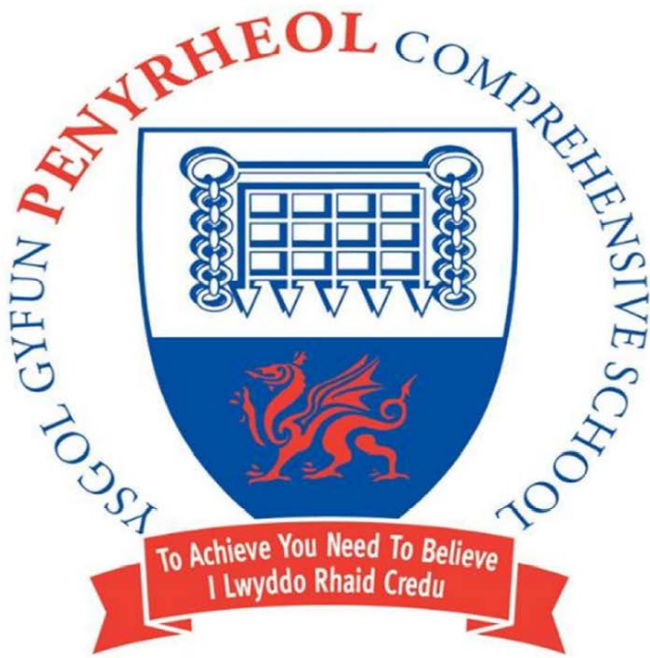


Penyrheol Comprehensive School



REVISION GUIDE or “How to Revise” Key Stage 3 Version



Revision Guide or “How to Revise”

What to do before you revise

- Have an **exam** timetable which tells you when, where and how long each exam is.
- Make sure you have a list of topics to revise in each of your subjects (make sure you know what it is you have to know).
- Make sure you have a complete set of notes to revise from.
- Put together a **revision** timetable. This should start well before your exams to give you enough time to cover (and revisit) all topics in all subjects. See **Spacing** and **Interleaving** later in this guide.

Revision Techniques- what **shouldn't** you do?

What does research say?

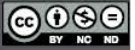
Re-reading and highlighting are among the commonest and apparently most obvious ways to memorise or revise material. They also give a satisfying – **but deceptive** – feeling of fluency and familiarity with the material (Brown et al, 2014).



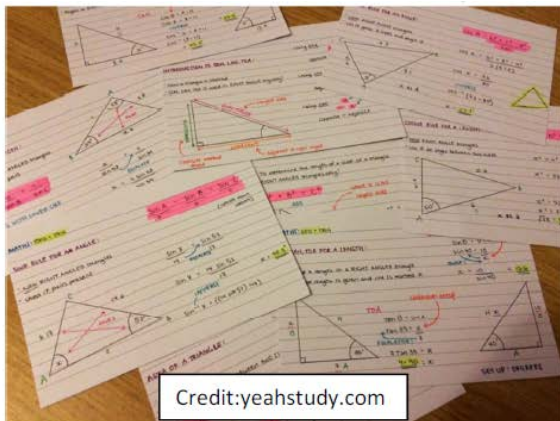
Six Strategies for Effective Learning

LEARNINGSIENTISTS.ORG

All of these strategies have supporting evidence from cognitive psychology. For each strategy, we explain how to do it, some points to consider, and where to find more information.



Technique 1- Revision Flashcards



Credit:yeahstudy.com



Credit:meridianvale.com

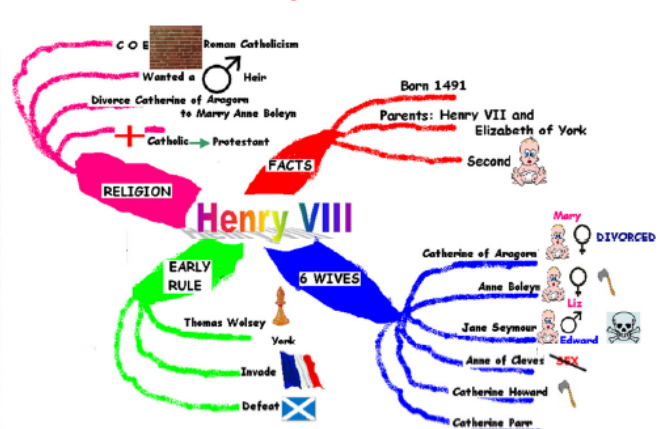
Flashcards have a keyword or the name of a concept/topic on one side and a definition or a series of notes on the other. Probably the easiest way to make flash cards is to use your class notes to produce flash cards for each topic you need to study. On one side will go the topic title and on the reverse you need to summarise the key points. Use pictures and words (**Dual Coding**).

If you use this technique it is important to remember that the creation of the flash cards **does not** represent the end point of revision for this topic. The next crucial step is to test how well you can recall the information on the flash card (**Retrieval**).

Technique 2 - Mind Maps

A topic is summarised on one large sheet. Each sheet will have more information than a flash-card.

Steps to follow: Write the MAIN TOPIC in the middle of the paper and draw a ring around it. For each KEY POINT draw a branch out from the main topic. Write a KEY WORD or PHRASE on each branch. Build out further branches and add DETAILS. Use pictures and words (**Dual Coding**).



