# Independent Learning and homework at St Edmund's Catholic Academy

Name:

Form Teacher:













# Contents Page



### A Message from the Principal

Do you want to take control of your own learning and be empowered to excel?

This is what I want for each and every student at St Edmund's and reading this guide will be your first step to independence.

My prayers are with you. Let's get started!



Themes	Page number
The importance of independent learning at St Edmund's Catholic Academy?	1
What does it mean to be an independent learner at St Edmund's?	2
How much homework should we expect?	
What will independent study or homework look like at St Edmund's Academy?	3
How will independent study or homework be set?	4
How do I find where my homework is?	4
How can parents track homework for their child?	4
Other ways you can extend your child's subject knowledge at home	
How can you help your child with homework?	
Knowledge Organiser Guidance for Parents	
What happens if my child fails to complete Independent Learning expectations at home at St Edmund's Catholic Academy?	10
GCSEPod revision Strategies and activities	11-18
Effective Revision Habits & Strategies: A study guide for for Pupils & Parents	19-28





### Why is independent learning so important at



### St Edmund's Catholic Academy?

Research by the Education Endowment Foundation states that those students who conduct two hours of independent study per day perform significantly better than their peers who do less. Therefore, at St Edmund's Catholic Academy we have made developing these skills within lessons and at home a top priority to ensure each students is aware of their value for later life.



### Why is independent learning important?

- It can develop inquisitiveness, by providing opportunities for long term research and other work.
- It can develop *collaboration*, by involving parents and others in the learning process and so providing an important motivational function.
- It can develop persistence, by allowing students to develop their ability to work independently.
- It can develop discipline, by allowing valuable practice and extension of skills, knowledge and understanding learned in the classroom.
- It can develop *imagination*, by allowing students to use materials and other sources of information that are **not always available in** the classroom.

### What does independent study look like at home for St Edmund's students?

Independent study is essential. It gives pupils the opportunity for research, develop independent learning skills and reflection. Through independent study, students are able to consolidate previous learning and prepare for future topics; extend learning in the classroom and assess progress towards their targets; identify and 'close their gaps' in each subject area and develop the skills they will need to in preparation for exams and life beyond the classroom.







# The St Edmund's Independent student will have the ability to . . . .

can make informed decisions about their learning.

be self- reliant.

are intrinsically motivated by progress in their learning.

can connect classroom learning with the real world.

know about different strategies to embed their learning.

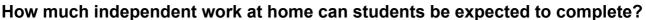
Have the ability to plan their own learning and set personalised goals.

> have the ability to reflect on their own learning. They are aware of their strengths and weaknesses

take responsibility for their own learning. Have the ability to lead and shape an activity.

utilises a range of strategies and processes for tackling a new task.









All independent work at home will be set according to your allocated homework timetable which has been shared with you within the Academy. Time allocation expectations include:

- Key Stage 3- Students should completing between 30 to 60 minutes of independent learning per day per week on google classroom.
- Key Stage 4- Students should be completing between 1 to 2 hours of independent learning per day per week on google classroom.
- **Key Stage 5** It is expected that for every hour of lesson time, sixth form students will do one hour of independent study. Staff will set independent learning that amounts to this quantity on google classroom.

### What will Independent Study at St Edmund's look like at home?

Departments across the Academy may set numerous independent learning tasks to be completed from home. Some of the context of these task are outlined below:

- 'Pre' Independent Study this could be to 'pre-learn' contextual information and develop understanding of vocabulary. One example may be to focus on studying sections of the digital Knowledge Organisers available online for each department.
- 'Post' Independent Study This comes from what students have learnt previously in class. This is where knowledge and skills can be practised, applied or consolidated for knowledge retrieval. These are essential skills needed for any assessments or future examinations.
- Flexible Challenge Periodically, departments may set an optional piece of independent study such as a google form or quiz based around a topic studied in lesson. A Deeper Learning Assignment is an extended assignment which is broken down in manageable parts by teaching staff over half a term. These assignments may not necessarily be on a topic covered in class but creates an opportunity to build cultural capital and extends the research skills of our students.

