

# St Ignatius College



Year 11 Revision Guide 2018

## Revision:

***Repeatedly reviewing material you have previously covered in order to store the information in your long-term memory.***

Revision does take time and effort. Everyone is different, so there's no ideal plan we can give you, but in this revision guide are some planning points which we know help.

Remember that your teachers are here to help you and they want to support you in your learning and revision. So, if you get stuck, please ask for their help.

We wish you the best of luck with your exams and we hope that you will be delighted with your results in August.

Best wishes

The Staff of St Ignatius College

# TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE REVISION

## **Build your life around revision**

This is one of the hardest things to do. Now you are in your last year of Key Stage 4, it is vital that you make sufficient time for revision. For the next few months, some other activities might need to be put on hold until after the exam. Think about what has got to give way and where you can turn 'down time' into 'study time'. Sacrifices should be less difficult now the exams are getting closer.

## **Study space**

Get the basics right: have you got a comfortable chair, clear desk, good light, comfortable temperature, pens, coloured pencils, highlighters, paper, folders, dividers, flashcards, post-it notes, ruler, eraser, calculator, dictionary, revision guides, exercise books, textbooks, past papers, markschemes, examiners reports?

If the place where you do most of your school work is not easy to work in, what can you do to make it better? What distracts you when you are trying to settle down to revision? Can you do something to remove that distraction (e.g. place your phone into a lockable box or different room)? If you find it difficult to study at home, use your local library or arrange to stay longer in school to attend a study club:

**Engine room 204: Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 3.05pm – 4.45pm.**

## **Keep healthy**

As we said at the beginning, revision takes time and effort and a lot of your energy. You do not need to stay at home and study all the time, however, try and avoid any activities that leave you drained and exhausted the next day.

Make sure you eat sensibly and drink plenty of water. Moderate exercise and plenty of sleep are also important. Remember that you should stop revising one hour before you intend to go to sleep. If you don't allow for some down time after revision, it is likely that you will find it harder to fall asleep straight away.

## **Keep calm**

It is natural to feel a bit of tension as the exam season is drawing closer. Remember that if you have organised your time, started revision early and kept to your revision timetable, you are going to be fine.

If you are worried, try to identify what it is that is bothering you and talk about it with your parents and teachers. The chances are that you can do something about it.

## REVISION TIMETABLE

Before you start your revision it is essential that you know what needs to be revised in each subject. Often your teacher will provide you with a checklist or exam specification which makes it also clear which topics are on which exam paper.

You can use the exam board specification to divide the task up into a lot of smaller topics (it is easier to get started and to see your progress if you divide one large topic into a series of smaller topics). This means that each topic is fairly quick which keeps up your motivation to continue with your revision:

### Example:

Chemistry Topic 5.9.1 The composition and evolution of the Earth's atmosphere

Specification point	Notes made	Revised notes	Need help
Students need to know the proportion of gases in atmosphere			
Students are required to know the composition of the Earth's early atmosphere			
Students need to describe the process by which the level of oxygen in the atmosphere increased			
Students need to describe the process by which the level of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere decreased			

Make a provisional timetable for which topics you will cover each week. It is better to revise a little every day than to revise everything in one go. Five hours spread over the week is more effective than revising for five hours in one day.

Build in some unallocated study time because you may get a bit behind. With a revision timetable you are able to check that you are revising all subjects and are not running out of time.

Put the timetable up on the wall or fridge at home where everyone can see it. Ask your family to help you keep to it. If you find that you are repeatedly not sticking to your revision timetable, find out why you are struggling to keep to it and rewrite it!

