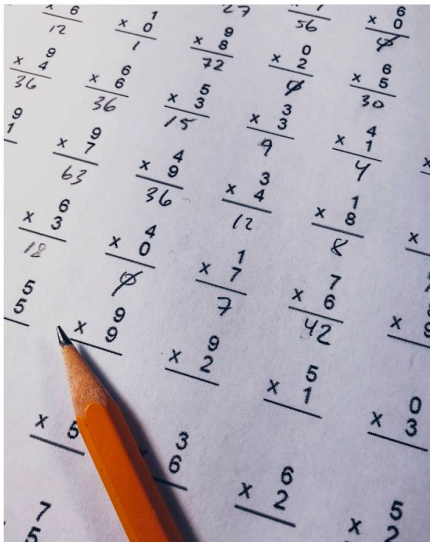
How We Learn at Redmoor.

A Guide for Parents and Carers at KS3



Positive attitude leads to excellence

Contents

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How We Learn at Redmoor

Teaching and learning sits at the centre of everything we do at Redmoor Academy. We believe that the learning of our students is underpinned by a knowledge rich curriculum, which is varied and broad in its content and skills, delivered by highly trained teachers whose subject expertise instills enthusiasm throughout the learning environment.

The learning of our students is further underpinned by our support staff, who through their own expertise ensure our students' progress. We see our students as individuals and recognise that within the classroom, different students require different strategies for success.

Encompassing this is our belief that all students should be challenged to realise their full potential. This booklet explains how we decide on the best learning strategies and the research that supports this. It also explains what our children experience during lessons and why they receive the homework they do.

We hope that it helps you understand what happens in our lessons at Redmoor, what you should be seeing when your child discusses their classwork and homework with you and how you can support your child further.

"Knowledge is power.
Information is liberating.
Education is the premise of progress, in every society, in every family."
- Kofi Annan

Click here to watch a video explaining how we learn at Redmoor

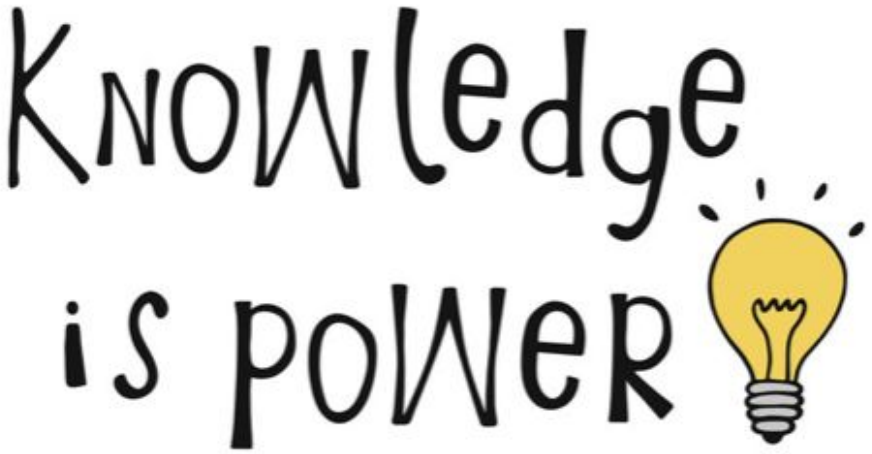
Knowledge Curriculum

When Francis Bacon first coined the term “knowledge is power”, he was summarising a belief that great things can be achieved by anyone who learns. Equally, for those people lacking knowledge, it can be hard for them to fully access and participate in the world and community around them.

At Redmoor, our KS3 curriculum has been planned so knowledge is built upon and sequenced carefully, preparing our students to be successful at GCSE, but also to prepare our students for life after Redmoor.

Over time, students build on previous knowledge so that they can understand relevant cultural, historical, scientific and philosophical knowledge to help them access learning.

