind maps.
- \* use colour and highlighters to help the brain remember.
- \* write information in bullet points or as key words on “post-its” – (they come in different colours).
- \* Careful layout of notes





# Auditory Learners

- \* Learn by listening and speaking
- \* 34% of us prefer to learn by storing sounds in our brains.

## **Possible revision techniques:**

- \* Talk over the work with someone else
- \* Tape notes and play them back
- \* Listen to music while revising – no words
- \* Repeat their work out loud in funny voices.
- \* Make up rhymes or raps about work.
- \* Get someone to ask you questions about the work.





# Kinaesthetic Learners

- \* Learn by doing
- \* 37% of us prefer to learn by movement or touch.

## **Possible revision techniques;**

- \* Key word cards
- \* put their notes on cards or “post-its” and sequence them (perhaps rank the cards in order of importance or make into sentences).
- \* walk between notes or “post-its” that are on the floor or on the walls.
- \* walk around while reading.
- \* stand up – stretch or exercise – at least every 20 minutes.
- \* draw pictures, mind maps – run a finger between the words on the map, say each one out loud.
- \* squeeze a sponge or stress release ball while working.



# How are you going to revise?

## 2) Suggested strategies:

- \* Mind maps
- \* Mnemonics
- \* Journey technique
- \* Rhymes/ songs
- \* Flow diagrams
- \* Cue cards
- \* Sound recordings
- \* Repetition



# Revision timetable (template on the Academy website)

- \* Block in any after school commitments
- \* Plan 2 x 40 minute slots per evening
- \* Plan in a 10 min break between slots (or dinner)
- \* Plan a good subject on the same night as a more challenging subject
- \* Think about the way in which you revise (ideas to follow)



# Mindmaps/Thought Showers



- \* Information can be seen quickly and act as a visual aid
- \* Guidance in pupil organiser – title in centre, branches for separate points
- \* Put around the house for regular revision





**Sell grain abroad= buy industrial machinery**

**Feed industrial workers**

**1941=98% farmland collectivised**

**Increase grain production**

**Kulaks protested- forced to hand over food**

**Reasons**

**NEP had not worked**

**Results**

**Grain exports increased**

**Modernise farming methods**

**Eliminate kulaks= 'Real' communism**

***E.G What Was Collectivisation ?***

**1932-33=famine- 6-10 million died!**

**Key Features**

**How?**

**Join kulaks and batraks together**

**Use farming machinery**

**Who?**

**25,000 workers sent to the countryside**

**What?**

**Modern facilities- hospitals**

**Kolkhoz=50-100 farms grouped together**

**When?**

**1927**

**Where?**

**Russian farmland**





# Mnemonics

- \* Encoding information in a memorable phrase
- \* Using vivid, positive, humorous phrases

My Very Eager Mother Just Served Us Nine  
Pizzas (Order of Planets)





# Journey technique

- \* Use an established journey
- \* Associate landmarks on the journey with the items to remember
- \* E.g. journey to school
- \* Could be useful for remember items in an order (Science)





# Rhymes or songs

- \* Helps to remember knowledge in sequence
- \* Learn by repetition

E.g.

In 1954 the Supreme Court made a clear decision  
Miss Brown could go to a white school as her father was wishing  
In 1955 a 12 month bus boycott led by Luther King  
Ended bus segregation with the Supreme Court agreeing  
In 1957 the president stepped in at Little Rock  
And mobs, Governor Faubus and segregated education he did stop  
The peaceful protests continued into the 1960s  
And resulted in desegregated facilities





# Flow diagrams

- \* Use colour
- \* Encourages you to summarise notes to put in diagram





# Cue cards

- \* Cards with key word or question on one side and answer/ definition/ formula/ short list on reverse





# Sound recordings

- \* Use revision notes or booklets to make recording
- \* Listen whilst travelling
- \* Make mindmaps/ diagrams while listening

Or

- \* Read revision notes out loud



# Repetition

- \* Regular repetition of knowledge will strengthen it
- \* Will enable you to prioritise what you need to learn again
- \* E.g. review notes before sleeping





