



Kelmscott School

“Putting Learning First”

How to Revise Effectively

Hard work and self-discipline lead to success

YEARS 7 – 11

Which method of revision suits you?

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Making revision effective

Before you do any revision

Tip one: Eat properly

- Have breakfast every day – your brain needs energy
- Have healthy snacks – fresh fruit, dried fruit, carrot sticks
- Eat lunch and dinner
- Treat yourself occasionally



Tip two: Drink well

- Keep hydrated by drinking water or squash regularly
- Don't drink too much tea or coffee or sweet or fizzy drinks as these can give you headaches
- Avoid energy drinks

Tip three: Put your phone away

- Phones can be distracting
- Evidence shows that students who spend more time texting and using social media get lower grades
- A recent study revealed that the mere sight of a phone was enough to reduce a person's ability to focus

During revision sessions

Tip four: Start early and spread it out

- To commit something to memory takes time
- Spreading out your revision sessions on a particular topic (eg one-hour sessions over 10 days) is more effective than spending the same amount of time in one go (ie 10 hours in one day).

Tip five: Test yourself

- Testing yourself is one of the most effective ways to improve your ability to recall information
- Testing yourself also helps you check for any gaps in your knowledge
- Practice papers provide a good starting point, as well as quizzing yourself at the end of your revision session.

Tip six: Teach someone

- After you have tested yourself, teach the material to someone else. This helps aid memory and recall.
- Teaching someone else requires you to learn and organise your knowledge in a clear and structured manner.

Tip seven: **Think twice about using highlighters**

- Research suggests they don't work very well
- People learn and recall information better if they connect it to other pieces of information, highlighters don't do this.
- Quite often, students end up highlighting whole chunks and passages of text, which can give the appearance of having worked hard, but is of little value.
-

Tip eight: **Don't listen to music**

- Parents around the world rejoice!
- Students who study in a quiet environment can recall more than those who revise while listening to music.
-

Outside revision sessions

Tip nine: **Get some fresh air and exercise**

- Do an extra-curricular sports activity, ask your PE teacher for details
- Go out for a short, brisk walk
- Play outside with friends
- Run on the spot or do some star jumps between revision sessions

Tip ten: **Sleep**

- Go to bed at a sensible time, your brain needs to rest
- Switch off electronic devices and charge outside
- your room

How to make a Revision Timetable

It's so obvious, but so important

- Manage your time!
- Either make a time-based plan or a subject-based plan, or combine the two

1	2
Time-based plan	Subject-based plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Plan out how much time you have and allocate subjects to the time periods/slots• This method is good for long and short term planning• You may choose to make a daily plan, or a weekly plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This involves breaking down each subject into topics and working through them• This method is especially good for ensuring you revise ALL information

10 top tips:

1. **Be realistic** – you won't/don't have to work all day, every day
2. **Make a list of subject topics** that you need to revise between now and your exams **3.** Concentrate particularly on those specific topics or modules **that you are weaker on.**
4. **Break down** major revision subjects into smaller parts
5. Ensure that you **include break times** during the day
6. **Work out when you 'study best'** – morning, afternoon or early evening
7. Do not leave your most difficult **or hardest subjects** until the end of the day
8. At the end of each week **assess your performance** and change your plans accordingly
9. **Keep your timetable flexible** and be ready to change it if circumstances change

10. **Experts suggest studying in slots of 30 minutes and then taking a short break before you switch subjects.**

Revision Timetable

Week commencing ____/____/____

Day	Pre school	Study support After school	e.g. 4pm-4.30pm	time	time	time
Monday						
Tuesday						
Wednesday						
Thursday						
Friday						

Day	10am-10.30am						
Saturday							
Sunday		Break		Break		Break	

Revision Timetable - holidays							
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
8.00am							
9.00am							
10.00am							
11.00am							
12.00pm							
1.00pm							
2.00pm							
3.00pm							
4.00pm							
5.00pm							
6.00pm							
7.00pm							
8.00pm							
9.00pm							

What parents and carers can do to help

Recognise how important these examinations are and how much time your child will need if they are to do as well as they can

- Let them off household chores in the run up to their exams and encourage the rest of the family to **help** by not disturbing revision
- Secure a **quiet place for study**, where work can be left out without getting on the way of others
- **Encourage** them to stick to their revision plan
- **Praise** effort and hard work
- Emphasis the need for plenty of **sleep**
- **Help** them by testing them using their revision notes
- Allow them to stick up revision post it notes
- Ensure they attend any interventions or revision sessions at school.
- **Contact** your child's subject teacher and or Head of department if you have any questions about what they are studying
- **Contact** your child's Form Tutor if you are concerned about their well-being



Using STORM characteristics to support your child

Over your child's time at Kelmscott they have been developing STORM characteristics which will support a positive mindset.