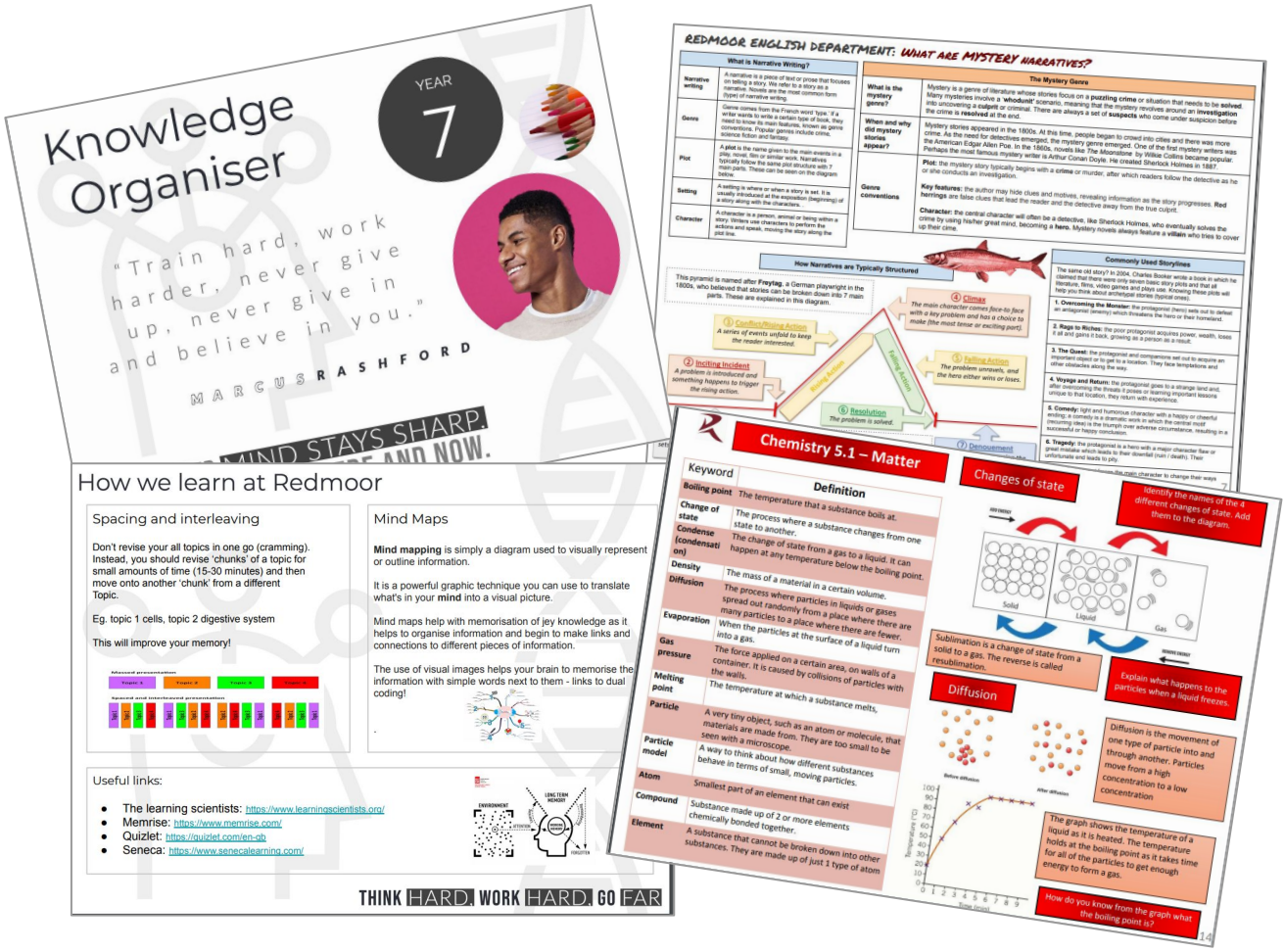
We also build up key vocabulary over time, as poor literacy can be a barrier to learning. It is our hope that by increasing knowledge and therefore understanding of the world around them, our students will be able to become successful in whatever profession they choose.



Knowledge Organisers

Knowledge organisers (KOs) help students to remember the knowledge that they have to understand to be successful in school and wider life. KOs organise and break down the key elements of the topics to be covered so that students can practise these chunks of knowledge that then become transferred to their long term memory. Over time this knowledge becomes like building blocks to create a real understanding of the world we live in, across all subjects areas.

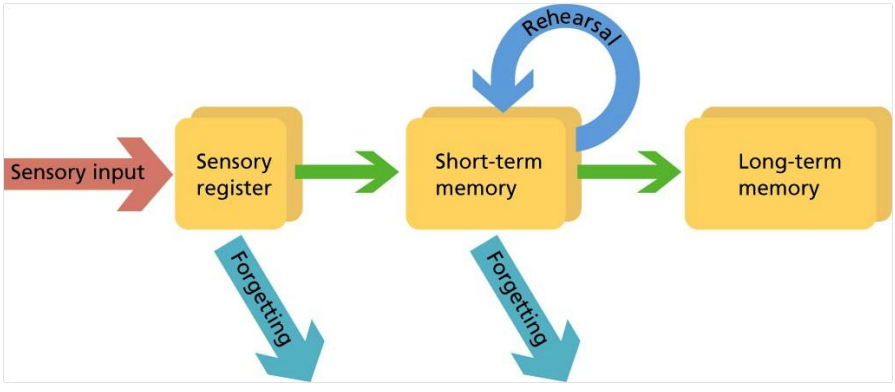
Your child will be given new knowledge organisers every term in year 7,8 and 9. Many subjects now also use them effectively at GCSE.



Cognitive Load Theory

As a parent/ carer, you may be asking:

- Why do we ask students to learn facts off by heart?
- Why does your child have constant knowledge organiser tests?
- Why is your child constantly revising for 20 minutes a day?



At Redmoor, we look at the most recent research from educationalists, psychologists and cognitive scientists, to make sure that the learning of our students is as effective as possible.