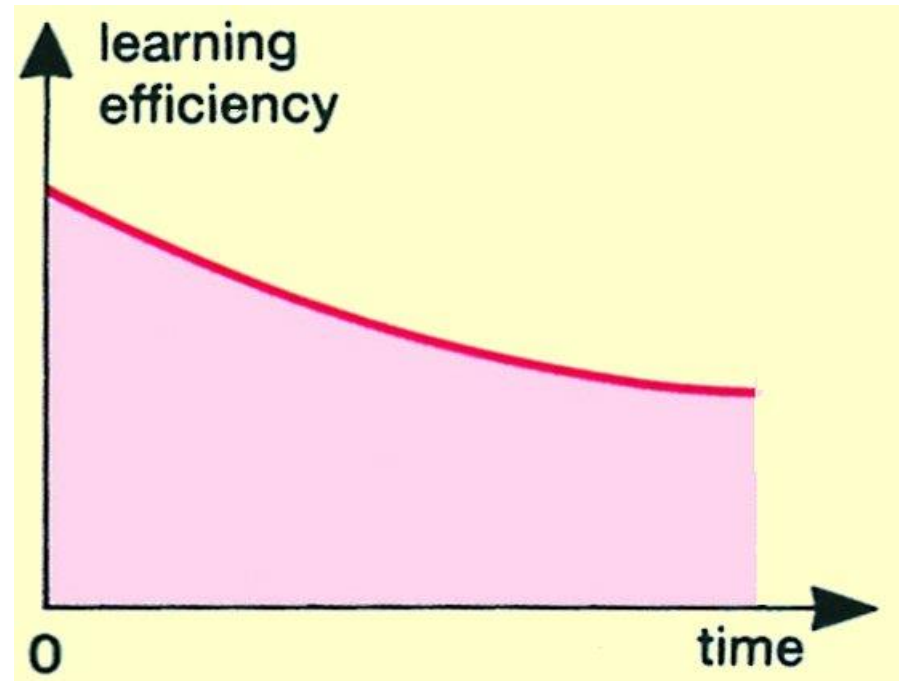
# General guidance

- \* You can't rewrite all of the notes from your 2 year courses – summarize
- \* Use a variety of revision techniques – your memory will be more efficient
- \* Highlight key parts or ones that are more difficult to remember
- \* Keep persevering with the more difficult work



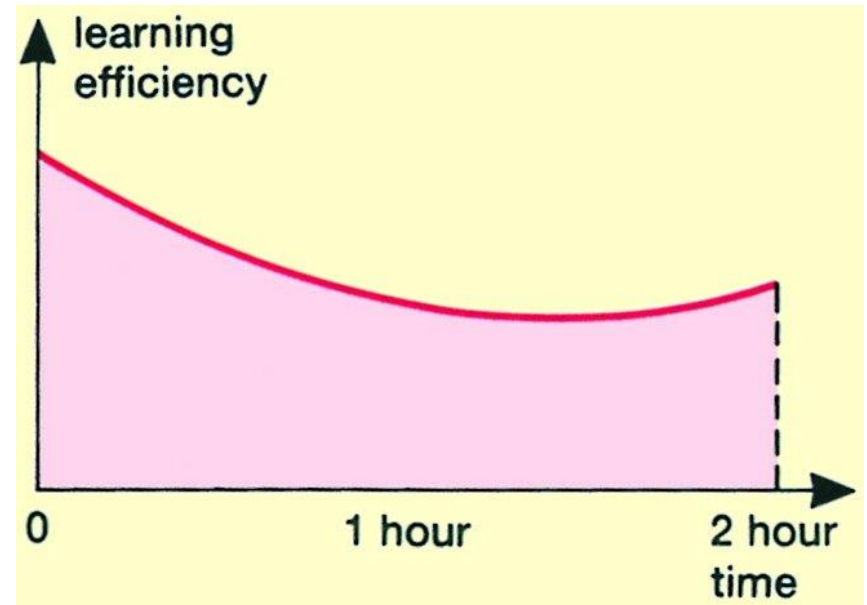
# General guidance

- \* Don't spend too long revising. There is the law of diminishing returns. If you just sit down to revise, without a definite finishing time, then your learning efficiency falls lower and lower, like this:



# General guidance

- \* If you decide at the beginning how long you will work for, with a clock, then, as your brain knows the end is coming, the graph rises towards the end.