They know not to use or even think the phrase **"I can't"** at school as saying this gives your child permission to stop trying.

Instead we ask **"How can I?"** This shows our willingness to learn and knowledge that we can progress.

It is imperative that your children continue to develop their STORM characteristics, **S**elf-control, **T**olerance, **O**ptimism, **R**esilience and **M**otivation.

Self-control - preparing and keeping to their revision plan

Tolerance – finding solutions to their revision topics and asking for support or help

Optimism - recognise that this is an opportunity to demonstrate their skills and show off their knowledge.

Resilience - if they are struggling encourage them to talk to you and to their Form Tutor, subject teacher and or mentor.

Motivation – Being positive and having a goal to do their best in the test/exam.



Getting support and praise right

It is important to move from only praising achievement to praising effort and process.

Research shows that the most effective praise needs to be truthful.

Praise given too readily for tasks that require little effort may ultimately undermine confidence rather than build it.

Supporting your child through this period

If your child says...	Avoid saying...	Try saying...
"I can't do this..."	"Don't worry, it'll be fine..." "I was rubbish at that at school..."	"You can't do it yet, what do you need in order to do it?" "You might not be able to do it yet but let's find out how we can work it out."
"Why do I even need to do this? It's a waste of time."	"I agree; I've never needed that at work."	"The better your GCSE results the more career options will be available to you."
"I need help with my revision."	"Okay let's get it done."	"What have you tried so far to tackle it?"
"I don't need GCSEs, I'll get an apprenticeship / win the lottery / marry rich!"	"Of course you will" "And pigs might fly" "Your Uncle never got a GCSE and he's fine."	"You will always have these results let's do everything possible to make sure they are great."

How to write paragraph summaries

HIGHLIGHTING DOESN'T WORK!

Sure, it can be a good method for picking out key chunks of information or key words – but how many times has your sheet looked like this?



Why doesn't highlighting work?

- One of the main problems is that it is already a very familiar strategy and using it **involves little effort**.
- Most people don't have a strategy for highlighting.
- Another reason to ditch the highlighters is that **when a revision technique feels too easy, it usually is**.
- Scientists have found that successful revision should involve '**desirable difficulty**'.
- The added difficulty makes it harder to stick to it, but **it leads to better long-term retention** in the memory.

Try using Post-it notes

- In class/at home, if you are set the task of reading through a text and making notes, try writing a Post-it summary at the end of each paragraph.
- This exercise forces you to extract the key meaning from the paragraph and reduce it down to something more palatable and memorable.



How to write Cornell Notes

Do you find it difficult to condense key information into a more concise format?

- Cornell Notes will help. The principle was developed at Cornell University, one of the most prestigious universities in the USA.
- It involves dividing up your page (or using a template), which you use to give your notes structure.
- It forces you to be brief and to pick out the key points.

CUES	NAME, DATE, TOPIC, CLASS
WRITTEN SOON AFTER CLASS	NOTES
ANTICIPATED EXAM QUESTIONS	TAKEN DURING CLASS
MAIN IDEAS OR PEOPLE	• MAIN POINTS
VOCABULARY WORDS	• BULLET POINTS
	• DIAGRAMS / CHARTS
	• ABBREVIATE
	• PARAPHRASE
	• OUTLINES
	• LEAVE SPACE BETWEEN TOPICS
USED FOR REVIEW & STUDY	CORNELL NOTE-TAKING METHOD
← 2½"	6"
↑ 2" ↓	SUMMARY
	WRITTEN AFTER CLASS. BRIEF SUMMARY HIGHLIGHTING THE MAIN POINTS IN THE NOTES ON THIS PAGE. USED TO FIND INFO LATER.

Name:..... **Date:**..... **Session:**..... **Subject:**.....

