



Southend High School for Girls

Revision Strategies
Preparation for End of Year Examinations
KS3

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Introduction

In this booklet you will find all the information that you need to help you prepare for the End of Year Examinations including handy tips about the most effective revision strategies and also how to manage exam stress.

Why have End of Year Examinations?

End of Year Examinations provide an excellent opportunity for you to experience and practise the routines of a formal, high stakes examination. In addition, they provide a useful measure of assessing your attainment and progress.

Seven ways that examinations are good for you :

1. They motivate you to do revision early
2. They help you to identify topics you need to revise
3. They test how effective your revision strategies are
4. They allow you to get used to exam pressure
5. They allow you to practise exam techniques
6. They help to increase your belief that exams are doable
7. They provide you with an opportunity to ask for help.

(Inner Drive)

How to create a revision timetable

Week 1	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
7 AM - 8 AM							
8 AM - 9 AM							
9 AM - 10 AM							
10 AM - 11 AM							
11 AM - 12 PM							
12 PM - 1 PM							
1 PM - 2 PM							
2 PM - 3 PM							
3 PM - 4 PM							
4 PM - 5 PM							
5 PM - 6 PM							
6 PM - 7 PM							
7 PM - 8 PM							
8 PM - 9 PM							
9 PM - 10 PM							
10 PM - 11 PM							

Key	
	Subject
1	English Lit
2	English Language
3	Maths
4	Spanish
5	Biology
6	Chemistry
7	Physics
8	Spanish
	Non-study time

Step 1

Fill out all non-study commitments e.g.

- sports training
- Extracurricular activities

Step 2

Fill in your study sessions using the information below to guide you. You may choose to spend more/less time than suggested but remember you will only get out what you put in!

In week 1 the example shows 10 hours of home study:

- 4 hours of **SUBJECT 1**
- 4 hours of **SUBJECT 2**
- 2 hours of **SUBJECT 3**

Step 3

Remember to set aside time for breaks. Try to stick to these times and avoid distractions such as mobile apps and social networking sites.

Week 2	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
7 AM - 8 AM							
8 AM - 9 AM							
9 AM - 10 AM							
10 AM - 11 AM							
11 AM - 12 PM							
12 PM - 1 PM							
1 PM - 2 PM							
2 PM - 3 PM							
3 PM - 4 PM							
4 PM - 5 PM							
5 PM - 6 PM							
6 PM - 7 PM							
7 PM - 8 PM							
8 PM - 9 PM							

Key	
	Subject
1	Delete these
2	words and replace
3	with your subjects.
4	They will be
5	automatically
6	inserted into
7	every page of
8	your study plan.
	Non-study time

Step 1

Fill out all non-study commitments.

Step 2

Fill in your study sessions using the information below to guide you. You may choose to spend more/less time than suggested but remember you will only get out what you put in!

In week 2 the example shows 10 hours of home study:

- 3 hours of **SUBJECT 1**
- 3 hours of **SUBJECT 2**
- 2 hours of **SUBJECT 3**
- 1 hour of **SUBJECT 4**
- 1 hour of **SUBJECT 5**

Step 3

Remember to set aside time for breaks. Try to stick to these times and avoid distractions such as mobile apps and social networking sites.

When should I revise?

In order to revise effectively, you have to think hard. Thinking hard is tiring. Therefore, when you revise you should choose a time when you find it the easiest to focus. For some this may mean early morning, whilst for others this may mean the evening. Whichever time it is, it is important that it is at a point when you are well-rested.

Revision timetable template

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
8.00-9.00							
9.00-10.00							
10.00-11.00							
12.00-13.00							
13.00-14.00							
14.00-15.00							
15.00-16.00							
16.00-17.00							
17.00-18.00							
18.00-19.00							
19.00-20.00							

Adjust the timings to suit you best and remember to plan in 'you' time

Revision Techniques and effective study habits

It is important also that you manage your time when revising. The **Pomodoro** technique is highly effective in helping you do this. This technique is designed to improve concentration and combat multitasking.

