

NS NORTHAMPTON
SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

A GUIDE TO SUCCESSFUL REVISION



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1. INTRODUCTION

This Revision Guide is intended to provide you with some helpful advice on how to revise and prepare successfully for examinations.

General tips:

- ✧ Preparation is key
- ✧ Plan to start NOW!
- ✧ Set realistic, achievable targets
- ✧ Make a revision timetable for term time and holidays
- ✧ Find a quiet place where you can revise, remove all distractions eg mobile phone
- ✧ Use the syllabus for each subject to make a list of topics to work through
- ✧ Use the revision notes provided by your teachers
- ✧ Use revision guides, these will have accurate notes and practice questions
- ✧ Google GCSE revision apps. Find ones that you like and install them on your phone
- ✧ Watch tutorial clips available on YouTube and BBC bitesize when you are struggling to understand
- ✧ Work with friends to help each other to succeed
- ✧ Get plenty of sleep, exercise, eat healthily and drink plenty of water



2. Step 1 - STRENGTHS, MOTIVATION, ASPIRATIONS

To get yourself into the right mindset for effective revision it is important to revisit what is important to you and what your ultimate goals are. This will help with your motivation.

My strengths are:

The things that I need help with are:

The things that motivate me are:

My goals for year 11:

My aims for next year:

What do I need to do to get there (minimum grades, actions, targets):

3. Step 2 – REVISION TIMETABLES AND PLANNING


Don't leave anything to chance, make sure you have planned your revision time carefully so that you cover each subject equally, focussing on the topics you find particularly difficult. As you get close to your exams, plan your time around your exam timetable. The timetable for all exams, along with the exam boards used by NSG, can be found on page XXX

The following templates might help you. There are also lots of Apps that will do this for you, here is just one example [Get Revising](#)


HOLIDAY REVISION TIMETABLE – Example

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Morning	Maths	Science	Free Time	Catch up with work or friends	Computer Science
Break - Make sure it's brain food	Apple	Cookies and milk	TREAT TIME	Surprise me!	TREAT TIME
Morning	English	History	Free Time	Catch up with work or friends	Free Time
Lunch - A balanced lunch will help you to concentrate	Jacket potato	Sandwich	Pasta Salad	Wraps	Surprise me!
Afternoon	Free Time	Catch up with work or friends	Film	Spanish	Free Time
Evening	FAMILY TIME	FAMILY TIME	FAMILY TIME	FAMILY TIME	FAMILY TIME


TERM TIME REVISION TIMETABLE - Example

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
4pm - 4.45pm	Maths	Science	Revision	Catch up with work	Art	9am - 10am Revision	9am - 10am Revision
Break - Make sure it's brain food	Apple	Cookies and milk	TREAT TIME	Surprise me!	TREAT TIME		
5pm - 5.45pm	English	History	Revision	Catch up with work	Revision	12pm-1pm Revision	12pm-1pm Revision
Dinner	Jacket potato	Pasta	Stir Fry	Curry and Rice	Surprise me!		
7pm - 8pm	Revision	Catch up with work	Film	Spanish	Revision		
Evening	FAMILY TIME	FAMILY TIME	FAMILY TIME	FAMILY TIME	FAMILY TIME	FAMILY TIME	FAMILY TIME

HOLIDAY REVISION TIMETABLE – Template

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Morning					
Break - Make sure it's brain food					
Morning					
Lunch - A balanced lunch will help you to concentrate					
Afternoon					
Evening					

TERM TIME REVISION TIMETABLE - Template

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
4pm - 4.45pm	Green	Teal	Purple	Red	Pink	Purple	Purple
Break - Make sure it's brain food	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey
5pm - 5.45pm	Yellow	Orange	Purple	Red	Purple	Purple	Purple
Dinner	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey
7pm - 8pm	Purple	Pink	Red	Light Blue	Purple	Blue	Blue
Evening	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

SUNDAY

**YEAR 11
WEEKLY
REVISION
PLAN**

Key areas of revision to focus on this week:

DAILY CHECKLISTS

Today I will accomplish:

(remember to tick these off as you complete each task, this will give you a sense of achievement)

1 Big Thing

Write BIG task here

3 Medium Things

Write MEDIUM tasks here

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

5 Little Things

Write LITTLE tasks here

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

4. Step 3 – REVISION TECHNIQUES AND EXAM PREPARATION

Now that you have planned **when** you are going to do your revision you now need to think about **what** you are going to do to revise. This section looks at different resources you can use as well as techniques to help you memorise content and apply your knowledge when answering exam questions.

