

# Earlston High School



# STUDY SKILLS



🕒 **TIME**

*Memory, Review & Recall* *Page 2*

*Optimising revision time* *Page 3*

*Planning revision time* *Page 3 - 4*

📖 **LEARNING STRATEGIES**

*Key words- using colour* *Page 5*

*Mind maps* *Page 6*

*Brainstorming* *Page 7*

*Memory techniques* *Page 8 - 10*

*Note taking* *Page 11*

*Summing Up* *Page 12*

*Past Paper Questions* *Page 13*

# ⌚ TIME ⌚

## ⌚ *Memory*

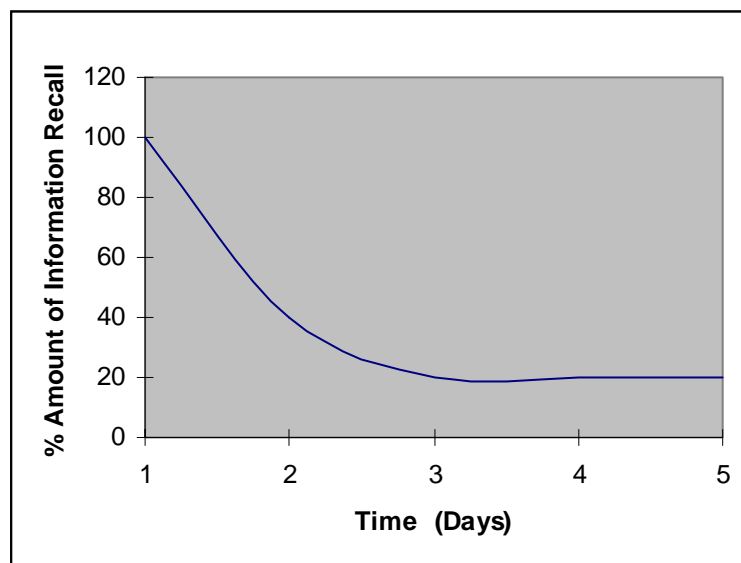
💡 Is re-creation of knowledge

*We remember from the beginning and end of an experience*

💡 Memory is enhanced when we relax

## ⌚ *Review and Recall*

### *Review of Information Improves Recall*



*increased recall of information with regular review*

*decreased recall of information when no review takes place*

- We forget 80% of what we learn after one day
- Review can improve recall of information
- We must **regularly review** information in order to commit it to long term memory
- Repetition → repeating information x 5 commits it to long term memory

## 🕒 ***Optimising Revision Time***

- 📖 You should study for at least 25 minutes or your brain doesn't get to work properly
- 📖 We remember more from the **beginning** and **end** of an experience
- 📖 Information is best remembered when it is 'chunked' into small pieces
- 📖 Something is easily remembered if it is **regularly revised**
- 📖 Simple memory strategies or mnemonics can change memory
- 📖 Taking frequent breaks during study time enhances memory

## 🕒 ***Planning Revision Time***

### **Stage One: Preliminary Revision**

*Make sure you know all the units and sub units for the subject. Check that you have all the necessary revision materials for each sub unit. Ask yourself which parts of the work you know well, and are comfortable with; and which bits you are less sure and confident about.*

(Appendix A)

### **Stage Two : Concentrated Revision**

*About 8 or 9 weeks before the exam, plan for concentrated revision for each subject. Concentrate on those topics, which you and your teacher identified as needing extra work or as **likely to come up in the exam.***

### **Stage Three : Last minute Revision**

*In the days leading up to each exam, go over the course once more. This final stage is to reinforce the revision you have already done, and commit firmly to short-term memory some of the vital information.*

### **The Way Ahead**

*From now to the exams there is a lot of time that **YOU** control - evenings, weekends, holidays, study leave.*

### **Your planning sheets will help you to :**

- give priority to revision*
- set targets for revision*
- plan time for revision*

***Being responsible means having nobody to blame but yourself***

### **TIME MANAGEMENT**

- *Revising well means working well*
- *Working well means using time well*
- *When you can manage your time well, you will manage your revision well*
- *It's dead easy to put revision off*
- *But if you really really want exam success, you must do your revision*
- *The only way to exam success is to face up to revision and make time for it*