Example Revision Timetable:

	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
7am	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast
8am	school	school	school	school	school	TV	French
9am	school	school	school	school	school	English	Break
10am	school	school	school	school	school	Break	French
11am	school	school	school	school	school	English	Maths
12pm	school	school	school	school	school	lunch	Lunch
1pm	school	school	school	school	school	Science	Geography
2pm	school	school	school	school	school	Break	Break
3pm	school	school	school	school	school	Science	History
4pm	Tea & TV	Trampolining	Tea & TV	Drama club	Tea & TV	Break	Tea
5pm	Tea & TV	Tea & TV	Football	Tea & TV	French	Tea	Homework
6pm	Maths	Geography	Technology	English	Out	Out	Break
7pm	English	Science	Maths	RE	Out	Out	Maths
8pm	RE	History	Science	History	TV	out	Break

## STRUCTURING YOUR REVISION SESSIONS

### Method 1 – The Pomodoro method



1. Select a task.
2. Set a timer to 25 minutes.
3. Work until the timer goes off.
4. Take a 5 minute break.
  
5. Set the timer to 25 minutes.
6. Go over the work done so far, then move on.
7. Work until the timer has gone off.
8. Take a 5 minute break.
  
9. Set the timer to 25 minutes.
10. Go over the work done so far, then move on.
11. Work until the timer has gone off.
12. Take a 5 minute break.
  
13. Set the timer to 25 minutes.
14. Go over the work done so far, then move on.
15. Work until the timer has gone off.
16. Take a longer break.

### Method 2 – The Revision power hour



1. Choose a small number of past paper questions.
2. Spend 20 minutes revising what you need to know to answer your chosen questions.
3. Set a timer for 20 minutes and answer the past paper questions you chose.
4. Mark your answers using the mark scheme.
5. Show your teacher your work and ask whether your marking is accurate and how you could improve your answer.

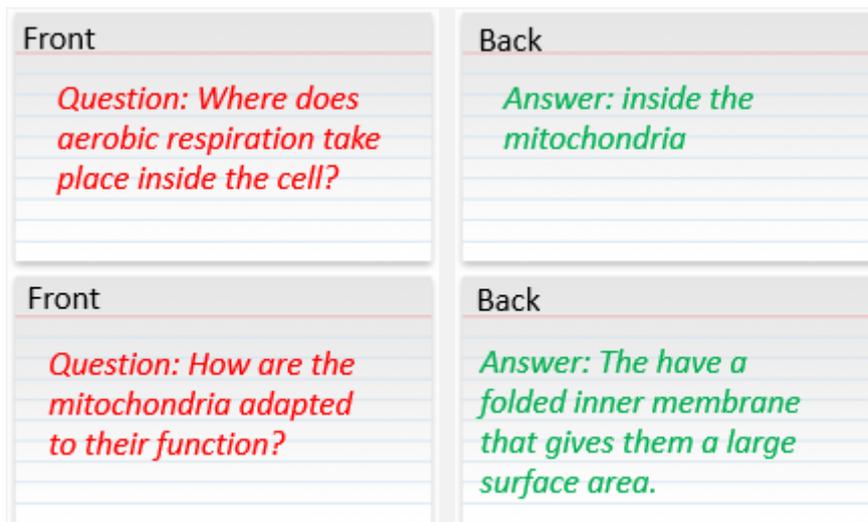
# HOW TO STUDY

## Retrieval Practice

- Choose a topic, or part of a topic. Spend time reading through the topic in your revision guide, textbook or exercise book.
- Cover up the information that you have just read and write down everything that you remember.
- Then check what you wrote against the original notes.
- Highlight the areas you have missed or did not remember correctly.
- Then repeat the process until you can remember everything correctly.

## Self quizzing

- One of the best revision techniques is to quiz yourself (or get someone else to quiz you).
- Use the notes from the revision guide, textbook or exercise book to create a set of questions and answers (on paper or flashcards). If you make flashcards, remember to write the question on one side and the answer on the other side of the same card.