### How will independent learning and homework be set







### How do we set homework?

Each student has a personalised homework timetable for all their subjects which was issued at the start of the year. This has been arranged so that there is an even spread of work from different subjects across the two weeks of the St. Edmund's timetable and there is not too much work for students to complete on any particular evening.

### How do I find where my homework is?

All homework is set on Google Classroom. Students are able to access Google Classroom from school, at home or anywhere where they have access to an internet connection. There are Google Classroom apps for smartphones so homework can be accessed on the move.

### How can parents track homework for their child?

Students have access to a 'to-do' list on Google Classroom which parents can ask to see so they are clear about what work their child is doing. Parents/guardians were sent an invite from the school to access 'guardian updates' which allows you to sign up for a daily or weekly email summary of the work set for their child. We encourage all parents to do this to ensure tracking can be done at home.

Students will also receive a paper copy of their homework timetable an example is

seen below:

English	Thu - Week A
English	Fri - Week B
Geography	Thu - Week B
History	Wed - Week A
French	Wed - Week B
RE	Mon - Week A
Maths	Thu - Week A
Maths	Tue - Week B
Science	Mon - Week A
Science	Mon - Week B
Science	Fri - Week A
MADC/Technology	Tue - Week A, Wed - Week A, Tue - Week B, Wed - Week B





### Other ways you can help extend your child's subject knowledge at home?



Your child's literacy and numeracy skills are critical to their long-term development; the importance of daily, personalised practice of reading and mathematics cannot be overstated.

### **Reading and Literacy**

Recent studies indicate that when students **spend 25 minutes a day reading suitably challenging books**, then they will achieve optimal reading age growth. You may not be reading with your child as you did at primary school but you can still support good reading habits. Talk to your child about the books you're both reading. Ask what books your child would like for birthday and Christmas presents. Go to the library together - if your child is stuck for a new author, ask the librarian for guidance or look online at book reviews. You could also take a look at **our reading recommendations for each year group.** 

### **Mathematics**

Similarly, students make most progress in Maths when they practise little and often through their progress booklets, which are used in class and every other week at home independently. The independent booklet work is complimented by an electronic homework (via <a href="mailto:sumdog">sumdog</a>, <a href="mailto:seneca">Seneca</a>, <a href="mathswatch">mathswatch</a> or <a href="mathswatch">dfM</a>) every other week to give students varied independent learning opportunities. The newly implemented whiterose scheme of work highlights deeper understanding of mathematical concepts and aids problem solving and seeing connections between topics. The <a href="maths">UKMT</a> and <a href="maths">NCETM</a> websites along with the <a href="maths">Uplearn</a>, extend the maths experience beyond the normal curriculum into challenging areas that are Nationally recognised and acclaimed.

### **GCSEPod**

In addition to the work they will be set by their class teacher, all children in years 7 to 11 will receive a login to GCSEPod offering our students award-winning, expert-led education resources. As parents/guardians there is further information available at the website at <a href="https://members.qcsepod.com/login">https://members.qcsepod.com/login</a>

GCSEPod is the perfect resource to help your child learn, retain and recall all the information they need to achieve academically. Designed to engage learners, improve confidence, and accelerate progress, the content and assessments offered have been proven to help users achieve one grade higher on average than non-users.

If there are any issues with access to GCSEPod please contact <a href="mailto:ehill@stedmunds.org">ehill@stedmunds.org</a> who will be happy to assist you.



### Other ways you can help extend your child's subject knowledge at home?



### **SENECA**

Students use an online learning platform as an effective and engaging interactive guide to access free quizzes and resources for Key Stage 3, 4 & 5 for the majority of the subjects. It also has summaries, videos, standardised assessment, practise questions and the ability to address misconceptions for all students in an easy format to understand. Please use the following website to gain free access to a range of these resources appealing to your child's individual needs.



