



Ideas for Self-Study

1. Choose 3 which you think would be useful to you at this stage.
2. Rank in order of usefulness.
3. Start by doing your top one ... you can try working in the others as you become more adept at self-study.
4. Keep this sheet with you and tick off each time you do one.

☐ **Review** what you have covered in the lesson. Make your own notes on what was covered and discussed or read and highlight. If you struggle to understand something, try looking at it again and working it out for yourself. Discuss with others.

☐ **Read** the text book, articles, revision guides, other books.

☐ **Start condensing** notes early - summarise key points.

☐ **Research** by watching programmes, films, listening to the radio, accessing websites, pod casts, blogs.

☐ **Get hold of exam questions** to see what you will be facing.

☐ **Finish** off any work from class.

☐ **Use the classroom** to complete practical work and develop your skills with materials and equipment.

☐ **Visit** galleries, museums, shops, studios, cinemas, businesses to look at the work of contemporary and historical figures.

☐ **Make memory cards** with specific terms/formulae which are difficult to understand/ remember.

☐ **Read ahead** ... even if you do not fully understand it as you read. This will really help you understand the topic in the lesson and enable you to ask questions to clarify points. Other students recommend that this is especially good for science subjects, but it is probably also good for all subjects.

☐ **Really go over the method.** Student advice: 'Practice on your own until rock solid.' Good for Maths/Biology/ Physics/ Chemistry.

☐ **Organise your folders!**

Score yourself 1-5 with 5 being great, to 3 will find it OK to do the minimum (or more) to 1 – will really struggle'

If you are not confident get yourself sorted or get help planning how you are going to cover the workload... friends/LM/family.

Planning your writing

Some ideas and tips to help structure your writing
for an essay or argument

For all writing

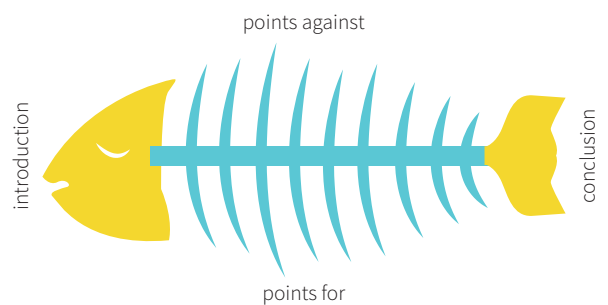
Audience _____

Purpose _____

Form _____

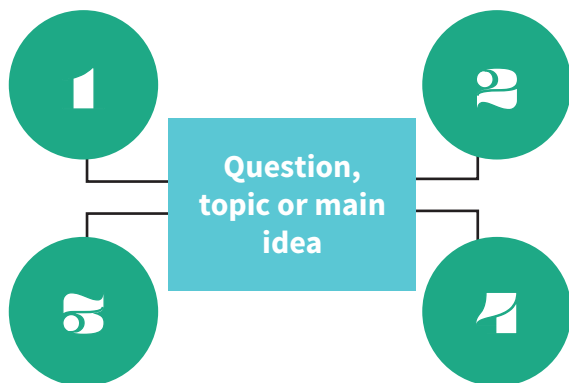
Features _____

Fishbone Discussion

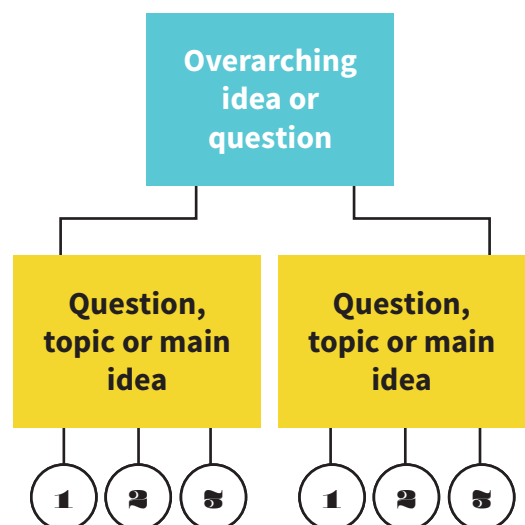


Explosion Chart

brainstorm ideas then number

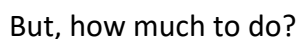


Tree Diagram





The best advice is: work hard. Immerse yourself in your work and enjoy it. 



