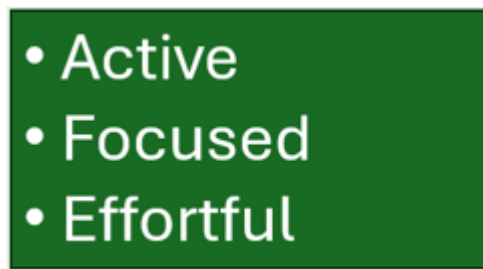


# Revision Tips

## Learning is a change in our long-term memory.

We know when we have learnt something when we can remember or recall something without even thinking about it or when we can do something without thinking about it.

Revision means to 'see again'. Revisiting key knowledge and skills moves them into our long-term memory.



### Create the right conditions

- Tidy desk
- Quiet space
- Distraction free



### Select the right strategies

A lot of research has been done recently on the most effective study strategies. The ones on the left maximise the chances of transferring knowledge into our long-term memory. They are highly effective. However, they require effort and feel hard. They are best done in shorter burst with breaks in between.

The ones on the right are likely to be chosen by students as they feel busy when they do them and feel reassured. These strategies require little effort so little knowledge transfers to the long-term memory.

- |                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| ✓ Quizzing           | ✗ Reading information in a guide, notes or a website |
| ✓ Brain 'dump'       | ✗ Watching a video clip                              |
| ✓ Self-explanation   | ✗ Copying out information or diagrams                |
| ✓ Practice questions | ✗ Highlighting a guide or notes                      |

## Self-quizzing

Students can use their notes and key materials from lessons to self-quiz. This strategy makes use of **retrieval**. The process works in four steps:

**Step one:** students read the key information (e.g. notes on power in Macbeth)

**Step two:** students conceal the information.

**Step three:** students write down everything they can remember (if using a page of Cornell notes, they can use the questions they have written as cues).

**Step four:** students look back over the key information to see how well they remembered it. This is the most important stage as it is where they evaluate their learning. They should use a different colour pen to fill in any gaps which become their focus for the next revision session.

This self-quizzing process can be done in pairs with students questioning each other or with you questioning them.

Many subjects provide students with ready-made quizzes.

## Brain Dump

Brain-dump and then look for gaps

Re-visit information that you could not remember

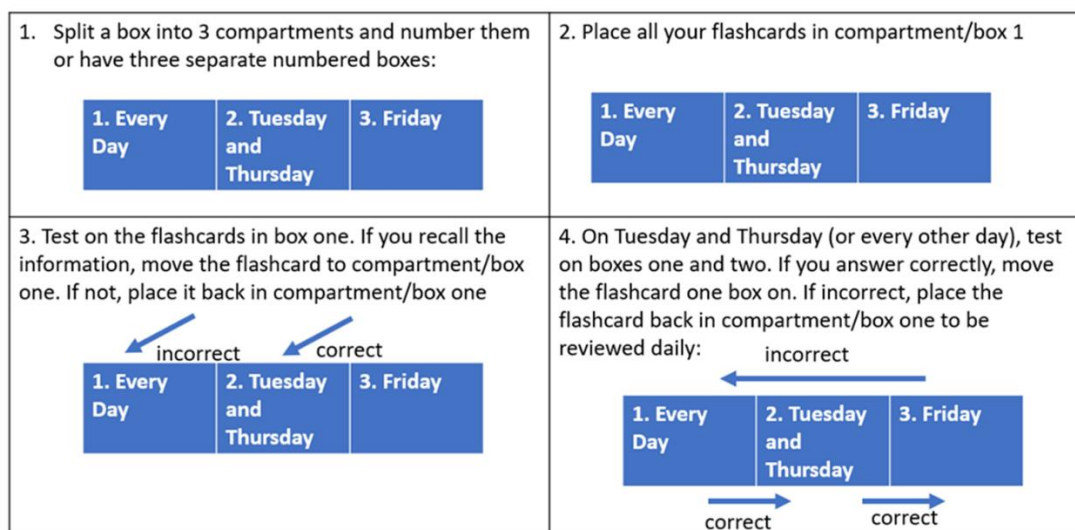
After each topic, close the book and write down a summary of what you have studied.

Check back to see if you missed anything important. Add it to your summary in a different colour.

Create a flash card or quiz questions to use later.

## Using Flashcards

The Leitner method is a way of self-quizzing with flashcards where you move the cards to different compartments depending on whether the knowledge was recalled correctly or not.



## Self-Explanation

Once the basic knowledge is secure you can practice self-explanation to deepen your understanding and help prepare for exams by answering 'how' and 'why' questions.

Below are some sentence stems that can be used to practice this:

- What does .....mean?
- Tell me about.....
- What is.....?
- Why did .....happen?
- What causes.....?
- What is the difference between.....?
- How do you calculate/find/work out the.....?

Explaining to another person or partner, as though teaching something, is effective too.

## Practice questions

The strategies above are mainly about revising and remembering key knowledge but, at some stage its important to practice answering exam questions. A revision session, therefore, should start with some brain dumping and/or self-quizzing but then use this knowledge recap to write sentences, paragraphs or full answers.

This is where the focus is on thinking carefully about crafting, incorporating key vocabulary and knowledge into writing, in subjects like English, History and R.S. or on selecting knowledge from different parts of the course to solve problems or reach decisions, for example in Science or Geography.

The temptation is to practice answering exam questions too early in the revision processes, before key knowledge has been learnt (secured in long term memory). This is likely to be less effective.