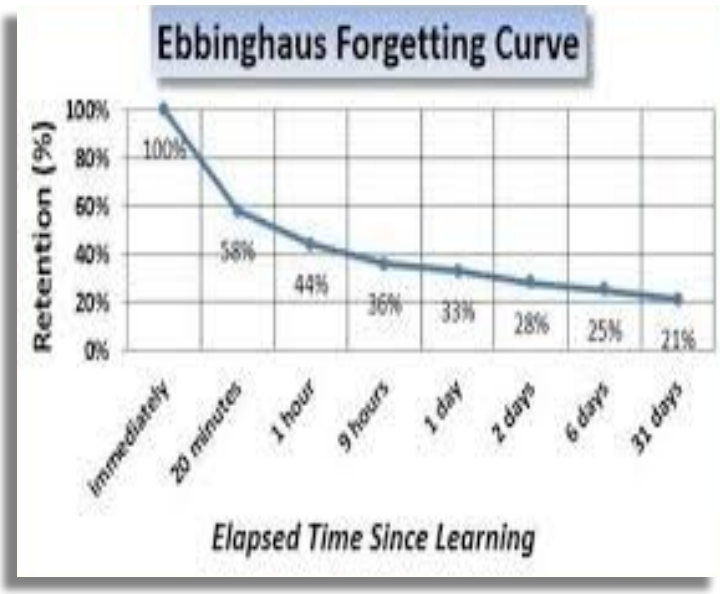
We understand that the cognitive load theory tells us that students can only hold so much in their shorter/ working memory at one time - only about 6 or 7 facts. So we need to transfer knowledge into long term memory and the only way we can do that is by constantly practising new material. Our long term memories have so much capacity, but we have to commit to constant revising to transfer knowledge there. Memorising from the knowledge organisers means that the key facts stick in students' long term memory, which allows their short term memory to take in new information.

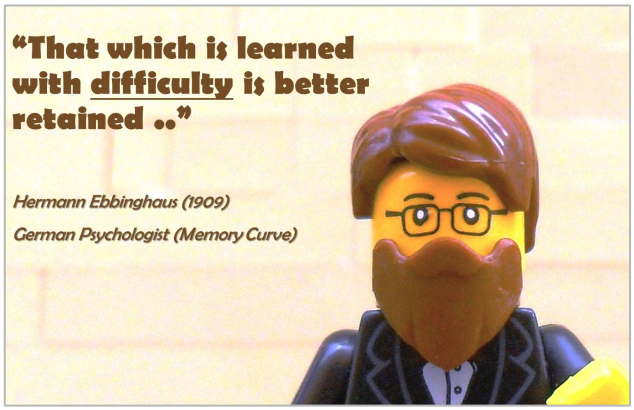
Top Tip: Think about how easily you can remember song lyrics. This is because we repeat them over and over again, so they stick in our long term memory.

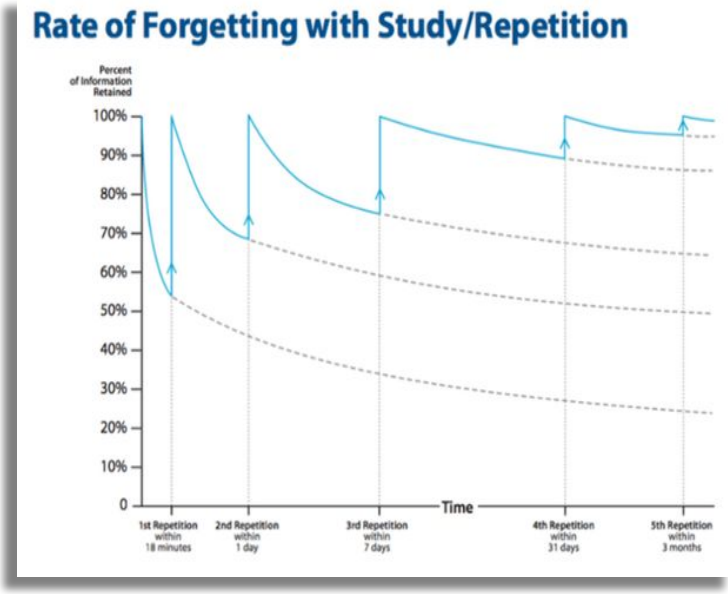
Ebbinghaus Forgetting Curve

Ebbinghaus, a German Psychologist explained this further. He noted that as soon as we are given information, it begins to fall out of our memories. However, the more we review facts, the more they stick in our long term memory.

Our knowledge organisers help this review and with constant practice, our students' long term memories become filled with knowledge that they can draw upon at any time to help them be successful in their academic learning, but also in understanding the world around them.







Follow this link to watch a video on The Forgetting Curve

Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction

Your child will experience a variety of different teaching styles and activities at Redmoor. We firmly believe that our teachers are subject specialists, who know their subjects and the way to teach their students best. We therefore have no set model of how a perfect lesson should be structured or delivered, as we believe high level learning environments can look different in different subjects.

However, staff have been extensively trained in Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction. This is research from the best educationalists and psychologists.