Key Points		Details	
Summary			

Reading is just a part of revising – you need to **rehearse**

Here are the steps:

- | | |
|----------|------------------------------|
| • Read | <i>...your notes</i> |
| • Write | <i>...what you remember</i> |
| • Recite | <i>...what you remember</i> |
| • Review | <i>...your understanding</i> |

- Get someone to test you.
- Cover up sections and test yourself.
- Review what you missed, read over it and start the cycle again.
- You need to look over your notes and identify what doesn't stick.
- Evaluate your performance and spend more time going over that section.
- Relying on reciting won't prove the most effective method of revision
... **it's just one part of a cycle.**
- Read-Write-Recite-Review offers an enhancement that works.
- Simply reading the information is never enough, but this active addition can prove more effective. A little reciting, and a little checking, go a long way.

TIP: Saying complicated or hard-to-remember information out loud and with a funny accent might help remember it!

How to make flashcards

Flashcards are good for storing information in your short and long-term memory

- They're portable.
- They encourage you to break down information.
- They can be used in multiple ways.
- You can use them to revise with others or test each other.
- They are a proven method – especially if you make them early enough.

There is no right or wrong way to make a flashcard ... it's up to you

1. Question and answer
2. Keywords
3. Key information
4. Cornell flashcard
5. Mini-mindmap
6. Lists
7. Exam question plan



GCSE BIOLOGY: TRANSPORT - Comparison of BLOOD

Component	Function
PLASMA	Transporting GC products, in blood, to tissues and back.
RED BLOOD CELLS	Transporting oxygen.
WHITE BLOOD CELLS	Defending against and attacking pathogens.
PLATELETS	Preventing blood clotting.

Summary: Blood is a complex mixture of cells and fluids. It is responsible for the transport of substances throughout the body.

How to organise your flashcards

1. Use an envelope.
2. Write the topic title on the envelope.
3. Write the title of each flashcard on the outside.
4. Add tick boxes.
5. File your flashcards in the envelope.
6. Tick off each time you revise the flashcard.

GCSE GEOGRAPHY: Coastal erosion key terms

ABRASION	When rock and sediment are worn away by the sea.
ATTRITION	When rocks and pebbles are broken into smaller pieces by the sea.
HYDRAULIC ACTION	When the sea waves hit the shore and break down the rocks.
SOLUTION	When the sea waves dissolve the rocks and take away the material.

How to revise with past papers

Yr10 & Yr11

Simple, yet effective revision

- Some experts have discovered that about **30%** of your total revision time needs to be focused on past paper questions, either answering them or planning them. You need to master precisely how you will be tested in the real exam

How do I get past papers?

- Check you have the right exam board for each of your subjects from your teacher and download from their internet sites (most are free and easily available).
- Do a web search - type in the exam board, year and the unit title (or unit code if you have it).
- You can also check Google classroom / Edulink – teachers will be adding material to this.
- Ask your teacher for copies of past papers
- Be creative – from looking at a few past papers you can probably have a go at creating your own exam questions. Just ensure you follow the **same structure** and use the **same command works**.

How do I use past papers for revision?

1. Do the paper in **timed conditions**.
2. Do a **section of the paper** in time conditions.
3. **RAG** rate your understanding.
4. Get to grips with key **command words** and questions styles. You won't be able to predict questions, but you can know the style of questions and come up with planning/answering techniques.
5. Create an exam guide (see next page)



How to create an exam guide

What do you need?

1. A past paper or series of past papers for one of your subjects.
2. A sheet of A3 paper or set of flashcards.
3. Pens.
4. A calculator.
5. A highlighter.

Step 1: Highlight the time allowed for the paper and the number of marks



Step 2: Using a calculator, divide the number of minutes by the number of marks available

- This will work out how long you have for each mark
- For example: 120 minutes (2 hours) divided by 60 marks = 2 minutes per mark
- Write how long you have for each question (multiply the number of marks by the number you calculated)



Step 3: Highlight the COMMAND words for each question. The command word if the instructive word

- For example: 'Explain', 'Discuss', 'Identify' and 'Evaluate'.



Step 4: Create your A3 revision guide by mapping out how long you have for each question

- Add doodles and images if it helps
- You might even prefer a list rather than an info page



Step 5: Add information about each specific style of question/command word and how you answer the question

- Seek advice from your teachers
- Use your exercise book and marked questions
- Use guidance in revision guides or online



Here's one I made earlier...