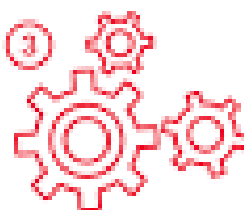
THE POMODORO TECHNIQUE



1
Decide on the Task That You Need to Do



2
Set the Timer to 25 Minutes



3
Work on the Task Until the Timer Rings



4
Take a Short 5 Minute Break



5
After 4 Cycles Take a 15-30 Minute Break

Retrieval practice

Retrieval practice is one of the most effective ways to revise. It is a learning strategy which focuses 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.

By answering questions rather than merely reading or highlighting information, you're putting yourself in the best position possible to succeed and remember as much information as possible. Past papers, multiple choice tests, self-quizzing, brain dumps and using flashcards are a great way of doing this.



(Inner Drive)

In the next few pages we will look at some common retrieval activities.

Flashcards – how to use them effectively

The most effective flashcards include one question followed by one answer (or one term followed by one definition)

Don't force your brain to remember a complex and wordy answer. It's easier for your brain to process simpler information so split up longer questions into smaller and simpler ones,


You will end up with more flashcards this way but your learning will be more effective.


The Leitner System as outlined below is a very effective way to use flashcards


The Leitner System

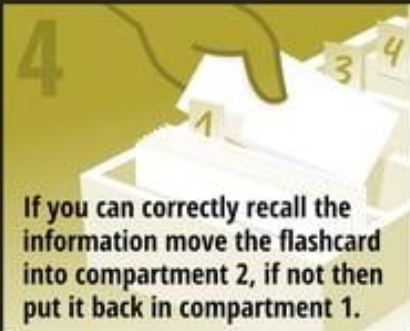
USING FLASHCARDS TO REVISE

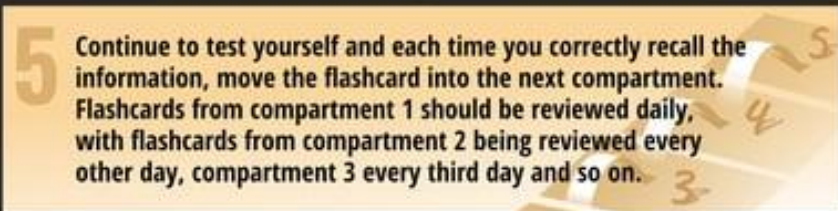
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- 

1 Split a box into 5 different compartments and label them 1 to 5.
- 

2 Place all your flashcards in compartment 1.
- 

3 Test yourself on a flashcard
- 

4 If you can correctly recall the information move the flashcard into compartment 2, if not then put it back in compartment 1.
- 

5 Continue to test yourself and each time you correctly recall the information, move the flashcard into the next compartment. Flashcards from compartment 1 should be reviewed daily, with flashcards from compartment 2 being reviewed every other day, compartment 3 every third day and so on.
- 

6 Eventually, all your flashcards will have been transferred to compartment 5 and the information they contain stored in your long-term memory.

Self quizzing using flashcards

1. Read the question on your flashcard
2. Write your answer on a piece of paper
3. Put your flashcard down to one side
4. Move onto the next card
5. Repeat steps 1-3
6. Keep your flashcards in the order you have quizzed them in
7. Mark your answers – highlight any answers you got wrong.

Mind maps

Mind maps are designed to summarise key information and connect areas of a topic or subject, so it is important not to put too much information into a mindmap and overcrowd it.

Follow these steps when creating your mind map

1. Identify knowledge – select a topic you wish to revisit. Have your class notes / knowledge organisers to hand.
2. Identify sub topics – place the main topic in the centre of your page and identify the sub topics that will branch off.
3. Branch off your sub topics with further detail. Try not to fill the page with too much writing.
4. Use images and colours to help make topics stick in your memory, by providing a visual aid.
5. Put it somewhere visible – place a completed mind map where you can see it frequently.



