



Year 11 Revision Guide

**How do I prepare for
my exams?**

**Practical Revision
Strategies**

Introduction

The best revision is active. Don't just sit there – **DO SOMETHING! Revise Actively!** Revising actively means you can make sense of the material you want to learn. Examples of active revision include: writing revision notes, making revision cards, designing mind maps, re-writing notes, doing examples and trying past paper questions, recording notes onto an iPod

We remember:

- **10% of what we read**
- **20% of what we hear**
- **30% of what we see**
- **50% of what we hear and see**
- **70% of what we say**
- **90% of what we both say and do**

Active learning means you will remember more and be an A* Learner. If all you did was read through your notes that is a U!

Know your Exams

Make sure that you know your exam. This sounds obvious but many students do not. Do you know the answer to the following questions about every subject you study?

- How many papers does each exam have?
- How long is the exam – are the papers the same length?
- How many questions are there in each paper and how long should you spend on each question?
- Do you know what content/skill to learn for each exam you sit?
- Do you understand what each question is asking you to do?
- What % of the final mark is the Coursework component?

Your teacher will help you with this and will give you Past Paper questions as Homework and in class. Become an expert in your exams. Actively learning content, Completing past paper questions in timed conditions is a great revision strategy. As you get closer to the exams the more exam practise you should complete but without the knowledge of the topics this is difficult so learn the content first.

Some Revision Strategies

Revision Notes

Revision notes are useful for any subject which has lots of knowledge to learn. It also means you are actively learning your notes and it forces you to tackle bulging folders of notes or exercise books full of notes. You can summarise and condense your notes & under organise them into different headings. You should reduce your original notes in your exercise books into something more manageable

Ways of making revision notes include: traditional notes on A4 paper, revision cards and patterned notes. Select which method is the best for you. Always write your own notes – don't just borrow a friend's notes. You can use revision guides but they are no substitute for your own notes.

Writing Traditional Revision Notes

- Choose a topic you want to revise. Break it into 'bite-size' chunks of work. Don't try completing an entire unit in one sitting.
- Read through your notes – this may be your exercise book, folder work or even a revision guide. Make sure that you understand the notes you are reading. Start early enough so you can check any topics you don't understand with your teacher.
- Then make your notes. Pick out any key words, ideas, diagrams that are essential information.
- Make sure your notes are interesting. Use colour, boxes, circles, underlining, highlighting to make things stand out.
- Keep your notes organised in a folder. This could be by subject/exam/topic etc. so that you can find your notes easily and this means less wasted time.
- Test yourself. Repeat!

Writing Revision Cards

Revision cards are usually postcard size and you can make your own or buy them yourself from a stationary shop. Their small size gives revision cards advantages – they can be carried around and as they only contain a small amount of information you don't feel swamped when you look at them. Make your revision cards outstanding by:

- Always write the subject in the top right hand corner
- Always put a title at the top of the card
- Develop your own method of numbering the cards
- Don't be afraid to scrap a card and rewrite it if you are unhappy
- Cards covering the same topic should be kept together. An elastic band or a treasury tag can be used
- Use colour and pictures to make them interesting
- Revision Cards are a good method of memorising any writing frames your teachers might have given you to help you answer the questions

Mind map/Concept Map

Some students find revising using mind maps or concept maps more fun to do and more interesting. They are particularly good at giving you an overall view of a topic and for showing links and connections

- Write the main topic in the middle of the paper
- For each key point draw a branch out from the main topic
- Write a key word or phrase on each branch
- Add details including diagrams, pictures. Highlight links and connections. Be creative.

Using my revision notes: Memorise and Test

- Make sure that you understand your notes.
- Read through your notes/revision cards/mind map
- Then the difficult job of memorising the notes begins. You can re-read through your notes several times and this does help.
- Try and create memory hooks to help you remember things. Hooks work best when they are unusual and funny and yours. Use links, pictures and stories. Be active.
- You must test yourself. Get others to test you.
- Teach someone the topic you have learnt. Use it or lose it!
- Make the most of any revision sessions your teacher puts on
- Use technology. Use revision websites; download audio revision topics to iPod's and phones
- Answer Past Paper questions. Use any writing frames your teacher has given you. Do questions as timed activities – it's no good doing an A* answer in 30 minutes if you only have 15 minutes on that question in the exam. A lot of exams have the big mark questions at the end of the paper so timing is crucial

Revision Timetable

There are many good reasons to use a revision timetable:

- To avoid last minute rush and panic before the exam
- To set up good routines and habits
- To ensure each subject gets a fair amount of time
- To spread out your revision
- To avoid wasted time and to plan in leisure time

HOWEVER...lots of students start revision timetables but don't use them effectively

Top tips:

Before you start draw up a chart of the dates of your exams

Decide when you are going to start – give yourself a decent amount of time at least 10 weeks before your first exam but you will need to plan your revision for any Mock exams as well. Revising thoroughly for mocks will help you with the real exams as you will identify weaknesses or problems and have time to solve them before the real thing!

