

# Revision Planning

A revision plan will make revision easier for you.

It will make it easy to work out **what** you need to revise, **when** you can fit the time in to revise it, and to record **what** you have revised before you move on to revise something else. You will have enough to remember without trying to recall this information and, therefore, making a **good** revision plan before you start will get you off to the **best** start.

In order to make a revision plan you will need to work out:

- i) **When** the exams are - you **should** have inserted these **dates** into your diaries.
- ii) How much **time** you have each week to revise - you **should** have worked this out at the start of the booklet.
- iii) What you have to do **in addition to** revising – for example attending clubs.
- iv) Periods of **free** time; these **need** to be built into **every** revision period, either as TV breaks or just time out for relaxing.
- v) **What** you have to learn.
- vi) How much you can **realistically** cover in a revision session (10, 20 or 40 minute 'chunks').
- vii) **All** the topics in the syllabus. Then you will need to **break** these **down** into manageable 10, 20 or 40 minute 'chunks'.
- viii) A detailed weekly revision plan to **record** when you **intend** to revise individual topics.

Did you know that simply reading your notes and exercise books over and over again is NOT revising! Look at the different ways of revising that follow.

## BEFORE You Start Revising

Try to organise a special revision work area. If everything is set up in one place, you will be able to make a **fast** start to your revision **instead** of being put off from starting because you cannot find any books, pens, calculators etc.

- i) You will need a room or area where you will not be disturbed, and this area should not be used for anything but revising.
- ii) You will need to be able to leave your work in this area without anyone else disturbing it.
- iii) You will need good lighting.
- iv) Do not let your revision area get too hot or too stuffy as this will make you feel tired.
- v) If you can, use the wall space for notices, timetables, calendars, goals etc.
- vi) Have background music on, if you wish, but do not have it too loud.
- vii) Try and keep each subject's notes together so that you can find them easily.
- viii) Always stop every 30-40 minutes and do a 'mini-exercise' (e.g. walk about).

Drink plenty of water as this is good for the brain.

## **Ten steps for successful revision**

1. Find a good environment in which to revise.
2. Make a realistic revision timetable; mark subjects and topics on it (see your teachers about missing work).
3. Know your areas of strength and weakness; mix them up on your revision timetable.
4. Always make your own revision notes (you will learn as you write and once you've made the notes, you're half way there).
5. Stay focussed (don't try to make notes about everything... stick to the important points).
6. Use other active revision techniques (Mnemonics, mind maps and revision cards) for extra success and to break up the boredom.
7. Tick off topics when you've revised them; feel good about it!
8. Split your revisions into 40 minute long sessions, including time to test what you've remembered.
9. Have a short relaxation / exercise break between revision sessions to unwind.
10. Frequently remind yourself how useful your revision is and look back at what you've achieved so far.

# Active Revision Techniques

Simply reading through work is a VERY POOR way of remembering it. You can spend hours thinking that you're revising by doing this – but actually, very little information stays in your head!

Active revision methods are much better. Ten active revision methods are:

1. Summarise points on revision cards.
2. Use mnemonics.
3. Make mind maps/spider diagrams; stick them on the wall.
4. Repeat lists or processes aloud over and over again.
5. Tape notes and play them back.
6. Set yourself questions from your notes – go over wrong answers.
7. Explain work to a friend/parent.
8. Get someone to test you.
9. Try the activities on the Bite size videos (just watching the video isn't good enough)
10. When you feel ready, work through past papers.

# The Exam!

## Exam tips – sitting the exam

### The night before the exam:

- Stop working at least one hour before bed to allow your mind to relax.
- Do something to help you relax- like a nice bath.

### The morning of the exam

- Eat something (NOT a big fry up, as this will make you feel lethargic).
- Be prepared; find out what is involved in each of the examinations that you are going to sit. Organise yourself the night before and get plenty of sleep.
- Check you have the correct equipment with you before you leave the house (pens pencils, ruler, scientific calculator, etc)
- Do take a watch or clock so that you can time your answers
- Leave for the exam in plenty of time
- Ensure you know your seat and location (gym/hall)
- Look through the paper first and mark difficult questions/initial thoughts
- Decide which question to answer first, it should be the easiest for you to answer, not necessarily the first one.
- Underline key words in the questions, scribble notes if necessary
- Select the questions that will best enable you to demonstrate your knowledge to the examiner
- Look at the marks available and read the questions carefully, following instructions given in the paper (e.g. to show all workings, word limits etc)
- Use the information provided on the paper (the answer's often nearly all there)
- Pace yourself and allow enough time to answer all the required questions

- Write as neatly as possible to help the examiner to mark your work. Marking untidy writing is difficult
- For longer answers, take a few minutes before you begin to produce a structured plan of what you are going to include in each section
- Allow yourself ten minutes at the end to read through your answers and correct any mistakes
- Cross out anything you do not want the examiner to read (e.g. an earlier answer to a question)

## **Exam tips – after the exam**

- It is easy to fall in to the trap of wondering how well you performed and to discuss this with your fellow students. Your time would be better spent looking ahead to your next examination.
- Don't panic – you won't be the only student who is anxious about their answers
- Don't compare your answers with those of other students – this can create negative feelings
- Have some fresh air and food and take time to relax before you start revising
- Don't rush to your textbooks to check your answers – there is no point at this stage
- Focus on the next exam and how you might improve your exam technique
- Have a quick look at your revision plan. Do you need to adjust it?
- Think positive!