### **OAK ACADEMY**

Using the website <a href="https://classroom.thenational.academy/">https://classroom.thenational.academy/</a> this gives students the opportunity to accelerate their learning at home working independently on a range of subjects that they have expressed interests in. Using classroom you can activate free video lessons, activities and worksheets on topics for most subjects at St Edmund's Catholic Academy.

### UNIFROG

Students use their UNIFROG login details to log into the platform to explore different careers which link specifically to subjects they enjoy most. Check out the 'Careers Library' and the 'Subjects Library' to explore a range of different careers and qualifications to help you think about your future you.





### Other ways you can help extend your child's subject knowledge at home?



### **Bitesize**



The website <a href="https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/secondary">https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/secondary</a> is available for all students in KS3,4 and 5 giving them the ability to look at examination content or topic materials for every subject available at the Academy. It will also give parental advice to help and support your child's education, from homework, school routines, advice on parents evening or how to support your child with AEN.



### **Accelerated Reader**

All Key Stage 3 students have an Accelerated Reader account which can be accessed via the apps on the school website (<a href="www.stedmundscloud.co.uk">www.stedmundscloud.co.uk</a>). Through a series of quizzes, students are given a reading level which is coded to match our Library system. This means that students can select books to read which are both appropriate and accessible for them. Students can use the Accelerated Reader app to answer quizzes on books that they have read which will help them to develop their reading level further. As soon as students have finished reading a book, they should aim to take the quiz so that their score is as accurate as possible. Students will be made aware when their reading level improves so that they can access a new level of books. Students can access Accelerated Reader both in school and at home, using the app to access our individual school area on the system.



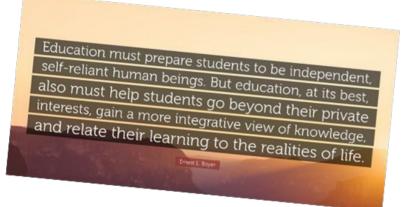


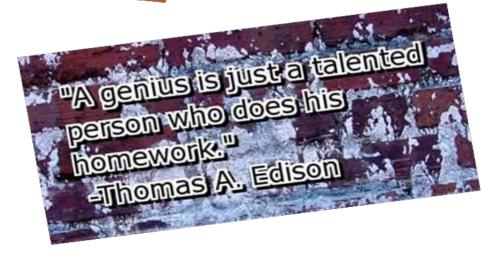
### How can you help your child with homework?



Your child will need to work more independently at secondary school than at primary school, but your interest and input will still be important and will help your child to do well.

- 1. Provide a quiet environment, where possible, and necessary equipment.
- 2. Have a regular independent learning routine.
- 3. Praise effort, rather than achievement.
- 4. Show an interest and ask questions about work they are completing.
- 5. Monitor: check your child's google classroom account and independent learning tasks regularly.
- 6. Check they have access to all the correct logins, including GCSEPod and the internet. If there is an issue with GCSEPod access please contact <a href="mailto:ehill@stedmunds.org">ehill@stedmunds.org</a> who will offer appropriate support.









### **Knowledge Organiser Guidance for Parents**



### When will you receive the Knowledge Organisers?

Your child will be able to access electronic Knowledge Organisers for each of their subjects every term (in Key Stage 3 only). They will be available via the school website.

### What do the Knowledge Organisers include?

The key information that will be covered each term for each subjects into different topics they will be studying.

### How will they be used in school?

Teachers will quiz students on information within the Knowledge Organisers on a regular basis as part of knowledge retrieval. They may also base their spelling tests on the key words included in the Knowledge Organisers. They may also have set homework tasks based on the information, where they ask students to read information in advance of a lesson based on that topic - we call this 'flipped learning'. In addition there maybe weblinks that they are expected to use to extend their knowledge.