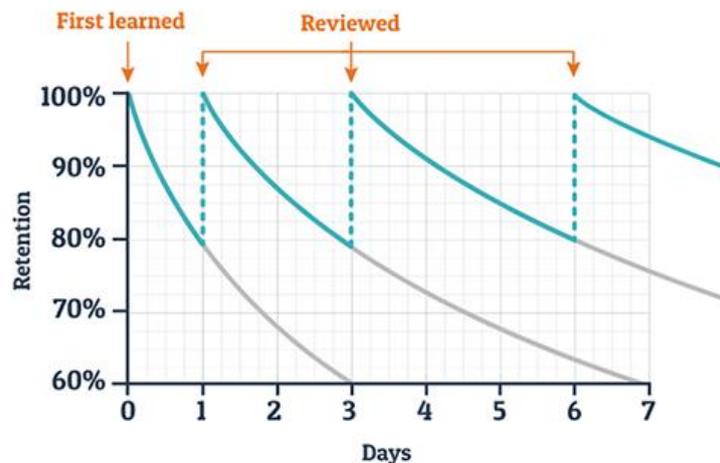


- Using this technique, you will find out exactly how much you have forgotten about a topic.
- Forgetting is a normal process. Quiz yourself more often on the questions you get wrong or forget.
- Don't stop quizzing yourself on the questions you get right. Repeated quizzing is required to transfer the information into your long-term memory.

## Spacing

- Leave time between quizzing sessions.
- Once you feel confident that you remember everything about a particular topic, allow some time to pass before returning to that topic (a few days or even a week).
- Over this time, you will start to forget some of the information. This means you will need to try hard to recall the information, which helps with the information being committed to long-term memory.

**Typical Forgetting Curve for Newly Learned Information**

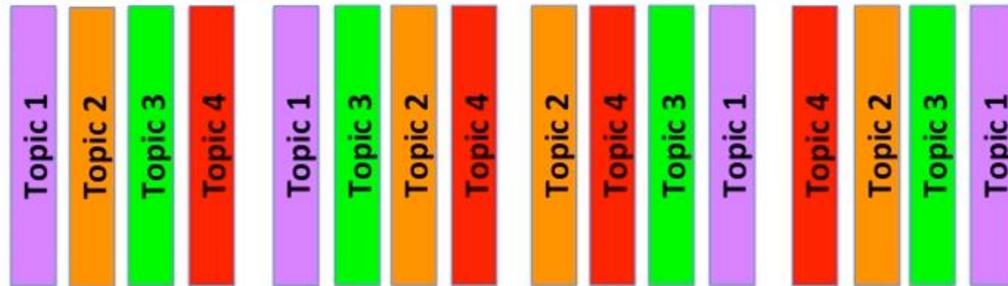


## Elaboration

- Don't just copy notes from the revision guide, textbook, exercise book. Ask yourself questions while you are studying about how things work and why.
- If you cannot answer these questions yourself, make a note of them and remember to discuss these questions with your teacher.
- Describe how the ideas and concepts you are studying apply to your own experiences and memories. This will help you recall the information in the exam.

## Interleaving

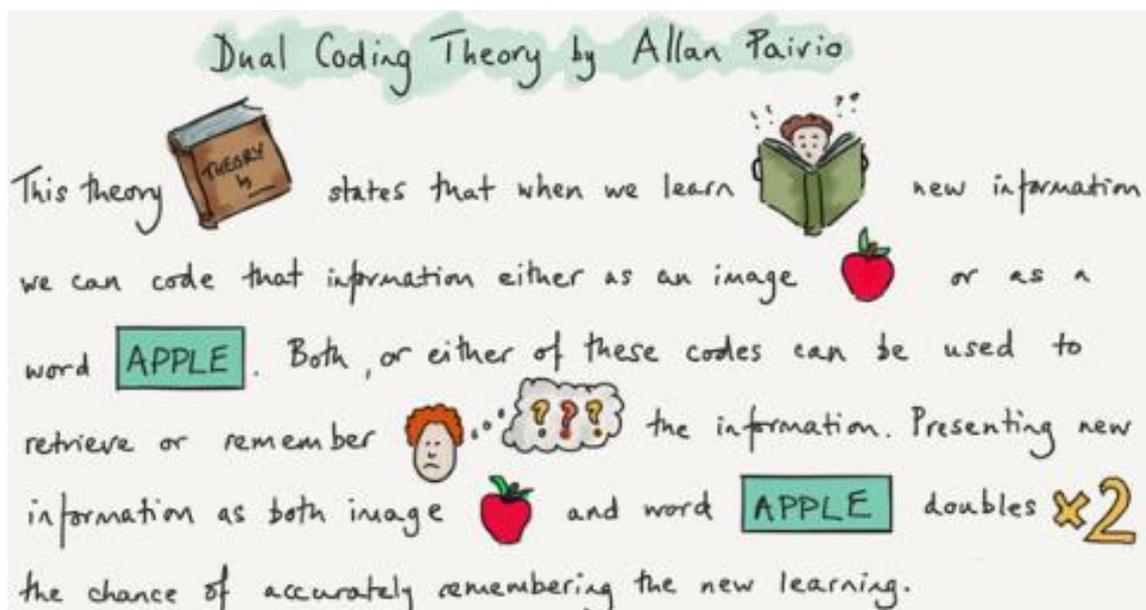
- Don't study one subject or topic for too long.
- When you go back through your flashcards or notes, go through them in a different order:



- Balance your time between subjects: if you spend too much of your time on one subject, either because it is your favourite one or because it is known to be weak, the other subjects will suffer. It is very common for students to get their best results in subjects they found difficult - because they neglected their stronger subjects during revision.

## Dual coding

- For some people it helps to draw diagrams to go along with the notes:



- You can also cover up the notes and use the diagrams/drawings as clues to explain/recall a concept. Don't forget to check for accuracy against your notes afterwards.

## Examiner reports/Insight reports

- Every year, the exam boards make public a document that is written by the examiners. In this document the examiners summarise what the most common errors were, which questions were answered well and what this good answer looked like (e.g. examiners have given high marks for answers that offer criticisms to viewpoints during an evaluation question).
- Examples of what not to do are also included.
- In terms of exam technique, this document is incredibly useful and an important resource to use during your revision. Read it carefully, turn it into notes, diagrams etc.

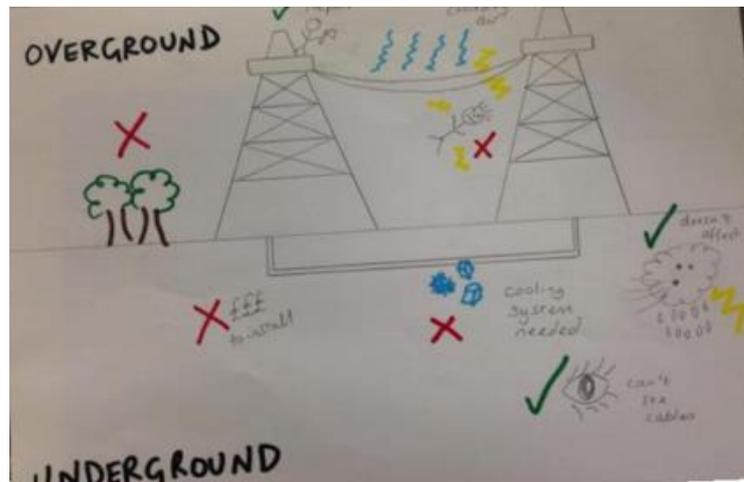
## Past Papers

- Once you know the information from your notes and flashcards, you need to move on to past papers to see how the specification is tested/examined.
- Most students will complete each past paper once, however, you should complete each past paper at least twice.
- The first time round you might have to use your notes to answer some of the questions.
- Then go through the markscheme. Only accept answers that are worded exactly like the markscheme. If you are unsure if you can award yourself a mark for an answer, ask your teacher for advice. You know what you wanted to say, but that does not mean the examiner will interpret your answer the same way and very often the examiner wants to read a very specific phrase. It is important that you do not overmark your answers.
- The second time round, you should complete the paper without any of your notes and under timed conditions so you get used to the time pressure you will be under in the exam.



## Other techniques

- Create a mind map on a topic. Then use the mind map to test yourself: turn the mindmap into explanation and descriptions and check these for accuracy. Example: Evaluate the use of overground and underground cables within the National Grid.



Advantages of overhead cables: easy and quick to repair, cables are cooled by the air.