A good revision timetable strikes a good balance between flexibility and routine. Just because you don't stick exactly to your revision timetable doesn't mean it's not working.

When you create your timetable you need to divide your day up. You can divide by blocks – e.g. morning, afternoon or evening or by dividing your time into hour blocks. Remember to plan in times when you are already busy – e.g. if you are revising you might well be still in lessons.

Don't revise the same topic or subject for hours at a time. Variety makes revision more interesting

Organising your time

Half the problem with revision is down to organisation. Plan and organise what you are going to do and what you need to be successful.

- Set a definite time for revision where you will start & finish
- Keep revision sessions to a reasonable length
- You can listen to music when revising but don't let yourself become too distracted
- Find a place to work which suits you – is it a calm well lit environment
- Have you got everything you need to revise – pens, paper, revision cards, folders, highlighters, revision guides etc.
- On your workspace have everything that you need but no more so you can avoid distraction
- Do have breaks but keep them short.
- Keep hydrated – your brain function will suffer if you don't have water regularly
- An effective revision session might be divided up into 40 minutes revising, 10 minutes testing, 10 minutes resting. You can vary this depending on the activity

Coping with the Stress of Exams

Everybody gets nervous and worried about exams but you can reduce your nerves

- Be prepared – if you know you've worked hard and revised you will be less stressed
- Talk to people – family, friends and teachers
- Asking for help is not a sign of weakness – it is a sign of maturity
- Be positive. Visualise yourself being successful. Being negative makes you worry more and makes you less enthusiastic about working hard
- Exercise is a great way of dealing with stress as it relaxes you and keeps you calm
- Eat properly and keep hydrated

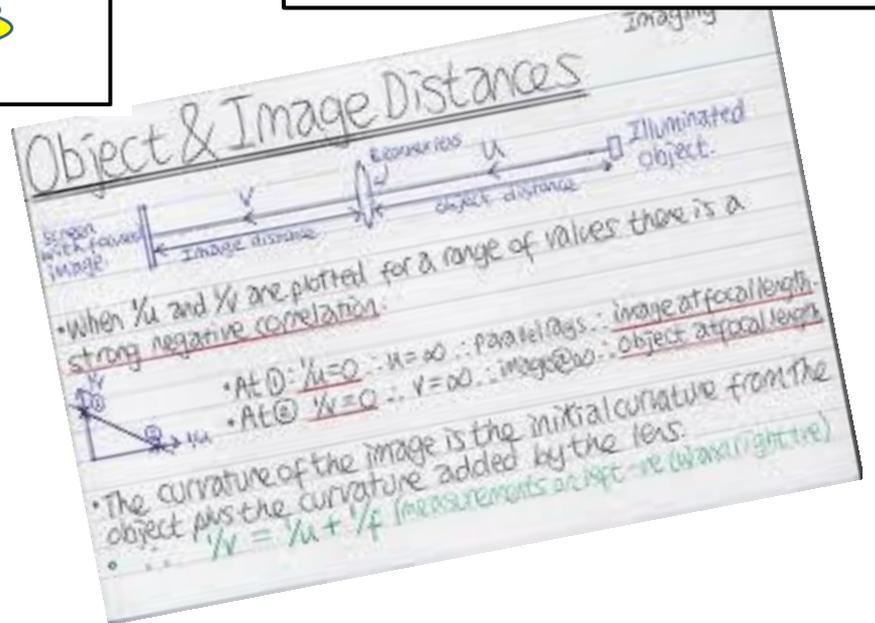
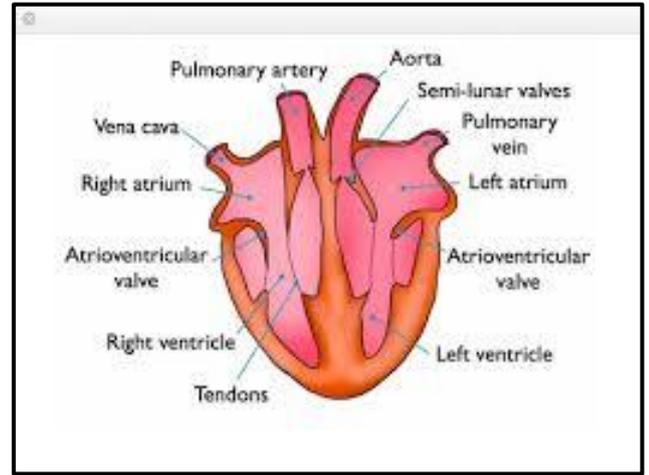
Examples of revision cards

'SOURCES' EXAM: KEY TOPIC 1: The Impact of the Depression

Unemployment in Britain in the 1930's

- Unemployment in the 1930's was highest in the coal, iron, steel, cotton and shipbuilding industries of the north and east of England and in Scotland
- By 1932 34% of miners out of work
- When a mine (pit) closed often the whole village/town that served them became unemployed – a massive impact on the community

80% of all new factories were in London or nearby e.g. car making



Examples of a Mind Map