### How can parents / carers support the use of Knowledge Organisers?

Here are some tips:

- Give your child small spelling tests based on the key words
- Help your child create revision resources such as flashcards or mind maps to help them remember the key information
- Mix and match activities (key words and definitions)
- Give your child 5/10 minutes to read through a section of information then ask them questions on it (give them longer to read through if they are struggling with this or normally have extra time at school)
- Some Knowledge Organisers may have links for websites or videos which you can watch together and discuss afterwards
- Ask your child true or false questions based on the information given
- Help your child to highlight or underline key information

If you find that these strategies are not working for your child, please let the class teacher know so they can suggest other ways of using their Knowledge Organiser at home, or they may need to look at ways of simplifying the information to support your child.



### What happens if my child fails to complete Independent

## Learning expectations at home at St Edmund's Catholic Academy?

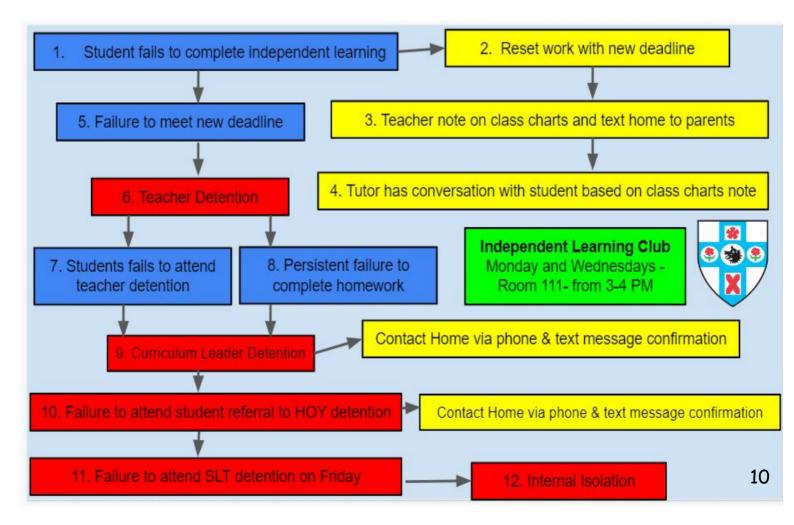


Given the importance of independent learning to your child's education, it is necessary for it to be enforced if they fail to meet the expectation of homework completion. Therefore, they will be sanctioned according to our procedures and you will be contacted accordingly.

Persistent failure to engage with home learning will lead to a detention with members of the Senior Leadership Team on Friday afternoons.

To ensure consistency across the Academy the following procedures will be followed below. However, if there is any concern in regards to homework initially please ensure you contact the correct Head of year below:

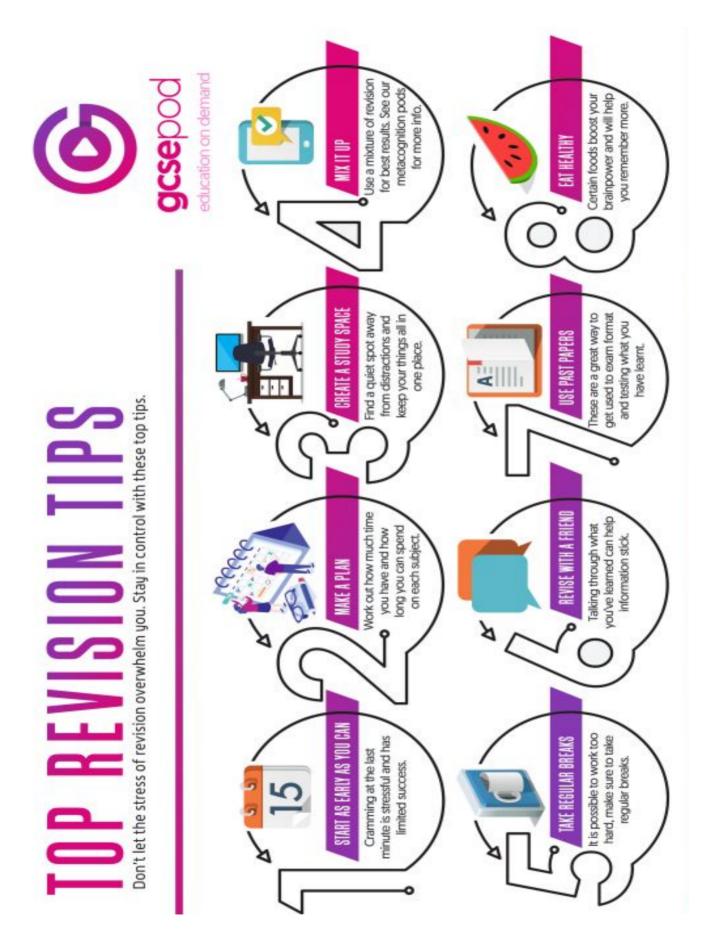
- <u>iperkins@stedmunds.orq</u> Head of Year 7
- ajeer@stedmunds.org Head of Year 8
- <u>ltaylor@stedmunds.org</u> Head of Year 9
- nshoker@stedmunds.org Head of Year 10
- rcollymore@stedmunds.org Head of Year 11
- <a href="https://