Brain Dumps

A brain dump is a simple strategy that can have a big impact on your learning.

You simply need to identify a topic area and write down as much as you can remember about it. From there you can look to organise your information and then check your understanding against your original notes – add in any key bits of information you have missed with a different coloured pen. Revisit your brain dump at another point in your revision schedule and try to complete the same 'brain dump' again. Compare the next one with the original 'brain dump.' Did you remember more?

Interleaving

Interleaving is a process where you mix and combine multiple topics within a subject area while you revise in order to improve your learning by making links between them where relevant. Blocked practice, however, involves studying one topic very thoroughly before moving on to another. Interleaving has been shown to be more effective than blocked practice, leading to better long-term retention.

A → B → C → D

B → D → A → C



1.

Switch

Switch between topics during each session.

It allows you to think about what you are doing with your time when you are revising.

2.

Review in different orders

When reviewing make sure you do it in a different order that you learnt them, or previously revised them.

By revisiting material from each topic several times, in short bursts, this **increases the amount of information you can recall in your exams.**

3.

Make links to remember more.

Try to make links between ideas and review your revision notes.

This helps you make connections between topics and forces you to think harder about which strategies need to be applied to which problems.

Applying Interleaving to your revision

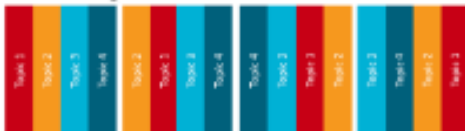
1. Break units down into small chunks and split these over a few days rather than revising one whole topic all at once.
2. Decide on the key topics you need to learn for each subject.
3. Create a revision timetable to organise your time and space your learning.

Blocking



Interleaving is for topics within one subject – not subjects themselves.

Interleaving



You can apply this in your revision timetable.

When revising science, mix up the topics that you study in that session, don't just focus on one.

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, graphic organisers.

- When you are revising your class materials find or create visuals which link with the information. Compare and combine the visuals with the words.
- Don't worry if you're not an artist – it isn't about the quality of your drawings. The focus is to improve and deepen your understanding.
- Make sure that your images / diagrams are relevant. Be careful when using photos as too many background images can detract from the main points.

Step 1



LEARN TO STUDY USING...

Dual Coding

COMBINE WORDS AND VISUALS



HOW TO DO IT

Look at your class materials and find visuals. Look over the visuals and compare to the words.

Look at visuals, and explain in your own words what they mean.

Take information that you are trying to learn, and draw visuals to go along with it.

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Next



LEARN TO STUDY USING...

Dual Coding

COMBINE WORDS AND VISUALS



TRY IT NOW

Now that you have read a bit, close the book and draw a visual that incorporates the main ideas.

Spaced Practice

Spaced practice is regularly revising material so that you are doing little and often rather than everything all at once.

Doing a little amount regularly is more effective than a lot all at once. Five hours spread out over two weeks is more manageable than the same five hours all at once. When we 'cram' we can get swamped and feel overwhelmed.

Step 1

LEARN TO STUDY USING...

Spaced Practice

SPACE OUT YOUR STUDYING OVER TIME

- 1 TESTING
- 2 SPACING
- 3 SKETCHING



HOW TO DO IT

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

Review information from each class, but not immediately after class.

After you review information from the most recent class, make sure to go back and study important older information to keep it fresh.

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Next

LEARN TO STUDY USING...

Spaced Practice

SPACE OUT YOUR STUDYING OVER TIME

- 1 TESTING
- 2 SPACING
- 3 SKETCHING



TRY IT NOW

Think of a topic you read about a few chapters back. What were the main ideas?

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Elaboration

This involves asking further questions and 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 on the topic will become and your ability to recall it.

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


Step 1



LEARN TO STUDY USING...

Elaboration

EXPLAIN AND DESCRIBE IDEAS WITH DETAILS



HOW TO DO IT


Ask yourself questions while you are studying about how things work and why, and then find the answers in your class materials and discuss them with your classmates.