Disadvantages of overhead cables: spoil the landscape, greater risk of electric shock, can be damaged by extreme weather.

Advantages of underground cables: cannot be seen, less likely to be affected by weather.

Disadvantages of underground cables: repairs are more expensive as the cables are more difficult to access, cooling system is needed.

- Use revision websites such as <https://quizlet.com/en-gb> , [www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize](http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize) and <https://senecalearning.com/>
- Write key points on posters and post-it notes and pin these to walls and doors around the house.
- Plan answers to essay questions. Which quotations will you include and why?
- Record a series of questions and answers (leave about 5 seconds between a question and answer so you can use this strategy to test yourself) or explanations on your phone and listen back to them on your way to and from school.
- Come up with mnemonics to remember lists (e.g. Richard of York gave battle in vain – red orange yellow green blue indigo violet).
- Find a study buddy. Structure your meetings (e.g. study, test each other, study, test each other) but make sure you stay focused and don't get sidetracked.
- Talk out loud when you quiz yourself.
- Walk (forwards, backwards, in circles) as you are quizzing yourself.

## EXAM SEASON



The hard work is done.

Your revision has met its end and now is the perfect time to calm your nerves and make sure that you are ready to enter the exam hall well rested and confident in your ability to answer the questions on the paper.

## The night before your exam, make sure you



- Have everything ready for the next day (pencil case, calculator, spare pens, school uniform, water, food, money for transport, alarm clock set)
- Re-check the time of the first exam.
- Many people think that the best use of their study time is to sacrifice sleep so that they can study more. But study after study shows that getting sufficient rest is vital to the way we process and store new information. Plan to study for a few hours in the afternoon/evening. Then get a regular night of sleep 6.5-8 hours, go to bed early. Then start studying again first thing when you wake up until it is time to take the exam. If you skimp on sleep, you will never really feel fresh, and will most likely just feel irritable, distracted, and burned out as you enter the exam hall.
- Go offline – avoid any social media sites.
- Exercise to work off stress (run, walk, swim, basketball, etc.)
- Visualise a positive exam experience. This will calm your nerves and increase your confidence.
- Remind yourself of how much revision you have done; again, this will boost your confidence.
- Focus on yourself. Do not compare yourself to others.
- Try and view the exam as a challenge or an opportunity to show off your knowledge and understanding rather than as a threat. This will reduce your stress levels.
- Remind yourself of how you overcame previous challenges. This will build your mental resilience and help you keep calm in the exam.

### Suggested timetable for the evening before an exam:

- Finish intense revision by 8pm
- Exercise for half an hour
- Review the topics for the next day's examination at 8.45pm
- Do some reading or another relaxing activity at 9.25pm
- Re-check your equipment, food, water and uniform for the next day at 10pm.
- Sleep

## The morning of the exam



- Get up early – allow time to get ready without rushing.
- Review the topics that will be tested in the exam.
- Eat a balanced and healthy breakfast. Avoid sugary foods. Drink water to ensure you are hydrated for the exam.
- Double check your school bag to ensure you have packed your pencil case, calculator, spare pens and water.
- Arrive at school with plenty of time
- Visualise a positive exam experience. This will calm your nerves and increase your confidence.
- Remind yourself of how much revision you have done; again, this will boost your confidence.
- Focus on yourself. Do not compare yourself to others.
- Try and view the exam as a challenge or an opportunity to show off your knowledge and understanding rather than as a threat. This will reduce your stress levels.
- Remind yourself of how you overcame previous challenges. This will build your mental resilience and help you keep calm in the exam.

## Enter the exam hall



- Set out your equipment.
- Imagine yourself on results day: visualise opening your results and being delighted with the outcome.
- Focus on slowing your breathing to help you relax.
- Listen carefully to the invigilator.
- Read the written instructions on the front of the exam paper carefully. These will tell you: time, choice of questions, type of answer, number of marks.
- Fill in the centre number, candidate number and your name.
- Read each question slowly. Use a highlighter to highlight or underline command words and essential information.
- Think about a general plan for the answer before writing down your answer.