RAGging and flagging

The key to success is prioritising revision and the areas you need to spend longer revising.

- Figure out which subjects need the most attention: start with the subjects you find most difficult.
- Don't be tempted to constantly revise your favourite topics – start with the trickier topics.

RAGging: Working out your strong/weak areas

- *RAGging involves categorising your understanding of key topics in your exam courses.*
- **RED** = Not at all confident/no knowledge
- **AMBER** = Some knowledge, but a little rusty or not yet confident
- **GREEN** = Secure knowledge

How can I RAG?

1. **Use the templates** in your revision pack/booklet to categorise your topics (see next pages).
2. **Go through your exercise book with RAG coloured pens/pencils** – put a coloured dot in the top corner of each page.
3. **Go through your textbooks/revision guides** and categorise each page: if you can't/don't want to write on your textbook you could RAG on a Post-it note or flashcard and include specific detail. This can work for any of your subjects.

Plan wisely

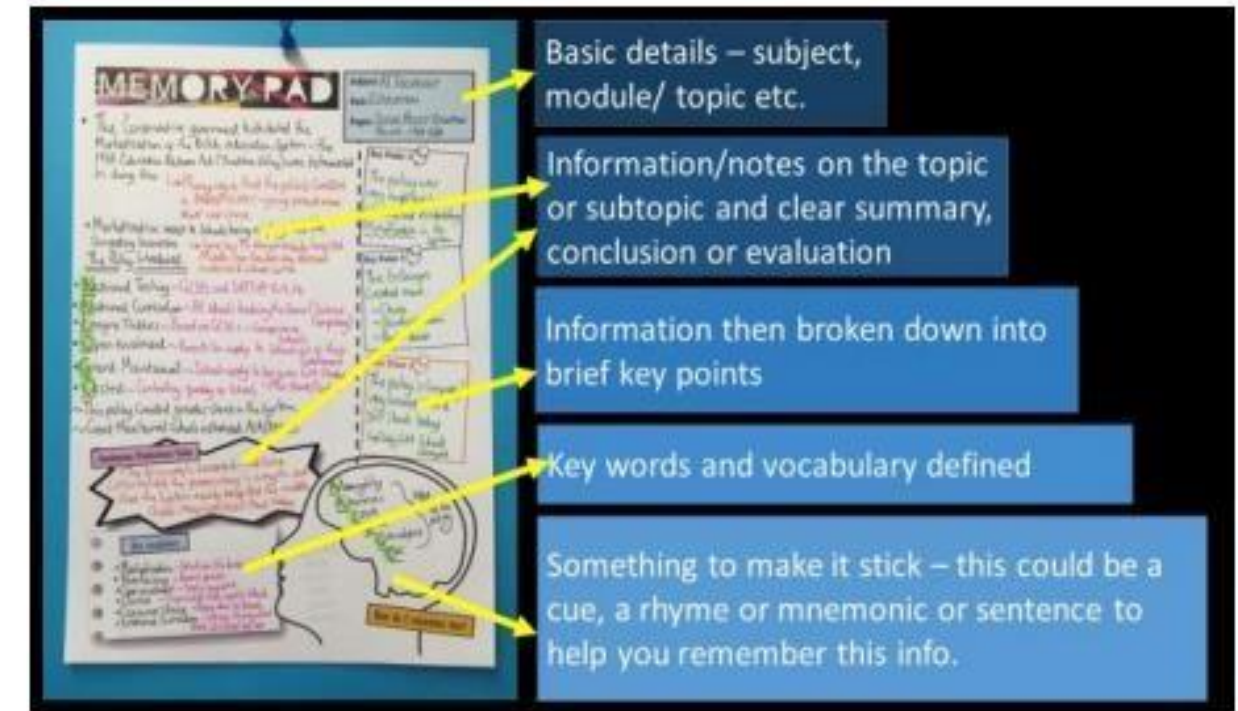
Get ahead

Be honest

Creating graphic organisers

- ### Types of graphic organiser:

- Venn diagrams
- Concept maps
- Spider diagrams
- Fishbone diagrams
- Foldables
- Memory pads



MEMORY PAD

Subject

Unit:

Topic:

Key Point 1

Key Point 2

Key Point 3

Conclusions/Evaluations/Links

Key vocabulary

Make it stick:

Rhyme

Acrostic

Sketch

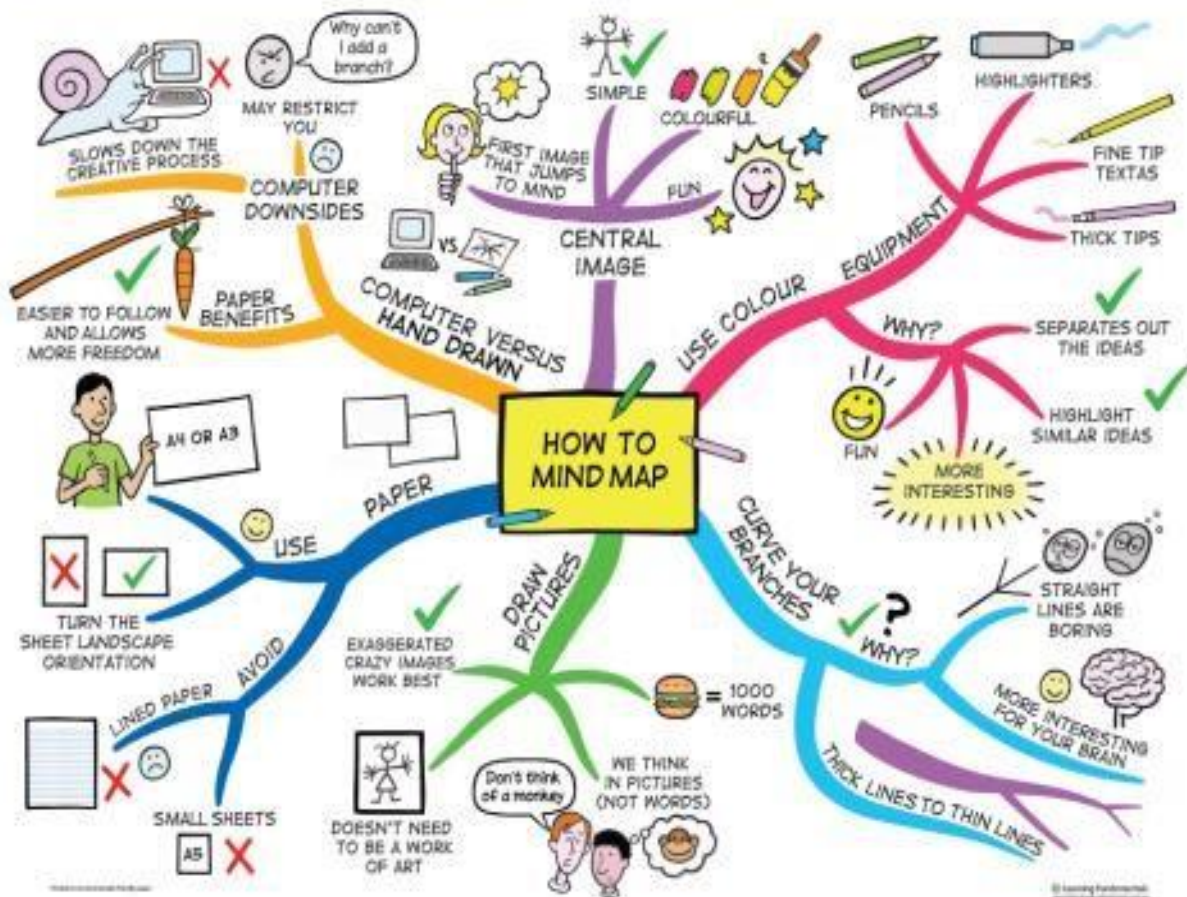
Symbol

Sentence

How do I remember this?

PROPERTY OF C. STUMP

How to create mindmaps



Steps to success

1. Create a **central idea**. The central idea is the starting point of your mindmap and represents the topic you are going to explore.
2. **Add branches** to your map – write along the branches (the mind map should flow).
3. **Add keywords** and key information (but keep it brief).
4. **Colour code** your branches.
5. Include **images and sketches** (nothing too difficult).

Still not sure? Try the SimpleMind app

Revising with Post-it notes

The humble Post-it Note has multiple uses...

- They are an essential study tool and prove especially useful when it comes to revision.
- In this session we will look at ten ways in which you can use Post-it Notes for revision (some of which we have already touched on).