# Revision Strategies to help your child succeed at St Edmund's Catholic Academy







# GCSEPod Pod Book

# Active Learning with Pods

The activities in this book are designed to help cement the learning from the Pods you watch. We would recommend you start a Pod Book to keep all your work together. This is as simple as finding an empty jotter or notepad, and using it to complete the following activities.

By dedicating time, being active and revisiting Pods and activities, you'll ensure you are being effective with your learning time.

- 1. Choose the Pod or Pods you want to watch
- Complete an activity from this booklet
- Don't be afraid of repeating activities

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March 2020





### Activitie

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1. Watch a Pod once and then list 5 or more pieces of information from memory. Watch it a second time to check the information you remembered is correct. Aim to improve on this score next time.

Stretch: Can you add another 3+ pieces of information after your second watch?

2. Write a one paragraph summary of the pod, selecting the key points.

Stretch: Can you quote or reference the Pod?





3. Create a spider diagram or mind map of the information in the Pod. Making it as colourful as possible will help you visualise it later. See below for an example of a spider diagram!

Stretch: Can you link this spider diagram or mind map to another Pod, building on it with the new information from each. Pod you watch?



- 4. Write an exam style question about the topic of the Pod then answer the question in full using the Pod to help you.
- 5. Watch a Pod, then create a lesson to teach someone else about the information in the Pod.





6. Select pieces of information from a Pod and rank the information in order of importance with the most important at the top and the least important at the bottom.

Stretch: Write at least two sentences justifying why you have ranked it this way.



7. Complete activity 6 and then select the pieces of information that are key to someone fully understanding the content of the Pod.



8. Select pieces of information from a Pod and rank the information in order of most difficult to easiest to remember.



9. Turn the Pod into six images – one per key piece of information. The images must represent the information in the Pod.

Stretch: Write a sentence under each image explaining your thinking.

10. Watch a topic, title or single Pod and create a set of around 6–8 symbols to represent the key pieces of information. Annotate your symbols.

For example, for Romeo and Juliet you might have some of the following:









a. Reduce this down to half the number of symbols, choosing the 3–4 most important.



- 11. Create a presentation or lesson to explain the content of a Pod or Pods as if you're teaching it to a 6-year-old. Think about the language you use to explain the content.
- 12. Choose a Pod and before you watch it storyboard what you think should be included. Then watch the Pod. How much of your information was in the Pod? See below for an example of a storyboard!



Stretch: Can you justify why you would include the information you did?

### (haracter: The Nurse



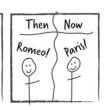
Who she is -(apulet, servant, Juliet's closest friend



Plot device introduces R+J and is the go-between



(omedic role Blank verse etc



Hypocritical? "Marry with the (ounty"





13. Identify the most important Pods in a topic or title. Can you justify why they are the most important?

Stretch: Have you based your decision on your own knowledge, the exam or the subject?