Therefore, your child should experience the following in lessons:

- Challenge: We teach our students in mixed ability classes and all children have access to the highest levels of academic work, to make sure that all children have the opportunity to succeed
- Scaffolding: Strategies will be put in place to help your child to help your child navigate the various stages that lead to success in each subject
- Examples of excellence: Model answers are displayed and discussed so students can aspire to the best academic work
- Questioning: this may be directed at your child rather than hands up, to ensure each individual's understanding
- Review: Your child will be asked to constantly review the knowledge on their KOs. This will usually take the form of quick quizzes and tests

Please find a link below to the pdf version of the research article: Principles of Instruction by Barak Rosenshine

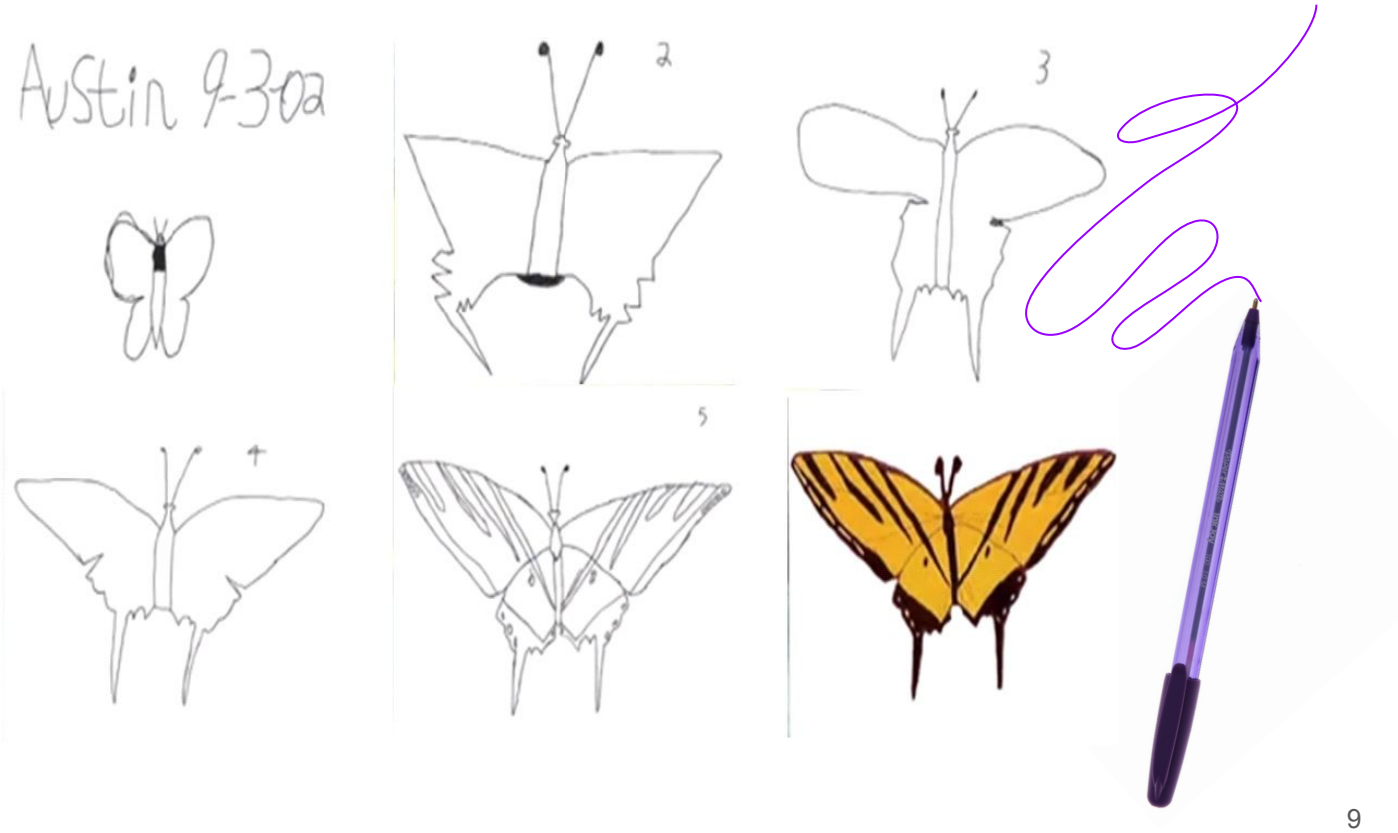
Feedback and Austin's Butterfly

When you look at your child's book, you may expect to see lots of red ticks, 'well dones' and grades.

However, recent research tells us that the most important aspect of marking student work is what the students then do with it and how improvement is made. This feedback may take the form of whole class feedback, or individual feedback, so you may not always see lots of comment in your child's book.

What you should see, is them responding to teacher marking in purple pen. The more your child acts on their teacher's feedback (or in some cases their classmates' feedback), the more progress they make. Austin's butterfly is a good example of how targetted feedback can lead to success (see the video on YouTube for more details).

"If it's not excellent, it's not finished!"



The Redmoor DNA

What is the Redmoor DNA?

The Redmoor DNA is a core of 7 character traits that we expect all of our Redmoor students to develop, refine and exhibit each and every day during their five years of study with us.

By being resilient, engaged, dedicated, motivated, organised, optimistic and responsible, we believe our students will develop into well-rounded, knowledgeable and successful young adults who will thrive at school academically and socially and in their future lives.

These qualities were chosen by our students and we insist that all our students strive to uphold them in everything that they say and do.

How can students demonstrate their Redmoor DNA?

Students will be expected to work hard to develop and show off their DNA traits in: the classroom; in their independent learning (homework); in their characters, their attitudes to school and each other; and their participation in wider school life, including extracurricular activities and student leadership roles.

We want to see our students:

- ★ Approaching and participating in their academic studies, both in school and at home, with effort and determination
- ★ Completing homework and revision to the best of their ability
- ★ Behaving well and participating fully in the school community
- ★ Taking pride in and participating with the House system's events and competitions
- ★ Engaging with the extra curricular activities on offer to enrich their characters and their knowledge.