A level is half taught and half self study.

Taught lesson time

3 subjects x 5 hours = 15 hours

1/2 A level

Self study

3 subjects x 5 hours = 15 hours

1/2 A level

This can seem a bit daunting so, a good starting point is to think of how this looks in a week:

Week One

[illegible]

E.g. you are in lessons, have activities e.g. sport/family/job commitments and, for instance, you may never study on a Friday night.

How many hours there are when you get home after college and before you go to sleep for the night (4pm -11pm = 7 hours)

Now, count up all the POSSIBLE hours available for self study on your timetable at college + at home = hours.

Get into the habit of thinking ahead when you will do these so you feel in control and can manage the work load well.

- decide roughly when you will do your 18 hours
- think about whether you need to do more in that particular week.

[illegible]



**Read all the
questions!**

Glossary of Exam Terms

The most important thing to do when you first open your exam booklet is to read all the questions and try to understand what they are asking of you. This glossary contains many of the exam terms most often used in essay titles:

Compare - Examine qualities, or characteristics, to discover resemblances. "Compare" is usually stated as "compare with": you are to emphasise similarities, although differences may be mentioned.

Contrast - Stress dissimilarities, differences, or unlikeness of things, qualities, events, or problems.

Criticise - Express your judgment or correctness or merit. Discuss the limitations and good points or contributions of the plan or work in question.

Define - Definitions call for concise, clear, authoritative meanings. Details are not required but limitations of the definition should be briefly cited. You must keep in mind the class to which a thing belongs and whatever differentiates the particular object from all others in the class.

Describe - In a descriptive answer you should recount, characterize, sketch or relate in narrative form.

Diagram - For a question which specifies a diagram you should present a drawing, chart, plan, or graphic representation in your answer. Generally you are expected to label the diagram and in some cases add a brief explanation or description. complete and entailed answer.

Discuss - The term discuss, which appears often in essay questions, directs you to examine, analyse carefully, and present considerations pro and con regarding the problems or items involved. This type of question calls for a complete and entailed answer.

Glossary of Exam Terms

List - Listing is similar to enumeration. You are expected in such questions to present an itemised series or tabulation. Such answers should always be given in concise form.

Outline - An outline answer is organized description. You should give main points and essential supplementary materials, omitting minor details, and present the information in a systematic arrangement or classification.

Prove - A question which requires proof is one which demands confirmation or verification. In such discussions you should establish something with certainty by evaluating and citing experimental evidence or by logical reasoning.

Relate - In a question which asks you to show the relationship or to relate, your answer should emphasise connections and associations in descriptive form.

Review - A review specifies a critical examination. You should analyse and comment briefly in organised sequence upon the major points of the problem.

State - In questions which direct you to specify, give, state, or present, you are called upon to express the high points in brief, clear narrative form. Details, and usually illustrations or examples, may be omitted.

Summarise - When you are asked to summarise or present a summarisation, you should give in condensed form the main points or facts. All details, illustrations and elaboration are to be omitted.

Trace - When a question asks you to trace a course of events, you are to give a description of progress, historical sequence, or development from the point of origin. Such narratives may call for probing or for deduction.

Enumerate - The word enumerate specifies a list or outline form of reply. In such questions you should recount, one by one, in concise form, the points required.

Evaluate - In an evaluation question you are expected to present a careful appraisal of the problem stressing both advantages and limitations. Evaluation implies authoritative and, to a lesser degree, personal appraisal of both contributions and limitations.

Explain - In explanatory answers it is imperative that you clarify and interpret the material you present. In such an answer it is best to state the "how or why," reconcile any differences in opinion or experimental results, and, where possible, state causes. The aim is to make plain the conditions which give rise to whatever you are examining.

Illustrate - A question which asks you to illustrate usually requires you to explain or clarify your answer to the problem by presenting a figure, picture, diagram, or concrete example.

Interpret - An interpretation question is similar to one requiring explanation. You are expected to translate, exemplify, solve, or comment upon the subject and usually to give your judgment or reaction to the problem.

Justify - When you are instructed to justify your answer you must prove or show grounds for decisions. In such an answer, evidence should be presented in convincing form.





Step Exam Countdown

5 steps to help you organise and prioritise your revision time.