- Red = topics I'm least confident with
- Amber = topics I'm ok with
- Green = topics I'm most confident with
- 15. Timetable your Pod watching using the results from Activity 14. Remember not to only focus on Red pods.



- 16. Watch a Pod and write out the three most important pieces of information ranking them 1–3.
  - a. Briefly explain each piece of information in 1–3 using two sentences for each.
  - b. Go back though and cross out the least important sentence so that you end up with only one key sentence for each important piece of information.
- 17. Reduce the key information in a Pod to 12 words.



18. Reduce the information from a Pod into a 140 character Tweet – remember spaces and punctuation count as characters.



19. Sort the information in a Pod into 2–3 categories then think of a title for each category.

Try organising your



thoughts like this!

20. Watch a Pod and write down 3 questions you'd like to ask an expert on this subject.



21. Watch a Pod or group of Pods and come up with 20 quiz questions and answers to ask a friend.

Stretch: Complete this activity with a friend. Only allow them to watch each Pod once – how many do they get right? Then get them to create a new test for you to answer.

- 22. Watch a Pod or group of Pods and note down:
  - a. 5 things I already know.
  - b. 5 new pieces of information.
  - c. 5 things I need to know more about and where I will find that information which Pods I will watch.

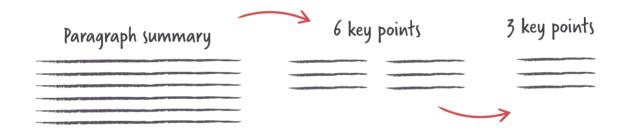




23. Reduce the information in a Pod:

- Write out a 1-2 paragraph summary of the information in the Pod.
- b. Reduce that information to 6 points.
- c. Reduce it again to the main 3 key points.

### Your process might look a bit like this:



24. Bullet point the information in a Pod then watch the next Pod and do the same. Is the information strongly linked or loosely linked? Represent this with a <u>bold</u> or <u>broken</u> line.

Continue to watch more Pods, making connections between them all, until you build up a knowledge map.

Stretch: Annotate the lines between Pods to explain the links. Can you make links to other subjects or topics?





### 25. Pod to Poster

Summarise a Pod and display the information on an A4 poster. Use key words, images and labelled diagrams from the Pod to help you remember the information.



### 25. Pod Passwords

Note down 10 key words whilst watching a Pod and then write down full definitions of each key word.

Can you display this as a presentation?

#### 27. Flash-Pod

Create a set of revision flash cards based on a Pod or a set of Pods.

Can you add colours and images to help you to remember key information?



#### 28. Probe a Pod

Design 10 questions relating to a Pod.

You must also include solutions or model answers to the questions.

#### 29. Pod Problems

What are the common misconceptions and common errors that students can make with this topic?

- a. Can you give examples of these?
- b. How do you know that these are incorrect?





30. Pod Poll

Make a set of 'True or False' questions relating to a Pod. Can you justify how you know that they are true or false?

Remember to include solutions.

### 31. Word Search

List the key words from a Pod and create a 'key-word-search' using an online tool such as <a href="https://www.thewordsearch.com/maker">www.thewordsearch.com/maker</a>



### 32. What Next?

After finishing a Pod, write a plan detailling what happens next.

- What topics may follow?
- What learning comes next?
- Can you list any questions that you have?





### 32. Prior to Pod

Can you list the skills or prior knowledge that are needed in order to fully understand the content of a Pod?

Can you identify any areas that you need to work on to help you to progress your learning in this area?

### 33. Primary Pod

Write a very simplified version of a Pod to give to someone in primary school. Can you think specifically about using very simple language in your explanations?