As you elaborate, make connections between different ideas to explain how they work together. Take two ideas and think of ways they are similar and different.

Describe how the ideas you are studying apply to your own experiences or memories. As you go through your day, make connections to the ideas you are learning in class.

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Now



LEARN TO STUDY USING...

Elaboration

EXPLAIN AND DESCRIBE IDEAS WITH DETAILS



TRY IT NOW

Close the book and think about how what you just read connects to something you already know.

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Exam vocabulary

It is important that you know and understand exam vocabulary and command words so that you can understand what the exam is asking you. Command words can vary across different subjects so it is important that you understand the command words in the exam question and in the correct context.

Analyse – examine something in detail and try to explain or interpret it.

Annotate – add a diagram, image or piece of text to illustrate or describe features rather than simply 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 and reach a conclusion, including pointing to evidence.

Evaluate – consider different options / factors and reach a conclusion about their importance / impact / value / worth

Examine – consider carefully and provide a detailed account of the topic.

Explain – provide a detailed description or interpretation of a term /concept etc.

Identify – point out and name from a number of possibilities.

Illustrate – refer to a specific case study or example (not just illustrate and draw).

Label – point out specific features on a diagram, image or piece of text.

Justify – Explain your opinion; explain why your selected choice / judgement is better than **other options**.

Summarise – sum up the main points arguments – this can be similar to ‘*outline*’.

Simple Revision strategies



Brain Dump

Choose a topic and write down as much as you can remember, without referring to your notes. Check your notes and see what you missed then try fill the gaps without the notes. Check your notes a third time and add the missing information.



Flash cards

Write flash cards for each topic, in all subjects, then mix them up for the most effective revision. Check out the Leitner System for effective spacing and interleaving. Keep your flash cards simple – one question, one answer per card.



Map it out

Take an essay question or writing question and map out your answer, without writing a full response. Look at the mark scheme and decide if you plan meets the criteria. DO this for a number of questions, then choose one and write the full response.



Past papers

Ask your teacher for practice questions or exam papers. Complete them without notes in the exam conditions, then check your answers and identify the gaps in your knowledge, so you can target your revision.



Quizzes

Write a set of questions and answers and ask someone to test you. Its important to either write or say your answers loud. Reading through quizzes in your head can give you a false sense of security.



Thinking hard: Reduce

Read a section of your notes then put them aside and reduce what you need into 3 bullet points, each one no more than 10 words. Look back at the notes and decide if you missed anything important. Hide the notes and write a fourth bullet point.



Practice Introductions

For essay subjects, take a past exam question and practice writing effective introductions and conclusion. Look back at your notes and remind yourself of the important things to remember. Practice for different topics, texts and papers.



Thinking hard: Connect

For each subject, consider the exam paper and group together questions that require the same technique to answer. Write down the requirements for each type. Find a previous example you have completed and identify where you've met the criteria.



Thinking hard: Transform

Read a paragraph from your notes or a text book, and transform it into a diagram, chart or sketch – no words allowed. OR Look a diagram in science, for example, and transform it into a paragraph of explanation.



Key vocabulary

For a particular topic, make a list of key vocabulary, then do the following: define each word; use each term in a sentence; create a question where the key word is the answer; identify other words which connect to each of the words in your list.

Well-being during exams

Exam periods can be stressful so although it is important to revise and be prepared so as to help reduce stress and anxiety, it is also important that you look after your mental and physical health.

Eat – diet is important so don't neglect it during the exam period. Don't skip meals, stay consistent with a healthy, balanced diet. Stay hydrated!

Sleep -staying up late to revise is a bad idea! Sleep deprivation can have a negative impact on concentration, performance and memory. Ensure you get enough sleep.

Exercise – take regular breaks from revision with exercise. Take part in a sport you enjoy or go for a walk .

Relax – relax during the exam period! It is essential that you have time to switch off. Watch Netflix, read, listen to music, catch up with your friends.



Remember...



GOOD LUCK!