Did you know:

- ✧ The average person needs to revisit something **five times** for it to be retained in their memory.
- ✧ It can take **two** weeks to understand a new topic, but once you understand, it may only take twenty minutes to revise it!
- ✧ You do not need to abandon your social life, friends and hobbies while revising.

It might be helpful to think of the three Ps:

Plan it! - revision timetables/to do lists

Place it! - find a quiet space free from distractions

Practice it! - identify and use revision activities that work for the task

Shopping List:

Try and gather all of the resources you need ahead of revising.

- ✧ Topic list – ask your teachers for one or use the content pages in your revision guides
- ✧ Exam board and tier of entry for each subject – this has been given to you
- ✧ Past papers – ask your teacher for these or download them from the website
- ✧ Past paper mark schemes or answer booklets with worked solutions
- ✧ Notes and revision materials made in lessons
- ✧ Knowledge organisers – some are available in your Google Classrooms
- ✧ Revision guides
- ✧ Revision apps
- ✧ Post its
- ✧ Flash cards
- ✧ Highlighters
- ✧ Paper
- ✧ Scientific calculator
- ✧ Pencil case

You are now ready to start revising. The next section starts with an overview of effective revision followed by a detailed explanation of different techniques. You might find different techniques work for different stages of your revision and for different subjects. You will also find using a range of techniques makes revising more interesting.

5. TOP TEN REVISION TIPS

1. Short bursts of revision (30-40 minutes) are most effective. Your concentration lapses after about an hour and you need to take a short break (5-10 minutes).
2. Find a quiet place to revise - your bedroom, school, the library - and refuse to be interrupted or distracted.
3. Make sure you don't just revise the subjects and topics you like. Work on your weaker ones as well. It is often better to do these first to get them out of the way while your mind is fresh
4. Make your own revision notes because you will remember what you have written down more easily. Stick key notes to cupboards or doors so you see them every day.
5. Rewrite the key points of your revision notes; read them out loud to yourself. We remember more than twice as much of what we say aloud than of what we merely read.
6. Use different techniques, there are detailed examples of these in the next section. Make your own learning maps, use Post-it notes to write key words, create flash cards. Record your notes on your phone and listen back to them at regular intervals. Ask friends and family to test you. Chant or make up a song.
7. Practise on past exam papers or revision tests. Start by completing one section at a time and progress to doing an entire paper against the clock. Make sure you mark these using the mark scheme. It is important to know where you still have gaps in your knowledge and where you are making mistakes. Research the gaps in your knowledge using your notes, revision guides or the internet. Correct your mistakes using the mark scheme so that you don't make the same mistakes again.
8. You will need help at some stage, ask parents, older brothers and sisters, teachers or friends. Ask teachers if they wouldn't mind if you contacted them to ask for help. Use websites specifically designed for revision.
9. Manage your stress! Eat properly and get lots of exercise and sleep!
10. Believe in yourself and be positive. If you think you can succeed you will; if you convince yourself that you will fail, that's what will probably happen.

6. RETRIEVAL PRACTICE



LEARN TO STUDY USING... Retrieval Practice

PRACTICE BRINGING INFORMATION TO MIND

LEARNINGSCIENTISTS.ORG



HOW TO DO IT

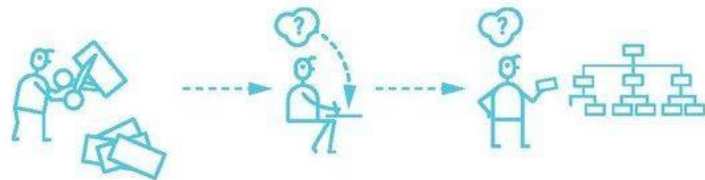
Put away your class materials, and write or sketch everything you know. Be as thorough as possible. Then, check your class materials for accuracy and important points you missed.



Take as many practice tests as you can get your hands on. If you don't have ready-made tests, try making your own and trading with a friend who has done the same.



You can also make flashcards. Just make sure you practice recalling the information on them, and go beyond definitions by thinking of links between ideas.



HOLD ON!



Retrieval practice works best when you go back to check your class materials for accuracy afterward.



Retrieval is hard! If you're struggling, identify the things you've missed from your class materials, and work your way up to recalling it on your own with the class materials closed.