So the best intervals for 'topping-up', by reviewing or briefly re-revising are:

✓ 10 minutes

✓ 1 day

✓ 1 week

✓ ...and then 1 month.

- \* Revise – Use techniques in line with your preferred learning style
- \* Repeat – Go through everything again, concentrating on what you still don't understand
- \* Review – Every week, spend some time going through everything you've done in the past week



# Command Words

- \* Command words are used to instruct you on the type of answer expected from a question.
- \* They are not used to trip you up but are designed to get the correct answer, therefore you need to understand what is required from different command words.
- \* A variety of command words may be used.



# Command Words

- \* Examples include:
  - \* State/Give
  - \* Outline
  - \* Describe
  - \* List
  - \* Explain
- \* The next slide explains these words



# Exam Command Words

Make sure you understand what the question is asking you to do. It may be useful to underline the command word on the exam paper just so you're clear what they are asking.

## Command word

**Account for** Explain why something is the way it is.

**Analyse** Explain your view of why the main points of an idea, text or process are important. Do not just describe.

**Calculate** Show the method and obtain a numerical answer.

**Compare** Write about the differences and similarities.

**Conclude** Make a decision after thinking something through.

**Contrast** Show the differences between two things.

**Criticise** Analyse and make a judgement or give an opinion. Do not just be negative, give a considered view.

**Define** Give a brief explanation of what something means.

**Describe** Say what something or someone is like or give an account of events.

**Discuss** Explain the advantages and disadvantages of something, and give your opinion.

**Evaluate** Make a judgement about the quality of something, taking the evidence into account.

**Explain** Give reason WHY something is as it is or HOW it operates.

**Give reasons for** Explain using words like because to make clear WHY things happen.

**Identify** Point out the required features or reasons.

**Interpret** Explain what you understand to be the meaning, or what someone else intended the meaning to be.

**Justify** Give good reasons for.

**Summarise** Give the main points of an idea or an argument.



# Style of Questions

A variety of question styles will be used such as:

- \* Multiple Choice
- \* Tick Box
- \* "Choose from a list"
- \* "Short answer"
- \* Those requiring description, explanation or discussion
- \* Longer open ended questions

ASK TEACHERS WHICH WILL BE USED  
FOR YOUR SUBJECTS





# Tips for Answering Questions

Attempt every question.

If you are stuck on a question leave it and come back to it later.

Make a guess if all else fails (never leave blanks, you can't lose marks for wrong answers but a guess may gain you some marks).

If you can't remember all the details, write as many as you can and guess the rest.

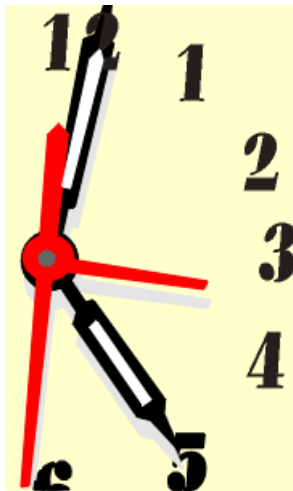


Lucky guess!



# Tips for Answering Questions

Do not rush. People always finish early.  
It is better to plan and answer properly  
than make silly mistakes and then sit  
waiting for the end.