***"If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail."***

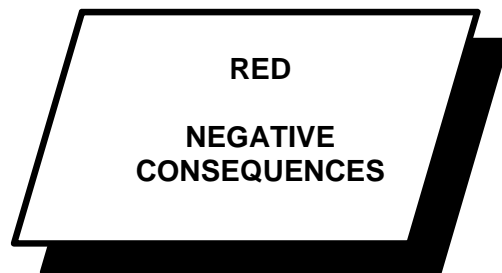
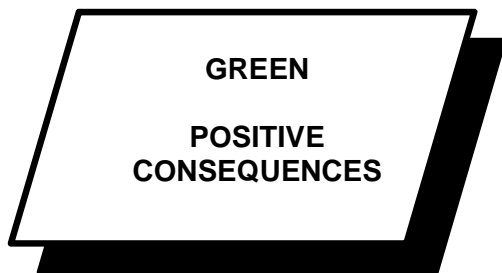
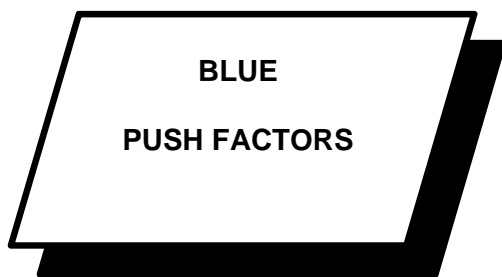
**Will Carling, Former Rugby Captain**

## How to Learn

## Colour it

*Write key points on coloured cards or bits of coloured paper or by highlighting words with highlighters (the brain remembers facts more easily when they are in colour)*

*Use different colours for different aspects of the topic. For example if you are revising the topic “Migration” in geography, use colours for affecting Migration.*



*Arrange the items on the floor or on a table in a way that makes sense to you. Turn the pieces of paper over to use as flash cards and test yourself.*

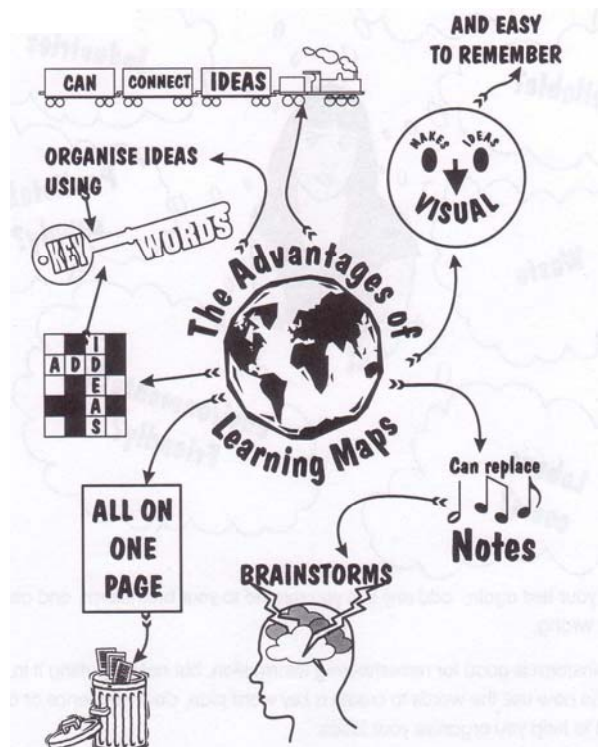
## **Mind Mapping**

- Mind maps are an excellent tool for effective learning
- Mind maps can be used to record a lot of information in a small amount of space
- Generate new ideas and organise them at the same time