Don't only recall words and definitions. Make sure to recall main ideas, how things are related or different from one another, and new examples.

RESEARCH

Read more about
retrieval practice
as a study strategy

Roediger, H. L., Putnam, A. L., & Smith, M. A. (2011). Ten benefits of testing and their applications to educational practice. In J. Mestre & B. Ross (Eds.), *Psychology of learning and motivation: Cognition in education*, (pp. 1-36). Oxford: Elsevier.

7. DUAL CODING



LEARN TO STUDY USING...

Dual Coding

COMBINE WORDS AND VISUALS

LEARNINGSIENTISTS.ORG



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.

HOLD ON!

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

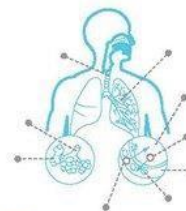
INFOGRAPHIC



CARTOON STRIP



DIAGRAM



TIMELINE



GRAPHIC ORGANIZER



Work your way up to drawing what you know from memory.



RESEARCH

Read more about dual coding as a study strategy

Mayer, R. E., & Anderson, R. B. (1992). The instructive animation: Helping students build connections between words and pictures in multimedia learning. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 4, 444-452.

8. SPACED PRACTICE



LEARN TO STUDY USING...

Spaced Practice

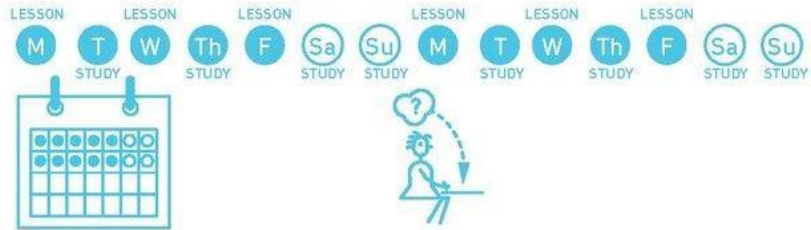
SPACE OUT YOUR STUDYING OVER TIME

LEARNINGSCIENTISTS.ORG

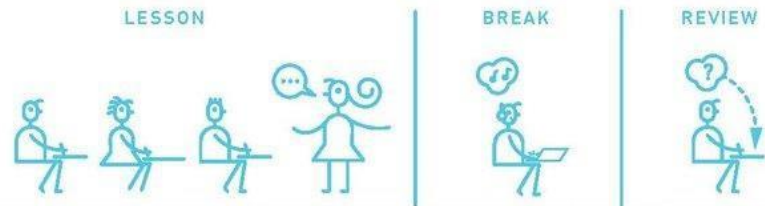


HOW TO DO IT

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.



HOLD ON!



When you sit down to study, make sure you are using effective study strategies rather than just re-reading your class notes.



This may seem difficult and you may forget some information from day to day, but this is actually a good thing! This forces you to retrieve information from memory (see Retrieval Practice poster).



Create small spaces (a few days) and do a little bit over time, so that it adds up!



RESEARCH

Read more about spaced practice as a study strategy

Benjamin, A. S., & Tullis, J. (2010). What makes distributed practice effective? *Cognitive Psychology*, 61, 228-247.

9. INTERLEAVING



LEARN TO STUDY USING...

Interleaving

SWITCH BETWEEN IDEAS WHILE YOU STUDY

LEARNINGSOCIETISTS.ORG



HOW TO DO IT

Switch between ideas during a study session. Don't study one idea for too long.



Go back over the ideas again in different orders to strengthen your understanding.

TOPICS
A B C



STUDY
SESSION
1

TOPICS
C B A



STUDY
SESSION
2

TOPICS
A C B



STUDY
SESSION
3

Make links between different ideas as you switch between them.



HOLD ON!



While it's good to switch between ideas, don't switch too often, or spend too little time on any one idea; you need to make sure you understand them.



AAA BBB CCC
TOPICS

ACB CBA BCA
TOPICS

Interleaving will feel harder than studying the same thing for a long time. But don't worry - this is actually helpful to your learning!



RESEARCH

Read more about
interleaving
as a study strategy

Rohrer, D. (2012). Interleaving helps students distinguish among similar concepts. *Educational Psychology Review*, 24, 355-367.

10. ELABORATION



LEARNINGSOCIETISTS.ORG

LEARN TO STUDY USING...