# Good body = Good mind

- \* Eat healthy food
- \* Drink plenty (water!!)
- \* Get lots of rest



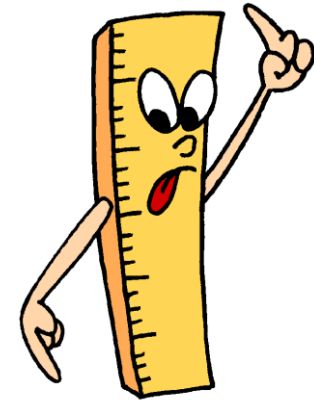
# Dos - before the exam

- \* Go to bed reasonably early
- \* Don't cram!
- \* Make sure you know where your exam is
- \* Arrive 10 minutes or so before exam
- \* Don't eat too much before exam
- \* Make sure your pen etc is working
- \* Bring a spare pen



# What to take to the exam

- Pen (Black)
- Pencil
- Rubber
- Sharpener
- Ruler
- Calculator
- Clear pencil case
- Clear water bottle
- Watch (time keeping)
- Tissues – hay fever time!



# What NOT to take to the exam

- Mobile phone
- Ipod/MP3 player etc
- Food



You can fail this exam and all your others if you are found with a mobile phone in the exam, even if it is switched off or in your bag.



# Stress Busters....

- \* **“There is no such thing a failure – Only feedback”**
- \* Everyone gets nervous before an exam and has different ways of dealing with it. Stress is not essentially the problem but how you respond to it, below are some ways which can help you to relax and concentrate both before and during the exam:

- \* **Visualisation**

- \* ◇ Visit the exam room so you are familiar with its set up
- \* ◇ Keep visualising the journey from your house to the exam room

- \* **Relaxation**

- \* ◇ Start from the toes: Clench for ten seconds and R-E-L-A-X
- \* ◇ Move up the body, clenching and relaxing

- \* **Breathing**

- \* ◇ Empty your lungs out and hold for as long as possible
- \* ◇ Then breathe in slowly and as easy as possible



# Stress Busters... Cont'd

- \* **The Three Minute Breathing Space**

- \* Your breathing space provides a way to step out of automatic pilot and reconnect with the moment at hand

- \* **Awareness**

- \* Bring yourself into the present moment by deliberately adopting an erect and dignified posture. If possible, close your eyes and ask: “What is my experience right now... in thoughts... in feelings... and in bodily situations?”
- \* Acknowledge and register your experiences, even if it's unwanted

- \* **Gathering**

- \* Then, gently redirect your full attention to your breathing, to each in and out breathe as they flow, one after the other
- \* Your breathing can be used as an anchor to bring you to the present and help you to tune into a state of awareness and stillness

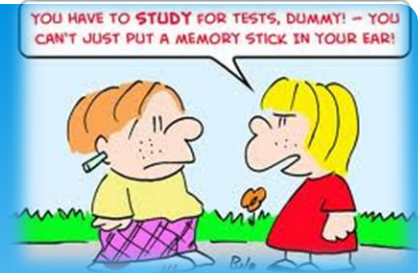
- \* **Expanding**

- \* Expand the field of your awareness around your breathing, so that it includes a sense of body as a whole, your posture and facial expression





# Worry Busters...



- ✦ **Write down your concerns**
- ✦ This immediately helps you to feel calmer and more objective
  
- \* **Ask the key question: Are these worrying thoughts helpful?**
- \* If they are drawing your attention to something that needs dealing with, then start the pattern for dealing with things in the next three points below:
  
- \* **Face the worst**
- \* What's the worst that could happen? Write it down. Now write down a few ways you'd cope if it did happen. Create a plan A and an alternative plan B, then think of the ways to make the worse less likely
  
- \* **Get the facts**
- \* Worry can arise from confusion, or trying to make a decision without enough knowledge. Imagine you are collecting all the facts for someone else will help you stay calm and objective, or try to imagine you're a lawyer, whose job it is to stay impartial
  
- \* **Analyses the facts once you have them**
- \* Decide what to do. DO IT!
  
- \* **Use your night thoughts**
- \* When you've a worry, your mind goes on thinking about it during the night. Lie still for a few minutes when you wake to give helpful ideas a chance to drift into your mind



# Fun

- \* It's vital when you are revising that you don't get overworked, as this will lead to stress
- \* Have a good balance between socialising, relaxing and working
- \* Plan your revision sessions and down time



And finally...

Good  
Luck!

