

STUDYING and REVISING

Where do you work best? On the floor in your bedroom,
at the dining room table,
at your desk in your room,
in complete silence,
with music?

When do you work best? Early in the morning,
in the evening?

There is no right way to work

- 1- Think where you work most efficiently, **the best place for you to work is the place where you work best!**
- 2- **Having a daily and a weekly routine is essential.** You need to decide at what time you are going to start working each day. The time will vary because of drama rehearsals, music lessons, football practice, visits to the dentist, etc but it is best to keep to a weekly routine.
- 3- **Use your time effectively**
 - Recognize your own preferred times of working (early in the morning, late etc.)
 - At what time of the day is your **energy level highest?** ...then it is best to tackle difficult work.
 - At what time of the day is your **energy level lowest?** ...then just tidy up files, write up notes, look for the meanings of words
 - **Short bursts of study** are the most effective
 - **Build in breaks** if you are planning to work for more than an hour
 - **30/40 minutes work is enough.** Your brain cannot work for a long period without a rest.
 - Have a **5 or 10 minutes break** (have an apple, have a drink, walk in the garden) and then you can tackle another 30 minutes session.
 - **Change subject revision** every hour (do a variety of topics)
 - Give **each subject equal time**
 - Leave time at end of revision session for **reviewing** what you have done and what you must still do
 - **Reward** yourself when you have achieved your targets

- 4- Be **realistic**: Don't plan to work when your favourite TV program is on, or make sure it is taped for you to watch it later on, doing your work is not a punishment.
- 5- Be **disciplined**: Stick to what you decided you will do
- 6- Be **flexible**: You never know when an emergency will crop up.

To revise what do you need?

- 1- **A study timetable**: Make yourself a study timetable including your free time, your commitments, your HW and revisions for exams. Spread your study throughout the week. Have something to look forward to after a study session.
Alternate the topics you enjoy most with those you find difficult or boring.

- 2- **Make sure you have**:
 - Notes *(spend one evening organising and ordering everything you have for each subject)*
 - Textbooks
 - Past tests
 - A dictionary, a thesaurus
 - A drink or something to nibble while you study
 - Folders
 - Dividers
 - Highlighters
 - Coloured pens or pencils
 - Index cards
 - Calm, quiet environment

I don't remember!

There are a few rules to store the information in your memory and get it out when you need it.

1- Be willing to remember

Pay attention to what you are learning (people often say they have a poor memory, and forget everything, but sometimes they don't really try to learn).

2- Understand

Remember, make sure you understand everything. We remember better what we have understood. Learning facts, dates or tables by heart is much more difficult.

If you don't understand what you have just read try:

- **reading it** aloud
- **checking** that you have copied the notes correctly
- **highlighting** key words
- **writing** again in note form in your own words
- **making** a mind map
- **converting** the notes into a picture, or a cartoon strip
- **discussing** the problem with a friend or the teacher.

3- Use your senses to find your memory strength

- look, listen, re-write, do experiments, highlight, read aloud, discuss
- be active
- motor memory
- visual memory (visualize things on a white background)
- video memory (make up a story about places, characters)
- auditory memory (make silly mnemonics, use music - tunes or rhythm)
- 3-D memory

For example if you are trying to learn a list of spellings, some foreign phrases, geographical features, important historical events, chemical formulae etc..

Just looking won't help, try

- saying them aloud
- reading onto a tape and listening
- writing them down, without copying, use the Look/Say/Cover/Write/Check method
- highlighting the difficult parts in colour
- writing in large letters or numbers and going over with your finger, as if to trace.