If you use this technique it is important to remember that the creation of the mind map **does not** represent the end point of revision for this topic. The next crucial step is to test how well you can recall the information on the mind map (**Retrieval**).

Retrieval (recall) is the key to effective revision.

Successful **Retrieval** makes this information more retrievable later (i.e. in the exam).

Which brings us to the most simple technique which has links with technique 1 and 2:

Technique 3- Test yourself

This can be as simple as having a blank sheet of paper in front of you and writing down (from memory) everything you know about a topic (**Retrieval**) and trying to **Elaborate** on some of the key ideas. This retrieval could be based on a mind map or flashcards. Once complete, the student then self-checks from the book/flash-card/mind map and corrects any spelling mistakes, omissions or inaccuracies.

You can also use your friends/family to test you from your flashcards/mind maps/revision guide. Parents can really help their child by testing them regularly on different topics.

Retrieval is hard, how can mnemonics help?

When revising topics, try to create and use mnemonics to help you with retrieval. For instance, **VC BASPOG** is quite easy to remember and will help you answer questions on natural selection (as it stands for **V**ariation, **C**ompetition, **B**est **A**dapted **S**urvive and **P**ass **O**n **G**enes). Another examples of a mnemonic is **French People Can't Forget Paris** – **F**asting, **P**rayers, **C**harity, **F**aith, and **P**ilgrimage for the 5 pillars of Islam. Another example is **Always Eat An Apple Says Aunt Nora** – **A**sia, **E**urope, **A**ustralasia, **A**frica, **S**outh America, **A**ntarctica and **N**orth America for the 7 continents.

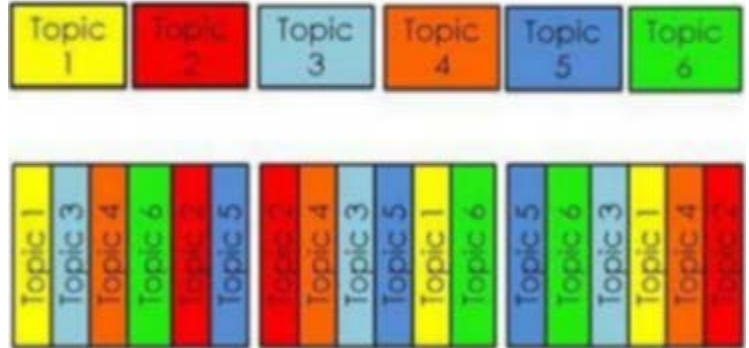
Organising Revision

What does research say?

Blocking your revision- focusing on one topic for a long time then moving on to a new topic – is not the best way to revise.

Interleaving your topics is far more effective!

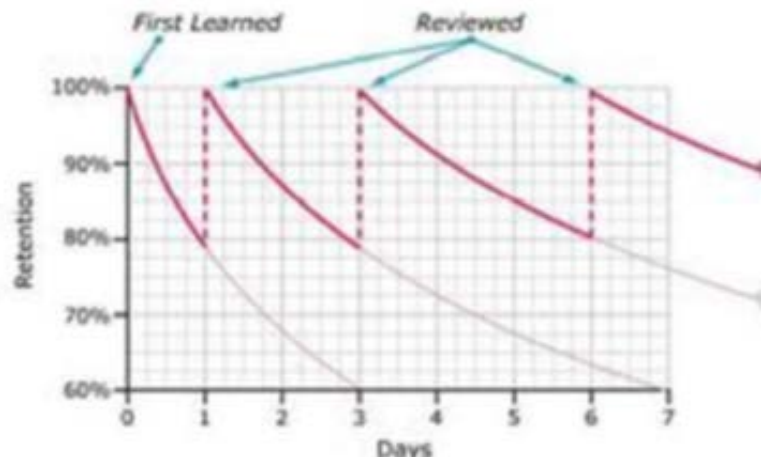
Blocking vs interleaving



What does research say?

Ebbinghaus's famous forgetting curve shows that the brain naturally “forgets” information. If we revisit Previously covered topics after some time has elapsed, we have a greater chance of remembering more of the information.

Typical Forgetting Curve for Newly Learned Information



The research suggests that when you plan your revision timetable, mix your topics and your subjects up (**Interleaving**). It may seem sensible to concentrate on a single topic in History for 3 straight nights, but actually you will remember more if you interleave with different subjects and topics. Remember to revisit (**Spacing**) what you are revising regularly.

Suggested revision session timings:

20 minutes on a topic, 5 minutes break, 20 minutes on a *different* topic, 5 minutes break, 20 minutes on a *different* topic, 5 minutes break, 20 minutes on a *different* topic.

This means you can revise **4** different topics in just over an hour and a half. If you want to revise for a longer period stick with the 20 minute times and do more of them (with 5 minute breaks in between).

If you are planning to revise a topic for the first time you may want to produce a mind map or make flash cards.

If you are revisiting a topic then perhaps focus on **Retrieving** the mind map or the flash card from memory (then checking how successfully you retrieved).



Pob lwc. Put the time in to your revision and make sure it is time well spent!