Our Expectations

As experts in education, we know what makes students successful and the big secret is… **EFFORT**. That's why we expect our students to work hard in every lesson. Showing the Redmoor DNA in class means that, as a minimum standard, we expect our students to:

- Take pride in their work
- Complete all classwork and homework with detail and depth
- Be able to work independently
- Participate fully
- Show resilience (a never give up attitude) when faced with challenging work

Demonstrating the Redmoor DNA consistently will mean that students will earn classwork effort scores of As and Bs on their school reports, as well as house points and praise during lesson time.

Not good enough		Good enough	
D	**C**	**B**	**A**
Lack of care	Lack of care	Pride in work	Pride in work
Minimum amount of work	'Just enough' but no more	Detail and depth	Detail and depth, originality / creativity
HW not attempted	HW mostly done but poor quality, inadequate or late	HW done well and on time	HW done to a high standard, sometimes extra / over and above
Book often forgotten or lost	Over-reliance on teacher/TA	Able to work independently	Thrive independently
Over-reliance on teacher or blaming / excuses	Passive in lessons	Participation	Full participation without dominating
Failure to participate	Tendency to give up	Resilience when faced with challenging work	Motivated by challenge, even seeking it
Frequent talking in the lesson or poor behaviour	Sometimes talking too much or not paying attention		

Homework at Redmoor

For homework, we ask our students to constantly practise the facts on their knowledge organisers. We feel, based on research, that it helps them retain important information and use higher level vocabulary. We therefore expect students to spend the following time on their knowledge organiser homework:

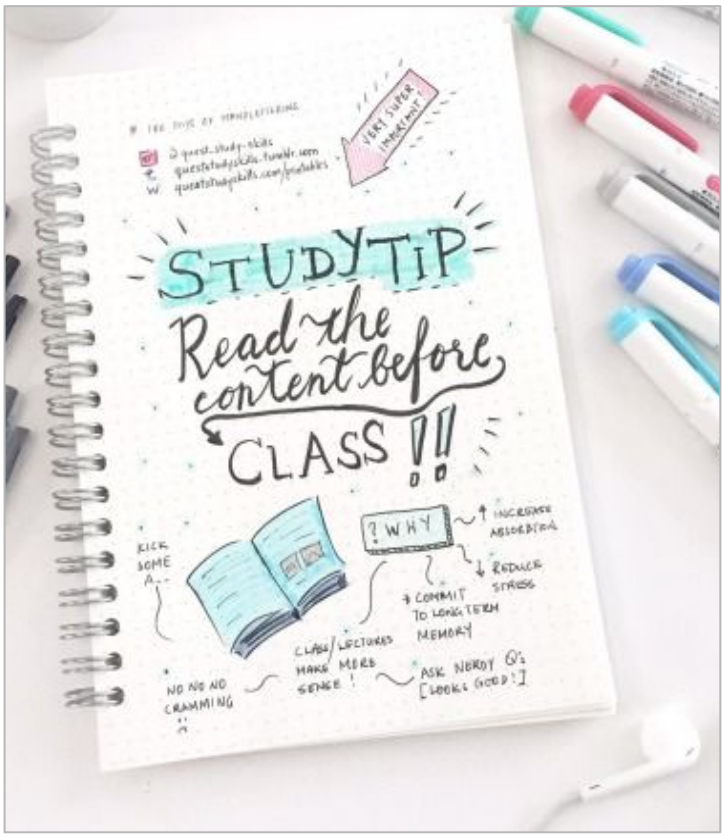
Year 7 and 8:

- 20 minutes per subject per week (except for lessons taught once a week)

Year 9:

- 30-40 minutes per subject per week
- Homework may also include GCSE preparation

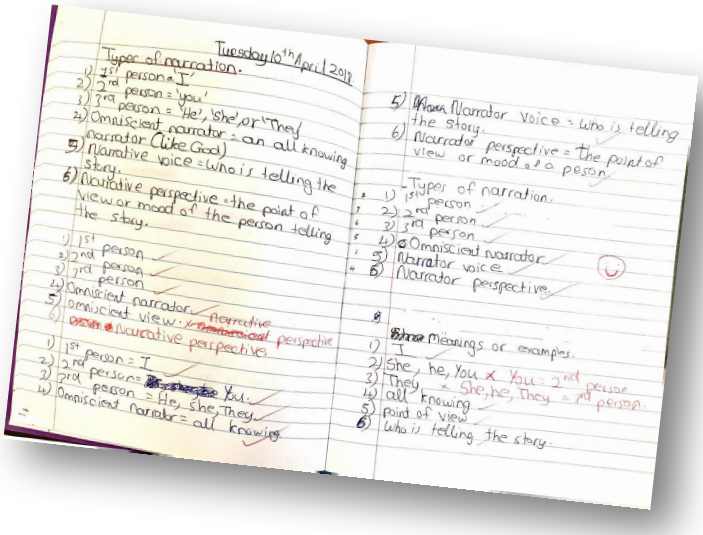
The Maths department will also set homework using online programmes to enhance activities in class.