1 Start here

Vital Topics	Weaker Areas	Deadlines	Places to Study

2 - 3 months before

Exam timetable

Exam	Date	Time	Place

1 month before

4 weeks	3 weeks	2 weeks	1 week



**Exam Day
Good Luck!**

Revising for A Level - the why and how of revision

You may, or may not have, revised before. The key is you **MUST** do it now. Some have worked hard at revising and already found what works for them. But there are ways to make it better. The main point is to make it work very well: to revise effectively ... and efficiently.

Why? The main purposes of revision are:

To commit what you have learnt and understood to memory

To deepen and extend your understand of the topic on which you are sitting an exam

To practice planning and writing outstanding answers to questions

To enable you to do this, you will need to organise your notes, essays, hand-outs etc. into a convenient and coherent set of revision materials. There is another section on making a revision plan.

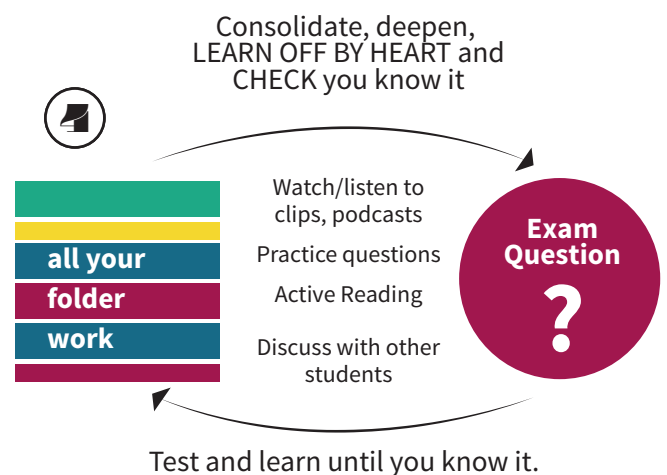
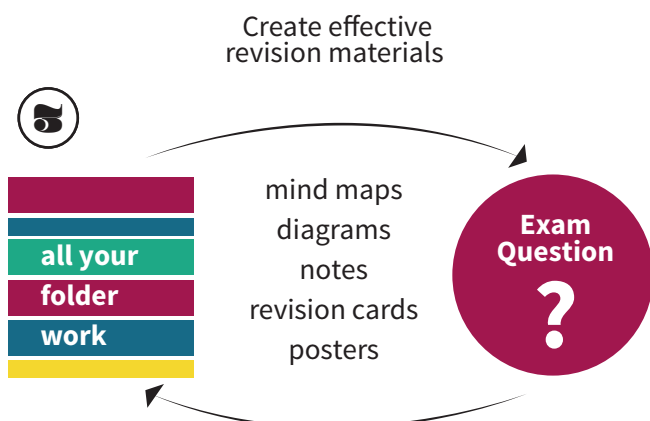
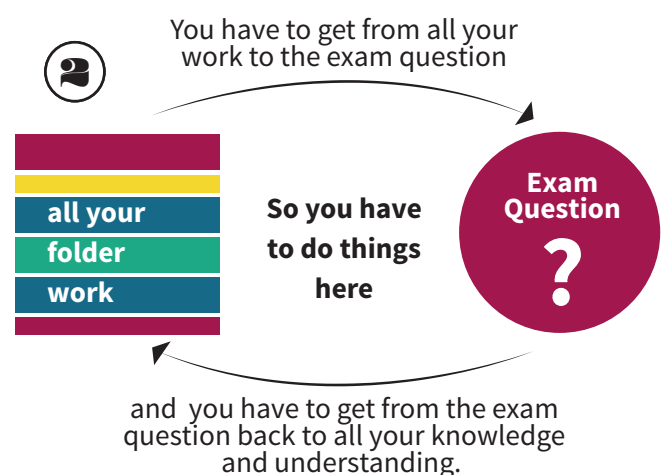
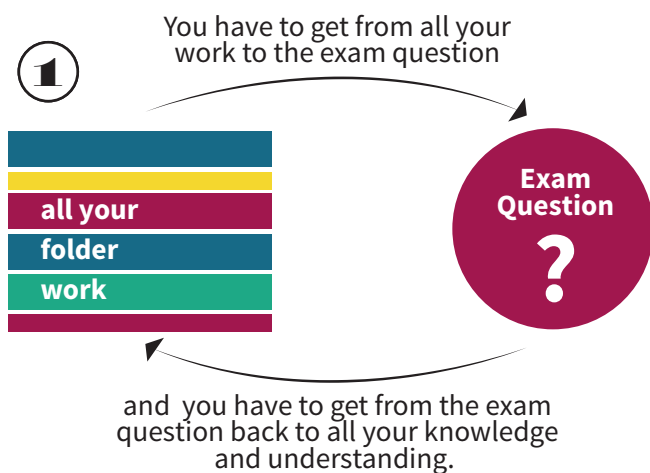
This section is on:

- how to revise
- consolidating all year round

How to Revise

There are four key revision steps:

- Chunking down information to create a set of thorough revision materials
- Memorising
- Deepening understanding
- Practising model answers



Advice about effective revision cards

Chunking

Chunking down information to create a set of thorough revision materials.

- Memorising
- Deepening understanding
- Practising model answers

These are not flash cards. A Level requires revision of much more depth. Flash cards may still have a place at A Level to revise concrete facts.

Revision cards should be A5 size – can be just a piece of A4 paper cut in half.

Tip: hole punch them so you can tag them in groups.

Select your complex information for your revision card.

The best way is to think of it including the information for a short answer or a paragraph or a section of a topic i.e. quite a substantial amount.

Try to think of points and then indented explanation, examples, facts.

You have to think carefully about this.

Arrange the information on your card.

Numbered points and indented detail is a good idea. Also easier to remember in chunks of 3, 5 or 7. Diagrams may suit you better.

Write questions on the back so you can test yourself/be tested.

Complex questions are needed – you do not have one mark answers at A Level.

E.g.

1. What 3 points are there to make about x?
2. Give two facts for each

Test yourself by asking yourself the questions.

Example Revision Card - side one

Consequences of the partition of Bengal 1905

1. Provoked religious/sectarian conflict

Hindus v Muslims

Precedent - division of territory along religious grounds

2. Divide and rule policy

Hindu v Muslim

middle class power base

3. Encouraged demands for independence from GB

no consultation

GB would never be fair

4. Nationwide protest

Peaceful – petitions, letters, newspapers

Peaceful direct action/non-co-operation – boycott (swadeshi)

Violence

1908 in Bengal – bomb judge, killed 2 English women

1909 London – shot official at The India office

5. Congress tension

Moderates v radical,

Peaceful v violence

Example Revision Card - side two

Consequences of the partition of Bengal 1905

List 5 consequences

Give at least one point for each consequence

Give two precise examples of the violence

Tip

Make this side the front – so you have a pack of cards where you look at the questions first.

When revising you can then ask yourself the questions and so see what you know before you review the material. Then know how much you still have to learn

One comment Year 13s always make ...

“

I wish I'd consolidated my work more as I went along.

So start consolidating now – start making some small revision materials now.

- Have revision cards to complete in lessons
- Do a small summary diagram when you have finished a piece of work
- Mind map a section or lesson

Start now ... make a revision material for one of the lessons you have today.

Cornell Note Taking System

This method of note taking was devised for students at Cornell University in the USA, and has been publicised through Walter Pauk's books on study skills for University education.

It is a structured, common-sense way of ensuring that you take clear notes, engage with them actively, and have clear material from which to revise.

- This format is often suggested to students who need to produce summaries of key ideas.
- It is particularly useful for taking notes from lessons/ lectures/books
- It ensures that you actively engage with the material, and aids recall.
- It can be very useful when it comes to preparing and revising for exams and preparing exam questions.

How to do it

Before the session:

- Get a large (A4) notebook.
- Rule off a section at the bottom of each page to create a 'summary' space.
- Then divide each page into two vertical columns; the left-hand column should be one third of the page wide, with the right-hand column taking up the remaining two thirds.
- Label each left-hand column 'KEYWORDS/QUESTIONS'; each right-hand column 'NOTES'; and each space at the bottom 'SUMMARY'.
- Do some preparation beforehand, so you have an idea what to expect: if it is a lesson/lecture does the lecturer distribute lecture notes in advance; what is the title of the lecture; is there any recommended reading; does it link to any material covered seminars? If it is a book skim the chapter.