## **Mind Maps or Learning Maps**

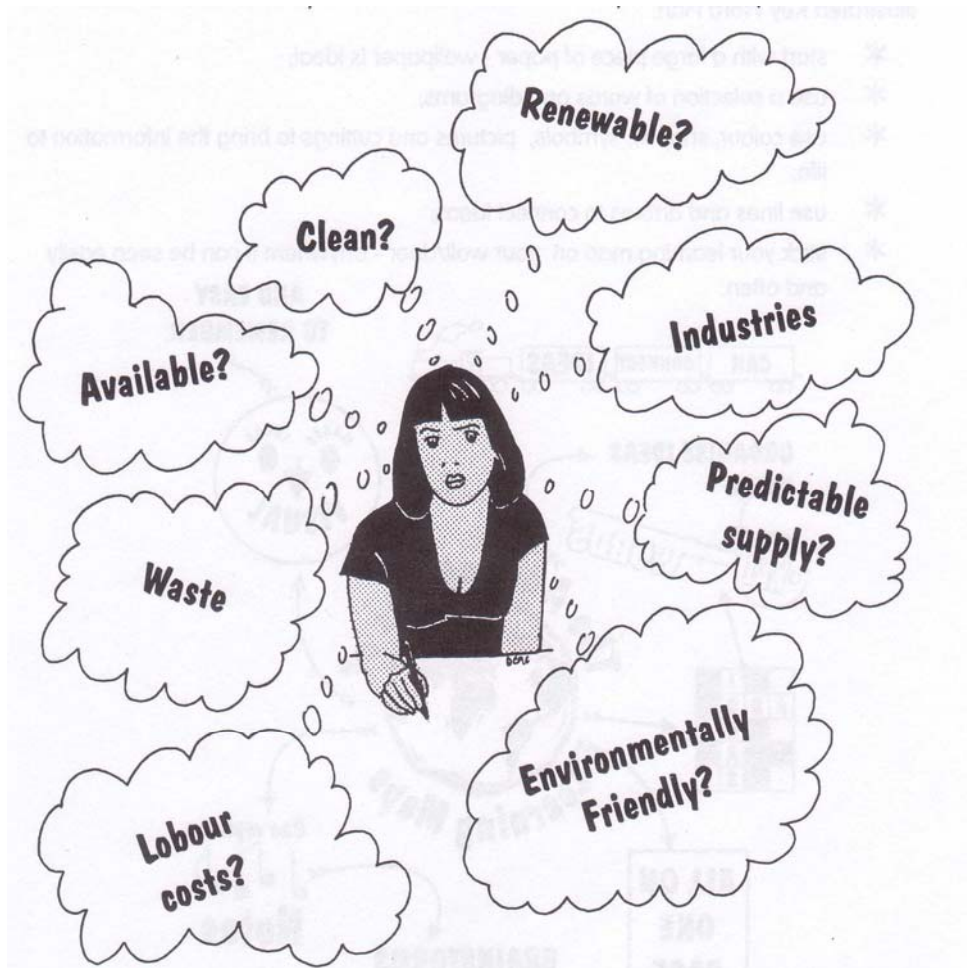
*Create a detailed poster summarising all the information you need. It is like an illustrated Key Word Plan.*

- ⌘ *start with a large piece of paper or a sheet of A4 - wallpaper is ideal*
- ⌘ *use a selection of words and diagrams*
- ⌘ *use colour, shapes, symbols, pictures and cuttings to bring the information to life*
- ⌘ *use lines and arrows to connect ideas*
- ⌘ *stick your learning map on your wall/door - anywhere it can be seen easily and often*



## **Brainstorm**

*Read the text you are revising carefully.  
Now cover it up and **brainstorm** - write down all the bits of information  
you can remember as fast as you can in any order.*



*Look at your text again; add any bits you missed to your brainstorm, and  
alter any bits you got wrong.*

*The brainstorm is good for remembering information, but not for putting  
it in a correct order. So now use the words to create a key word plan,  
clock sequence or any other method to help you organise your ideas.*

## **Memory Techniques**

### **Remember it**

Here are some more notes about ways of learning and memorising. Ask yourself :

***Which of these ways suits my preferred learning style ?***

***What could I learn using each technique ?***

### **Understand it**

There's no way round this. If you understand the information, you will remember it easily. If you don't, you won't. Your long-term memory stores *meanings* rather than *meaningless words*. If you don't understand what you are trying to learn, then ask a teacher, a member of the family, a friend.

#### ***Understanding***

- Making the correct associations*
- You don't know what you know until you say it*

#### ***Misunderstanding***

- Making incorrect associations*

### **Intent to remember it**

You won't remember anything unless you **want** to remember it. The most important memory tool is your **intention** to remember. Say to yourself things like "*I will remember this*", "*This is interesting*", "*I will need this*". In other words, make a definite decision to remember.

### **Break it**

Take breaks often. 30 minutes concentration is about the most people can manage before they need a break. Also, it's been proved that people learn most near the beginning and end of revision sessions. In the middle concentration sags so, if you have lots of breaks, you have lots of beginnings and endings!

### **Relax it**

Breaks don't need to be long. Just a few minutes will be enough. When you take a break have a drink of water. This helps to keep your body alert. Listen to a favourite music track. Stretch. Go for a walk

around the house. Do a bit of physical exercise. Do a muscle tensing and relaxing activity. Listen to a relaxation cassette. Whatever turns you on (or **off** in fact!). When you are feeling relaxed and confident, the parts of your brain that create memories work better.