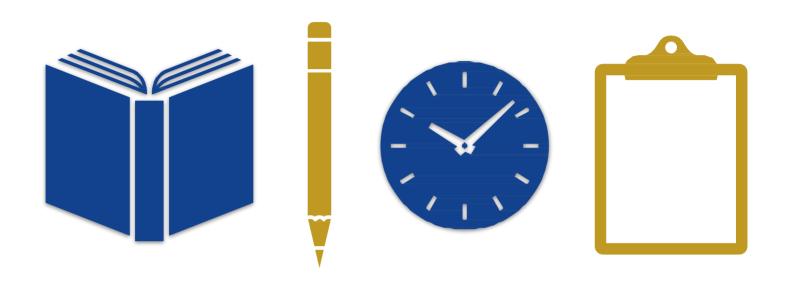
### 34. Pod to Paragraph

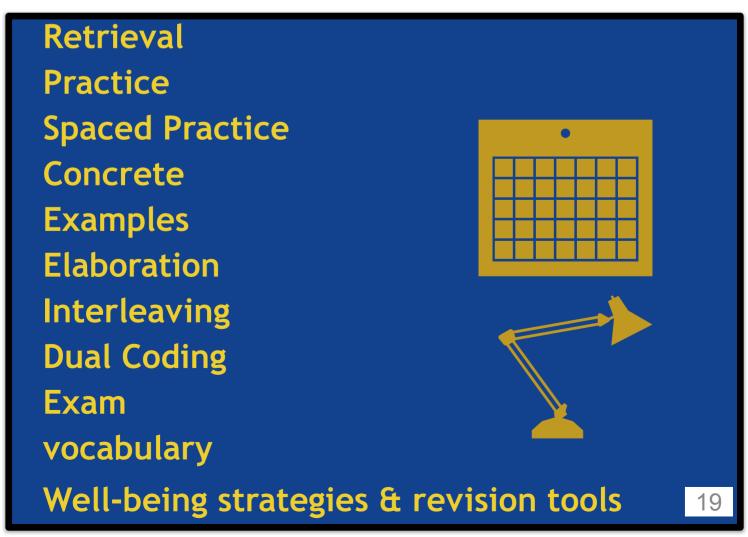
Can you summarise a Pod into 100 words? Decide which words are integral to your explanation and include the following if needed:



- Key formulae
- Quotes
- Symbols

# Effective revision habits & strategies: A study guide for pupils & parents.





CC. Kate Jones

# What is retrieval practice?

"Retrieval practice is a learning strategy where we focus on getting information out. Through the act of retrieval, or calling information to mind, our memory for that information is strengthened and forgetting is less likely to occur. Retrieval practice is a powerful tool for improving learning."







Use your class notes & textbooks to make a list of the important information & content that you need to know across different subjects.

Then close your books & test yourself. You can create quizzes, use flashcards or complete past exam papers. Make sure you don't use your notes!

Retrieve as much information as you can then check your answers. It's important to know what you know and what you don't know ... yet!

Use your answers to inform the next stage of your revision, focus on the areas that you struggled to recall from memory.

20

# What is spaced practice?

"Start planning early for exams and set aside a little bit of time everyday. Five hours spread out over two weeks is better than the same five hours all at once."

This is spaced practice & it is regarded as one of the most effective revision strategies.







Divide up your revision into short manageable chunks of time. When revising aim for 20 - 30 minutes per session.

Mass practice or cramming is not effective & can be stressful. This is when you study for a very intense period of time just before the exam.

You need to plan your time carefully to ensure all subjects & topics are covered in shorter chunks over a longer period of time.

Dividing up your revision into smaller, manageable sections will benefit you in the long term - the revision you do for mocks will stick for the final exams!

# What are concrete examples?

"Students often gain a false sense of confidence in their abilities to memorise new material. Using **concrete**, relevant, real life examples can help students understand abstract ideas and extend information retention."







Concrete examples involves finding & using specific examples to help develop & deepen understanding of abstract ideas.

Abstract ideas can be difficult to understand & explain. Our memories find it easier to remember concrete examples better than abstract information.

Foreshadowing can be explained with a very specific concrete example - in Romeo & Juliet the tragic ending is subtly foreshadowed in the very first act of the play.