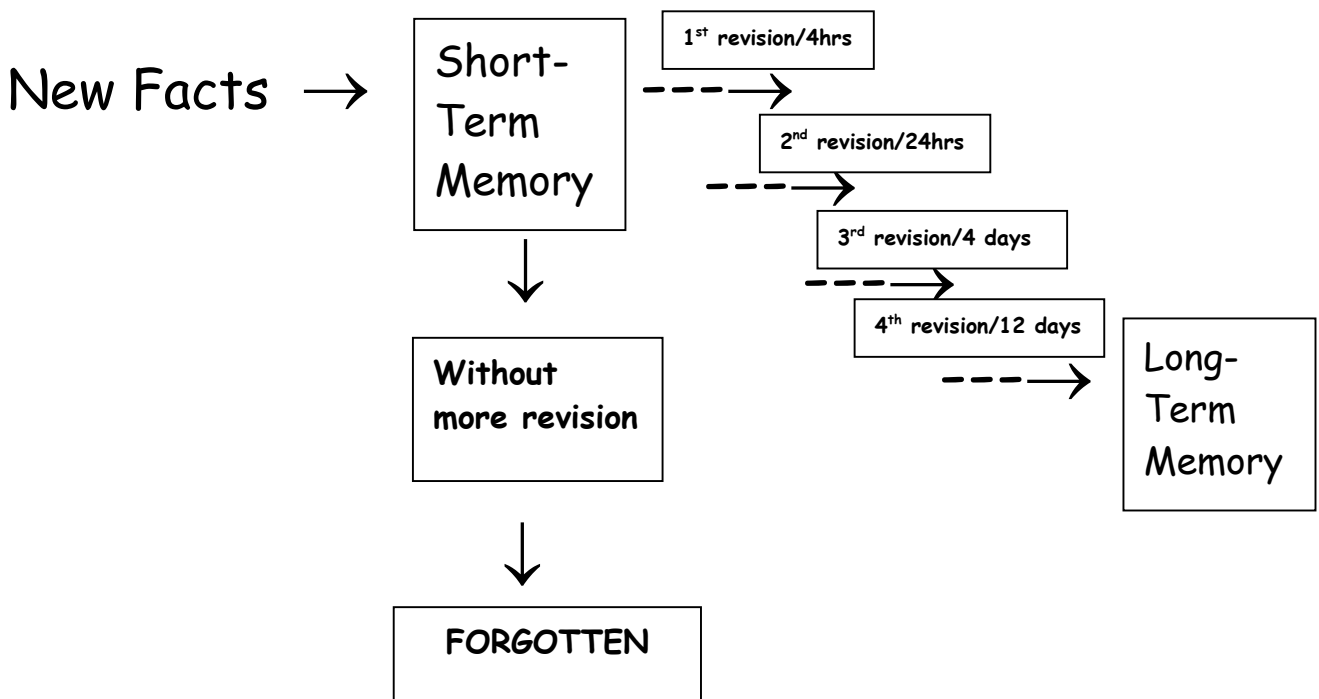
4-Understand about memory

- Most memories don't "stick" in memory forever
- Most material you memorize is forgotten in the first day or so.
- You need to reinforce memories by self-testing over a period of time. This process is called REVISION

5-Revision

- Unless you incorporate a properly designed **revision programme** into your study timetable, much of the work you do will in fact be a waste of time.
- Up to 80% of new learning is lost in the first 24 hours.
- Revise for about 10 minutes, 10 to 20 minutes after your first revision session
- This means attempt to recall all the relevant points **WITHOUT** looking at your notes. Write these key points down and compare with current notes.
- One day later revise for 5 minutes

- A week later revise for 2 to 5 minutes
- A month later revise for 2 minutes



Preparing notes for revision

- Remember you can work at your own speed.
- Writing revision notes will refresh your memory on details, it also helps you to keep your mind on the task of revising.
- You can make notes in different ways:
 - numbered points
 - mind maps or spidergrams
 - flow charts
 - on tape
 - on A4 or cards but always with an index

To make notes memorable, **visual stimulus** is very important. You can -

- **use different colour pens**, (*writing in bright colours gives you a better chance of remembering because you are stimulating the part of your brain which deals with colour as well as written information*)
- use BLOCK CAPITALS
- underline
- use highlighters
- draw pictures or cartoons 😊 💣 ☠️ 😞
- draw mindmaps (*these increase your chances of learning a subject because they stimulate multiple parts of your brain*)
- use diagrams - Tippex out answers, photocopy and fill them in
- invent mnemonics, the sillier the better.

Get down to revise

- **List all the modules or topics** to be revised for a subject so that you can tick off what you have done
- Gather all your material for the topic
- **Reduce into brief**, clear, concise, legible **notes** using the format you have chosen.
- Distinguish between important ideas and supporting details
- If you keep those notes in a file, **divide into sections**, using dividers, stick to the front of each divider a content list, do the same if you use cards.
- Set out **important questions next to your notes**, so that later on you can ask yourself the questions and see if you can answer them, or ask someone to ask you those questions.

- Make sure your past test, essays, essay plans are also with your notes.
- Then the next time **summarize those notes**
- And **again, and again** until you only have **key words** to remind you of the topic and act as triggers
- Put those key words on small cards that you can use anywhere, or on big posters stuck around your room

How to get started

You have decided when you must work, you know where you are going to work, and you know what you must study; now you just have to get started! You need to:

a) Warm up

Get your brain ready for action. Check details of your study, sort out the books you need for that subject, have your entire equipment ready, think.

b) Concentrate

Now work hard. Draw the diagrams, work the exercises, and make the notes, etc... do whatever is required. **BE active; DON'T just sit there!**

c) Cool down

Proof read your notes, read them aloud to see if it makes sense, test yourself, assess what you have achieved, and be honest with yourself. Make time at end of a revision session for reviewing what you have done and what you must still do.

Reviews at intervals of a day, a week, a month and 3 months have a tremendous effect on the amount of information maintained in the long-term memory.

Keep smiling, remember it takes fewer muscles to smile than to frown!