During the note taking

- Add in questions in the cue column
- Record your notes in the right hand side column using PEEK analytical structure
- Do use abbreviations, and paraphrase (i.e. use your own words) wherever possible.
- Do leave spaces in between your notes, so that you can amend and add to them later.

After the lecture (within 24 hours)

- Read through your notes. Make any amendments or additions whilst the material is still relatively fresh in your mind.
- Summarise the main points in the space at the bottom of each page.
- In the left-hand column, note down the key ideas or words from your notes on the right. Formulate these into questions.
- COVER UP your notes in the right-hand column, and see how well you can answer the key questions from memory.
- Re-format the notes: highlight, clarify, expand, make connections and generally refine your notes.

This method should help you to you engage with the material, transfer it from your short-term to your long-term memory, and mean that you have useful notes from which to revise.

The Cornell Note-taking System Page Layout

Cue Column	Note taking Column
	Record: use this note taking column to record the lecture using telegraphic sentences. Use analytical PEEK structure Questions: Formulate questions based on the notes in the right-hand column. Writing questions helps to clarify meanings, reveal relationships, establish continuity, and strengthen memory. Also, the writing of questions sets up a perfect stage for exam-studying later. Recite: Cover the note taking column with a sheet of paper. Then, looking at the questions or cue-words in the question and cue column only, say aloud, in your own words, the answers to the questions, facts, or ideas indicated by the cue-words. Reflect: Reflect on the material by asking yourself questions, for example: “What’s the significance of these facts? What principle are they based on? How can I apply them? How do they fit in with what I already know? What’s beyond them?” Review: Spend at least ten minutes every week reviewing all your previous notes. If you do, you’ll retain a great deal for current use, as well as, for the exam.
	Summary After class or after taking these notes, use this space at the bottom of each page to summarize the notes on that page.

Connectives and Discursive Markers

When writing to argue, you need to present your reader with a strong and convincing case. However, it is also important in an argument to consider the opposing points. Connective or discursive markers are words and short phrases that link, balance or refute ideas.

They are useful for:

LINKING POINTS

and ...
moreover ...
in addition ...
furthermore ...

EMPHASISING YOUR OPINION

Indeed ...
undoubtedly
without question ...
undeniably ...
certainly ...
definitely ...
however it cannot be denied ...

SEQUENCING IDEAS

firstly ...
secondly ...
another reason ...
finally ...

SHOWING CAUSE AND EFFECT

because ...
thus ...
therefore ...
led to ...
as a result ...
consequently ...
for that reason ...
this being the case ...

SHOWING A SIMILARITY

similarly ...
likewise ...
equally ...

EXPRESSING A POINT OF VIEW

it seems ...
it could be / has been argued ...
one might say ...
It seems most likely that ...
It seems fair to argue
on balance/analysis it seems that ...

SHOWING A CONTRAST OR DIFFERENCE

whereas ...
however ...
on the other hand ...
but ...
in contrast to
to counter the claim made in the question ...
contradicting this view ...
despite ...
nevertheless...

CONCLUDING

In conclusion ...
Ultimately ...
To conclude ...

Exemplification, Interpretation, Refutation and Evaluating

Supporting with own knowledge or from the sources

- illustrated - this much is illustrated by
- for example
- for instance
- indeed
- furthermore
- exemplified by
- demonstrated by
- shown by
- epitomised by
- is evident in

Recognising the debate

- Some historians... whilst others
- Historians have debated
- There are many conflicting interpretations
- But others argue
- Contradicting this is the view ...
- Others disagree ...
- A different view is held by
- ... is subject to debate

Refutation

- Despite the evidence ...
- Although ...
- This interpretation is flawed because ...
- A weak point in this argument is ...
- Although it seemed that ...
- This is false because
- This is discredited by ...
- This can be countered by ...
- A rebuttal to this argument is ...

Refutation

- This point is negated by ...
- This can be dismissed ...
- It is questionable that ...
- But ...
- In spite of ...
- Notwithstanding ...
- Even though ...
- In the face of ...
- Even with ...

Evaluating

- most /less significantly
- did significantly contribute
- more, most , less, least important (ly)
- crucially ...
- One factor above all others ...
- partly
- mostly
- very ...
- greatly
- notably
- particularly
- especially
- there is a strong argument
- the evidence supporting/refuting is far stronger ...