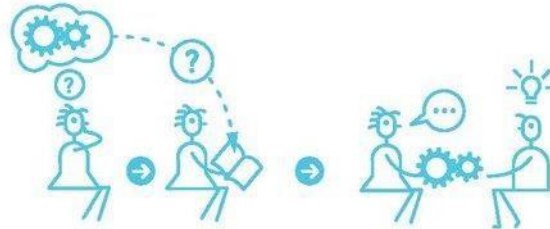
Elaboration

EXPLAIN AND DESCRIBE IDEAS WITH MANY DETAILS

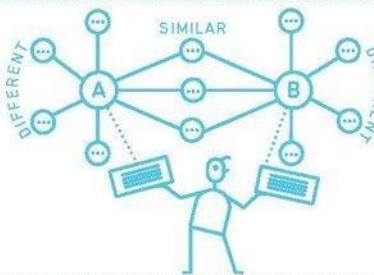


HOW TO DO IT

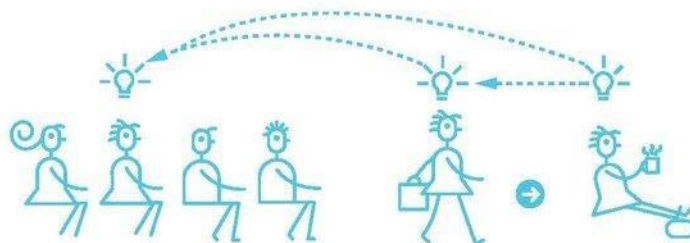
Ask yourself questions while you are studying about how things work and why, and then find the answers in your class materials and discuss them with your classmates.



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.



HOLD ON!



Make sure the way you are explaining and describing an idea is accurate. Don't overextend the elaborations, and always check your class materials or ask your teacher.



Work your way up so that you can describe and explain without looking at your class materials.

RESEARCH

Read more about elaboration as a study strategy

McDaniel, M. A., & Donnelly, C. M. (1996). Learning with analogy and elaborative interrogation. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 88*, 508-519.

Wong, B. Y. L. (1985). Self-questioning instructional research: A review. *Review of Educational Research, 55*, 227-268.

11. CONCRETE EXAMPLES



LEARNINGSCIENCE101.ORG

LEARN TO STUDY USING ... Concrete Examples

USE SPECIFIC EXAMPLES TO UNDERSTAND ABSTRACT IDEAS



HOW TO DO IT

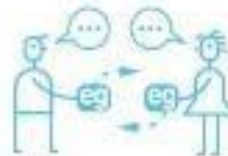
Collect examples your teacher has used, and look in your class materials for as many examples as you can find.



Make the link between the idea you are studying and each example, so that you understand how the example applies to the idea.



Share examples with friends, and explain them to each other for added benefits.



HOLD ON!



You may find examples on the internet that are not used appropriately. Make sure your examples are correct - check with your teacher.



Ultimately, creating your own relevant examples will be the most helpful for learning.