Look through your books & class notes searching for concrete examples that are relevant to the idea you are studying or create your own if you can.

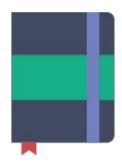
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# What is elaboration?

"The term **elaboration** can be used to mean a lot of different things. However, when we are talking about studying using elaboration, it involves explaining and describing ideas with many details. Elaboration also involves making connections among ideas you are trying to learn."







Elaboration involves asking further questions & making links to help you connect new information with what you already know.

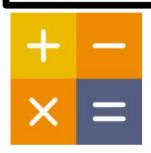
Ask yourself questions about a topic to delve deeper. The more information you have about a specific topic the stronger your grasp & ability to recall.

When you learn about the causes of WW1 you could ask which causes are linked together? Which causes are short or long term? What was the major cause?

Another way to elaborate is to take two ideas or concepts & think about the various ways they are similar & how they are different.

# What is interleaving?

"Interleaving is a process where students mix & combine multiple subjects & topics while they study in order to improve their learning. Blocked practice on the other hand, involves studying one topic very thoroughly before moving to another. Interleaving has been shown to be more effective than blocked practice leading to better long-term retention."







Mon

<u>Tues</u>

Weds

<u>Thurs</u>

<u>Fri</u>

Algebra

Ratio

**Statistics** 

Ratio

Algebra

Geometry

Statistics

Algebra

Geometry

Statistics

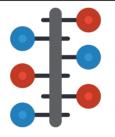
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CC. Kate Jones

# What is dual coding?

"Dual coding is the process of combining verbal materials with visual materials. There are many ways to visually represent materials, such as with infographics, timelines, cartoon/comic strips, diagrams and graphic organisers."







Dual coding involves you the learner drawing images, graphs, diagrams or timelines to support your revision notes.

When you are revising using your class materials find or create visuals that link with the information. Compare & combine the visuals with the words.

Don't worry if you don't consider yourself an artist - it isn't about the quality of your illustrations, the focus is to improve and deepen your understanding.

Make sure your images/diagrams are relevant. Be careful when using photos as too many background images can detract from the main points.

25

# Exam vocabulary - Command words

There will be subject specific key terms that you need to learn for each subject. Below are a range of **command words** that could be used in your exams. Do you understand what the exam question is asking you? Command words can vary slightly across different subjects so it is important you understand the command words in the exam question & in the correct context.







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 & reach a conclusion, including evidence. **Evaluate** - Consider different options/factors & reach a conclusion

about their importance/impact/value/worth.

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

Explain- Provide a detailed description or interpretation of a

term/concept etc. **Identify** - Point out & 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 the similar to outline.

# Well-being during exams

The exam period can be stressful that is why it's very important that you revise & prepare as this can help to reduce exam anxiety. In addition to revising there are other strategies you can do to look after your **mental & physical health**.







**Eat.** Diet is important so don't neglect it during the exam period. Don't skip meals, stay consistent with a healthy balance of meals & stay hydrated.

**Sleep.** Staying up late to revise is a bad idea! Sleep deprivation can have a very negative impact on concentration, performance & memory.

**Exercise**. Take regular breaks from revision with exercise. Take part in a sport you enjoy, go for a walk or any activity that is active & part of your daily routine.

Relax. Relax during the exam period? Yes! It is essential that you do make time to switch off & have a break. Watch Netflix, read or talk to friends.

## Useful websites & social media

The internet can be a great source of revision support. For subject specific examples of useful websites and YouTube videos ask your teachers for recommendations because the quality of revision materials online varies considerably.







### **Useful websites:**

https://www.learningscientists .org https://retrievelearn.org

https://tutor2u.net



### Useful social media sites:

Instagram @learningscientists - Facebook Learning Scientists - YouTube The Learning Scientists - Twitter @acethattest - Twitter @retrievelearn - App Headspace (to support relaxation) - App Calm - App Quizlet Flashcards 28

### References







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29