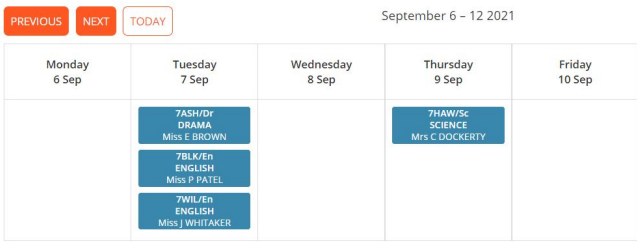
Homework Expectations

Again, we expect our students to put maximum effort into their independent learning (homework and all of the extra things they might do to extend their knowledge and skills).

By doing this, students will be on your way to achieving As for effort with their homework and receiving lots of house points. Remember, failing to hit these standards will result in students being given sanctions.



ClassCharts



Following a successful trial in the science department during the last academic year, all homework will now be set on Class Charts.

Teaching staff will put all the details your child will need to complete their homework, along with deadlines and supportive material to help your child to complete their homework.

You will be able to monitor and support your child as you can see what homework they have on the parent section of Class Charts.

For further information about helping students organise their revision and complete it effectively, please look towards the end of this booklet.

Reading at Redmoor

We see reading as being of vital importance to both the academic progress and well-being of our students. In all subjects, we teach how to read for information, in particular the skills needed to approach more difficult texts. We also place a high value on reading for pleasure. Reading good quality fiction has been proven to help young people in many ways, but in particular in developing a wide vocabulary. We encourage reading fiction as a great way to relax, gain insights into other worlds and exercise the imagination, whilst improving general literacy skills at the same time!

All students in Year 7 and 8 at Redmoor have lessons dedicated to oracy and reading skills. Teachers take the time to encourage and guide pupils towards more varied and challenging fiction choices and to reward pupils for reading widely. Mrs Barnes, our school librarian, is a great source of knowledge and can usually find a book to interest even the most reluctant of readers.

Students also take part in a Book Club for several weeks of the year. Book Club sessions offer a small-group opportunity to share the reading of a book and discuss it in more depth, with the guidance of teacher. Some of our Year 9 students also take part in the Book Club experience.

Many parents recognise the importance of reading but are unsure what books may be suitable. We publish two reading lists:

KS3 Reading List (Years 7-9)

KS4 Reading List (Years 10 & 11)

Our recommended fiction for teenagers includes books from many genres to suit all tastes.

We regularly re-published our lists to ensure they stay up to date, but there are so many books in the school library, we can't list them all! Students can now reserve books through our online library system.

Finally, parents can also help by encouraging reading routines at home. This may involve ensuring the last 30 minutes before bedtime is given over to reading - a great way to relax and round off the day.

Supporting Students' Progress

Parents/ Guardians

Together, we can achieve

Students

Teachers and Support Staff

Supporting Students' Progress

What can you do each day as parents and carers to support your child's learning?

1. **Make sure that your child is equipped for school each day and arrives on time**. Purple pens are essential for improving work. Knowledge organisers are not only used at home but our students use them in lessons for reference; the accelerated learning pages help them to make more progress. Student planners help them to become more organised.

2. When they get home, **discuss your child's lessons with them**. It is important to us that your child feels inspired and enthused by their learning. We are always happy to give you more information.

3. **Check your child's student planner and Class Charts** to see what homework has been set. Make sure that you sign last week's pages so that your child knows that there is a link between school and home.

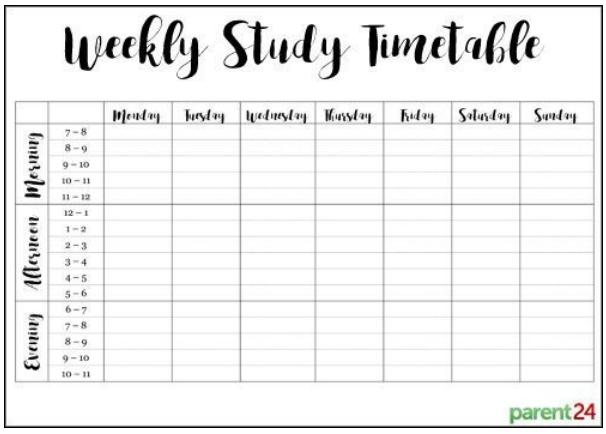
4. **Organise a time and place for your child to work.** Whilst this is essential now, it becomes even more important when GCSEs start. Study areas need to be quiet, with no distractions and the necessary equipment to work. We also provide a homework club called Study Space for students, where a member of staff is on hand to help children if they need some support.

5. **Help your child with their knowledge organiser revision.** Test their knowledge and ask them to repeat key facts. This will help them transfer knowledge into long term memory. Find out more about the facts in them and their place in our society. Make sure that old KOs are kept safe for future reference.

6. **Ensure that your child has access to reading material that interests them**. Designate a time when they can read. Bedtimes are ideal for this; children should not take gadgets to bed and need a break from mobiles phones an hour before bedtime. This is essential for good mental health and and a good night's sleep.

Getting organised is crucial to be an effective learner. Students not only need the ability to time manage and prioritise to succeed at Redmoor, but they are great life skills to have for further study and beyond!

Planning your child's week and their homework with them and looking at where they have other commitments fit in, is one way you can support your child at home



Thank you for your continued support!