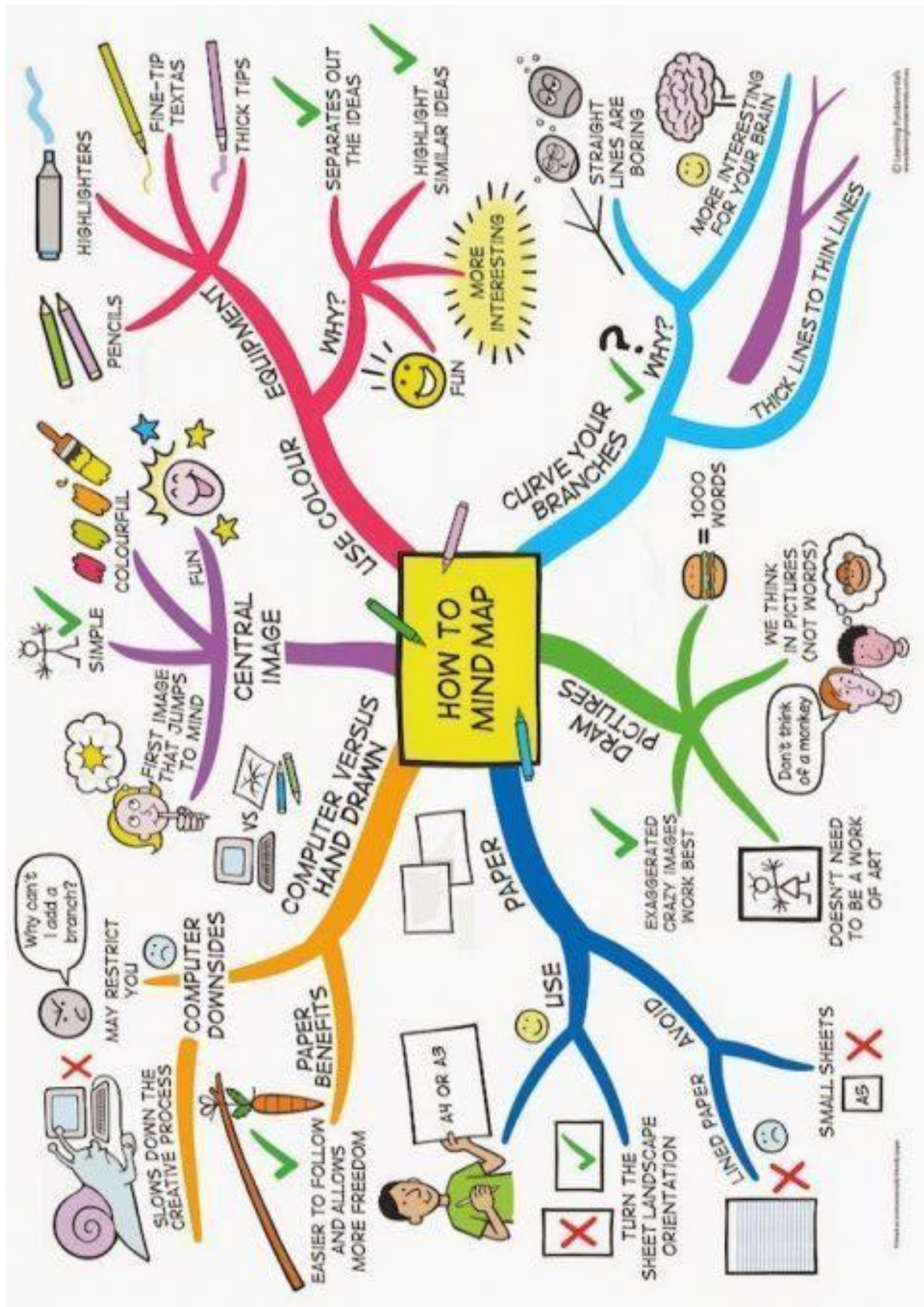


RESEARCH

Read more about concrete examples as a study strategy

Rawson, K. A., Thomas, R. C., & Jacoby, L. L. [2014]. The power of examples: Illustrative examples enhance conceptual learning of declarative concepts. *Educational Psychology Review*, 27, 483-506.

12. MIND MAPS



13. SIMPLE BUT EFFECTIVE TECHNIQUES

☆ READ INTELLIGENTLY

Spend five minutes flipping through a book or your notes looking at headings and summaries. Then attempt to mind map what you have spotted and what you can remember.

☆ USE CARDS

Write questions on one side and answers on the other. Then get your family to test you. Merely creating the cards will help your recall. You can also use them to test yourself when faced with 'dead' time at bus stops or waiting for someone.

☆ PHYSICAL LEARNING

Use the environment. Use a different room for each subject.

-Notice aspects of the environment such as the light or feel of the room - how do you feel in that place?

☐ Attach your notes to the furniture. Notice their location.

☐ Associate a different location with each subject.

☐ Associate furniture, windows, plants and ornaments with particular topics.

☆ USE YOUR CLOTHES

Associate items of clothing with topics in your learning - a shoe could represent angle proofs; each button on a shirt could represent a quotation. Clothes with patterns, pockets and buttons are especially useful.

☆ USE PARTS OF YOUR BODY

Parts of your body are especially helpful as triggers to memory, as your body will be there in the exam room! For example, each hand could represent an essay plan – each finger one major topic; each segment of each finger a principal reference you would use. The fingernails could represent counterarguments; the knuckles could be associated with relevant quotations.

☆ USE MOTOR MEMORY

Study on the move. If you exercise, associate each movement with something you wish to remember. To refresh your memory, go through the exercise in your mind. Writing, drawing and speaking also use motor memory: the fine-muscle sequence is recorded by the brain.

☆ CONDENSE

Fitting notes onto one side of paper makes them easier to stomach, so rewrite and cut down as you go. The process of condensing notes also requires you to concentrate and think about meaning if you are to condense them accurately. This is highly effective for improving understanding and committing information to memory