10 Uses for Post-it notes

1: Stick them on your walls and doors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Movable revision! • Keywords will catch your eye and pretty soon you'll internalise definitions • HOWEVER – don't cover every wall in your bedroom. It should be a sanctuary of sleep! 	2: Stick them around the house <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One former student used to stick Post-it notes around her house. • When asked a question she would mentally search the house. • She would then say something along the lines of 'Fridge ... milk ... 1969!' • This might help you make mental maps.
3: Use them as keyword match up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a series of keywords on one set of Post-its and the definitions on another set. • Jumble them and then use a wall space to check your understanding by matching them up. 	4: Use them to write paragraph summaries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-its encourage you to be brief yet concise.
5: Use them to keep track of what you have and have not revised <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stick these notes to your exercise book, text books or revision books as a handy reminder of what you still need to cover 	6: Use them as page markers in your exercise books <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use Post-it to mark out different topics and chapters.
7: Use them to create a flowchart <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You can even mix up the order and rearrange as a method testing yourself 	8: Use them as a past paper question planner <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you don't want to waste a past paper with so-so responses, you can use a Post-it to jot down your answer in rough.
9: Use them as a past paper prompter <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You can use a Post-it to remind yourself of how to answer specific questions. • This is useful because of the movable nature of Post-it notes. 	10: Download Post-it plus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This app allows you to turn physical Post-it notes into digital ones • You simply take a picture in the free app and it converts the Post-it into a digital version which you can move around and scroll through

How to make revision books

Revision books keep all of your revision in one place:

- What goes inside your revision book is up to you ... but here are some suggestions:

- 1: Keep notes brief and to the point.
- 2: Use images.
- 3: Use colour to denote key points/criticisms etc.
- 4: Add/stick in spider diagrams and mindmaps.
- 5: Include statistics and facts/fine details.
- 6: Include tables.
- 7: Use Post-its to indicate key things to remember.



Creating mnemonics

What are mnemonics?

- It's a general term that refers to any technique that helps memory. More specifically, mnemonic devices are ways of turning information into a format that is easier to remember.
- There are no rules to mnemonics, especially for revision; it's just about what works for you.

Acronyms

- An acronym mnemonic sees you abbreviate information by creating a word where each letter stands for something.
- A classic science mnemonic you may be aware of is **OIL RIG**, which describes the difference between **Oxidation and Reduction**: Oxidation Is Loss, Reduction Is Gain.
- Acronyms are very easy to remember but can only really be used for **small amounts of information**. Once your acronym is getting longer than **5 or 6 letters** it may be hard to recall exactly what the letters stand for, especially if you have the same letter multiple times.

Phrases and acrostics:

- Rest
- Exercise
- Variety
- Imagination
- Structure
- Individual
- Ongoing
- Not too long

Read difficult info or things that you keep forgetting in a funny accent.

You'll look pretty strange, but it may just work!

Rhymes and songs are quite a bit harder to create yourself, but once you've got one you'll probably never forget it.

*Thirty days have September,
April, June, and November.
All the rest have 31,
Except February alone,
And that has 28 days clear,
And 29 in a leap year."*

How to make foldables

What is a foldable?

It's paper magic ... that's what it is.

- A simple sheet of paper is all it takes sometimes to make an invaluable revision tool.
- They are a really useful way of distilling and breaking down your revision notes.

Step 1: Take a piece of A4 paper and fold it in half THREE TIMES



Step 2:
Add a title

★ ★ THIS IS A ★ ★
★ ★ REVISION ★ ★
★ ★ FOLDABLE ★ ★

Step 3: Unfold once and add some basic info (see guidance)



Step 4:
Unfold again and add some additional details (see guidance)



Step 5: Unfold again – you will have a full sheet of A4 to write/draw/map out key revision notes (see guidance)



Step 6: Fold back up and jot down a quick summary or evaluation points on the back



Transforming notes

Reading notes/revision books is a start ...

Testing yourself is better ...

Transforming your notes is best.

Transforming notes means to turn them from written notes into another form. Here's a list of what you can do with your notes (other than read them) when they are complete:

- **Make a set of flashcards.**
- **Use Quizlet to make a set of online flashcards/ glossaries.**
- **Make a series of foldables.**
- **Apply the notes to past paper questions.**
- **Ask someone to test you.**
- **Recite them out loud.**
- **Photocopy them and stick them around the house.**
- **Make a series of posters or mindmaps.**