Supporting Students' Progress

If your child is not making enough effort in class and with homework

(some Cs and Ds for 'Attitude to Learning' on school report)

- Talk about the school day: highlights and low points?
- Prioritise attendance and punctuality
- Check their homework diary
- Take an interest (check up on!) their homework. Does the standard look good enough?
- Praise really good effort
- Ensure they get enough sleep
- Limit time on devices - have a family 'cut off' point
- Create a study / revision timetable together
- Support the school's reporting systems that seek to improve effort and attitude to learning

If your child is trying hard in all their subjects

(Bs and As for 'Attitude to Learning' on school report)

- Celebrate and praise their efforts and achievements
- Help them to see that setbacks or disappointments are part of learning and not the end of the world
- Ensure they get the balance right - study is important but so are exercise, hobbies, socialising and 'downtime'

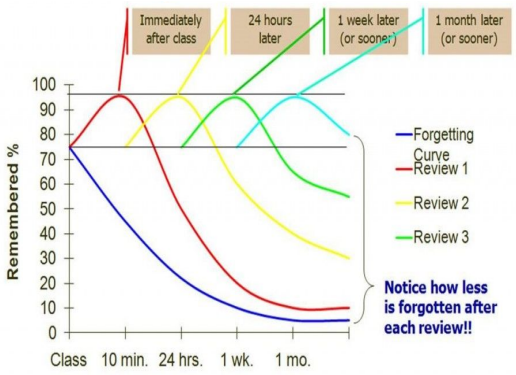
Effective Learning Strategies

Effective learning strategies

At Redmoor we use the latest educational research to inform our practice. Research tells us that there are some ways that are much more effective than others for your children to learn at home.

We have introduced three of the following strategies (dual coding, mind-mapping and Cornell note making) to students across all year groups and will give them opportunities to practise these strategies across subjects this year.

We want Redmoor students to now not only make excellent progress with us, but be prepared to be success independent learners in the future. Below is a guide to the strategies your children should be using to review their learning as well as links to the videos we made to introduce them to our students (just click on the links in the yellow boxes). You might find it useful to read the resource students were given first - it's on spiders and can be found on our website under the 'KS3 Effective Revision Strategies' drop-down.



Why reviewing your learning is so important

As soon as we are told a new piece of information, most of that information is 'lost' and forgotten. Hermann Ebbinghaus found that repeating information helps us remember more of it.So we need to be be reviewing and going over what we learn in order for us to remember and be able to use the information after a period of time has passed.

This resources summarises some proven strategies that you can use to review your knowledge.

Common methods of revision that are the least effective:

- Highlighting key points
- Re-reading
- Summarising texts

Retrieval practice

Testing what you know is a powerful tool in revision; the effort to remember something really strengthens your memory. Apps such as Memrise and Quizlet allow you to use or create your own quizzes based on topics. Create them, test yourself or get someone to test you. It works!

Learn more about retrieval practice here: Link to the Learning Scientists

Think hard, work hard, go far

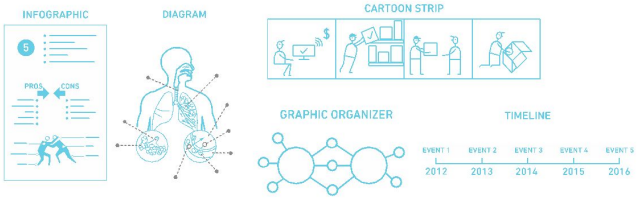
Effective Learning Strategies

Dual coding

Dual coding is the process of combining written materials with visual materials. Simply take information you are trying to learn, and draw visuals to go with it.

Learn more about dual coding here:
[Link To The Learning Scientists]

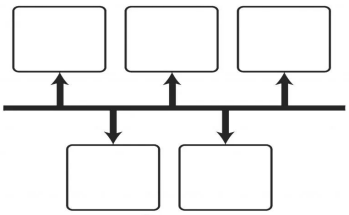
Try to come up with different ways to represent the information. For example: a timeline, a cartoon strip or a diagram of parts that work together.



Click here to watch our video explaining dual coding

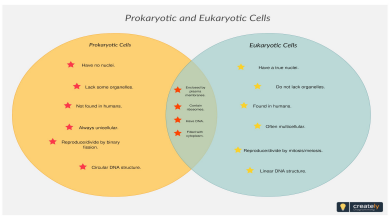
Mind Mapping

Graphic organisers are a great way of 'transforming' your notes/information into visual revision topics.



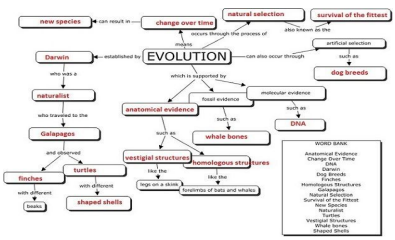
How to use:

1. Timelines. E.g. create a timeline to explain the chronological plot of a text in English.



2. Comparing ideas: create a Venn diagram to show the difference and similarities. E.g. in prokaryotic and eukaryotic cells in science.