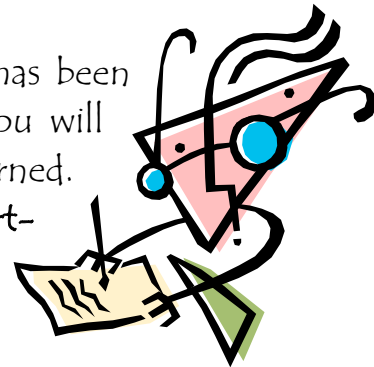
### **Mnemonic it**

A mnemonic is where you take the first letter from each word in a list and make a meaningful sentence with the words, which begin with the same letters. The well-known example is "Richard Of York Gave Battle In Vain" for the colours of the spectrum.

### **Review it**

Reviewing means, "looking through again". You go back to your key points and check them through once more. Better still : **test yourself first, then check them through**. A good time to review is straight after you have taken a break. Another good time is just before you go to sleep and again as soon as you wake up.

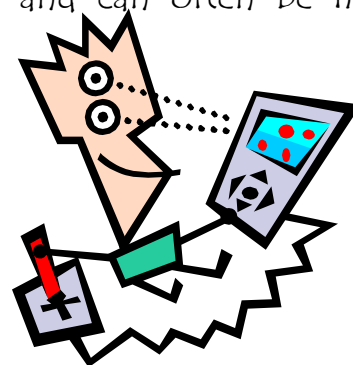
Reviews help you to recall (remember) what has been studied. If you don't go back and review, you will forget most of what you thought you had learned. Reviewing shifts your learning from your **short-term** to your **long-term** memory.



### **Record it**

Some people find it useful to record key points on cassette tape. They play the recording back while they sit or lie down with their eyes closed. Some prefer to let the recording "wash over them" while they are dozing or even sleeping.

People with a strong musical intelligence sometimes record a piece of music which they play while they are learning key points. They associate the information with the music and can often be heard humming quietly in exams !



## **Hide and Seek it**

*This is how to play key word hide and seek :*

- ❶ Make a **Key Word Plan** (KWP) of the information you want to memorise
- ❷ Study the KWP for one or two minutes
- ❸ Put the KWP away. On a fresh piece of paper, write the KWP out from memory
- ❹ Now compare this with your original KWP. Did you miss anything out? Check
- ❺ Put the first two KWP's away. Take another piece of paper and write the KWP out again from memory.
- ❻ Compare this third version with the first two
- ❼ Repeat the process until the KWP you write from memory is the same as the original

## **Flash card it**

This method is really good for scientific formulae, technical terms or foreign words.

Write out the items you want to remember on separate pieces of card. You can put them directly onto the object they are naming (foreign words for example) or on the wall of the bedroom where they will be seen before going to sleep and first thing in the morning.

OR write out the item you want to remember on one side, and its meaning on the other.

Any spare moment can be used (on a train or bus for example) to review the flash cards. Some people find that holding the flash cards above eye level helps them to memorise more easily.

## *Note Taking*

### **SQ3R** Technique - *An Active Approach To Notemaking ....* *from textbooks, exercise books and revision guides.*

**S** SKIM THE TEXT                      **quick reading** for a general impression

**Q** QUESTION THE TEXT                      to provide a **focus** for your notemaking. Ask yourself what you want to learn from this text eg. *What are the causes of the First World War ? What is the structure of the earth ?*

**R** READING :  
SCAN THE TEXT                      **close reading** to pick out the main points in the answer to your question. Don't make separate notes at this stage. Use a highlighter pen or use a pencil to circle or underline key points.

**R** RECALL                                      **quick notemaking** - cover the text and then make a KWP to see what you've taken in so far. Read the notes.

**R** REVIEW : RE-READ  
THE PASSAGE                      **check and update notes**

- Have you missed any details in the text ?
- Have you found out what you wanted to learn ?
- Are your notes easy to understand ?
- Do they fit in with other notes on this topic ?
- Will your notes help you to answer exam questions on this topic ?

## SUMMING UP

- ☑ **Revision needs to be active** : “PEN IN HAND” !!
- ☑ **Get a focus** - if you know what you’re looking for, you’re more likely to find it
- ☑ **Work out questions for which you’re seeking answers** - these will focus you
- ☑ **Make notes** of your answers - this will provide you with something for next time
- ☑ **Don’t copy** - note the ideas **in your own words in your own way**
- ☑ **Use key word plans** to test what you have learnt or understood so far
- ☑ **Check !** Re-read materials and revise your KWP

**Have something to show for your efforts**



## PAST PAPER QUESTIONS

One of the best ways to find out about a subject is to do past paper questions . Every subject has past papers which you may obtain from your teachers or buy at the newsagents. You should study a topic from a subject and test out your level of understanding by completing relevant past papers.

Ask your teachers about where to obtain past papers.