Click here to watch our video explaining mind-mapping



3. Mind Mapping: At the end of a week, mind map all you can remember about a topic and link areas together.

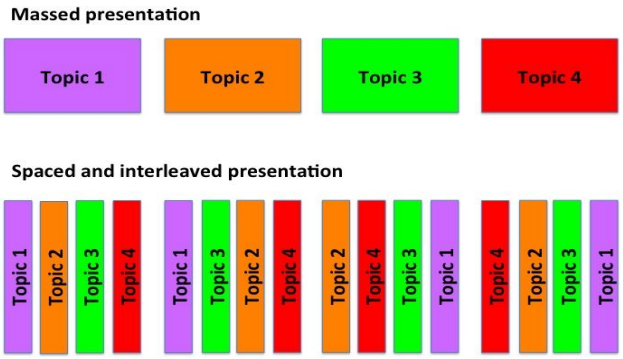
Effective Learning Strategies

Spacing and interleaving

Don't revise your all topics in one go (cramming). Instead, you should revise 'chunks' of a topic for small amounts of time (15-30 minutes) and then move onto another 'chunk' from a different Topic.

Eg. topic 1 cells, topic 2 digestive system

This will improve your memory!



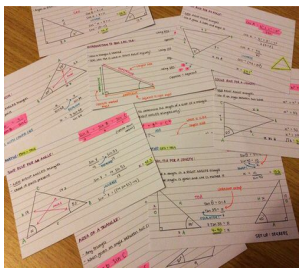
Flash Cards

Simply create questions on one side, answers on the other.

Colour code the cards for specific topics. Post it notes can be useful for keywords and timelines.

Once you have created your flash cards, you need to think about how you will use them effectively. There is a link below to further information about the Leitner system of using flashcards:

YouTube: The Leitner Method



Click here to watch our video explaining flash cards

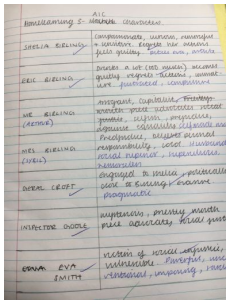
Self-Quizzing

Using your knowledge organisers, flash cards and any form of revision material: read, cover, regurgitate and then check your answers for homework knowing you will be tested on this knowledge.

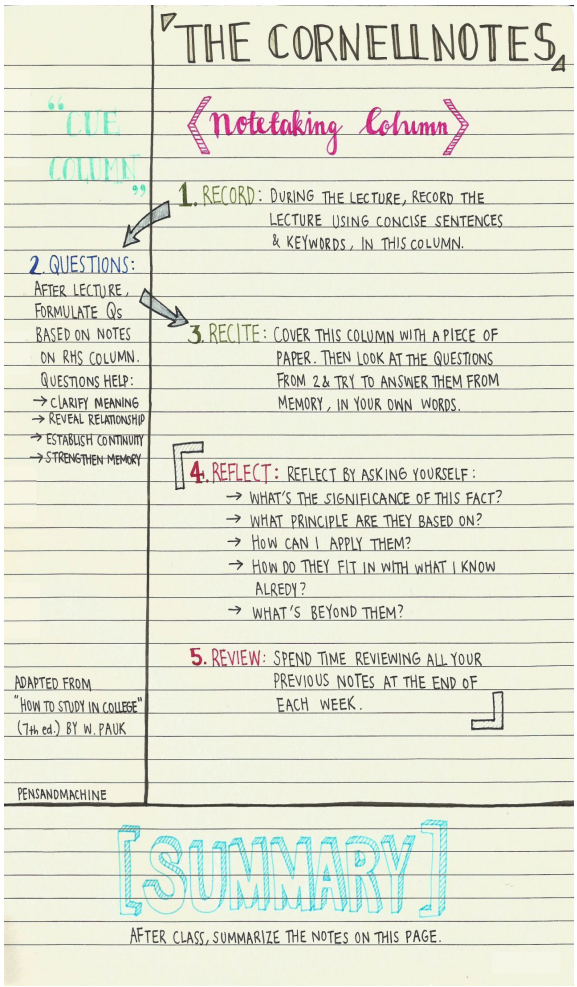
You might want to make quiz questions for yourself.

You can then self assess any missed information in a different colour pen to show where the gaps in their knowledge.

Here is a short video about the power of testing: The Power of Testing



Effective Learning Strategies



Cornell Notes

This method can be used in your revision books as a great method to get you to 'think' about your revision.

Simply split your page into 3 sections as shown on the diagram opposite:

- Note Taking
- Key words / concepts
- Summary

Click here to watch our video explaining Cornell notes

After reading the piece of information or knowledge you are trying to revise, you should first condense into notes. You should use sub headings, dual coding and minimal highlighting in your notes.

The keyword section can be used to identify all subject specific keywords or ask yourself questions

This should then be summarised in the bottom section of the page

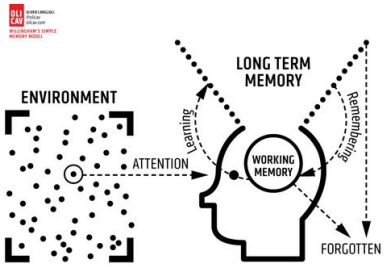
Useful links:

The learning scientists: https://www.learningscientists.org/

Memrise: https://www.memrise.com/

Quizlet: https://quizlet.com/en-gb

Seneca: https://www.senecalearning.com/



Think hard, work hard, go far

Notes...