

Revision ideas for parents

1. Revision timetables

It is a good idea to help your child make a revision timetable so that they can focus on a given subject. Generally, the blocks should be around half an hour with breaks between subjects. Your child may block 2 or 3 subjects each evening, and it really depends on what subjects they study and how they work best. Completing short amounts of revision is better than planning to complete lots of sessions that they then can't face.

The first stage of revision is to identify what you know and what you don't yet know. Your child should have revision guides that are specific to the exam board. Most year 11 pupils have these. If your child doesn't, it is not too late and they need them now. They should use highlighters, post its and pens to 'tick off' areas they know, areas they know but can't yet recall when needed and areas they have yet to understand. (eg I can label a cell, I understand sugar control but need to learn the correct key words, I don't understand osmosis)

It is human nature to revise what you know, it is comforting when you can answer lots of questions. Encourage your child to identify subjects and topics that they find most difficult.

Your child should have a notebook, post its, or a file on their computer where they list the items they find difficult – that they don't yet know. They should then give, tell or email their teacher. Their teacher will be delighted! This will form the basis of revision lessons, and resources provided by your child's teacher. Just remember, your child shouldn't say 'I need help to revise biology', they should say 'I need help to understand osmosis'.

This timetable will change as they get closer to exams and the area of need will change according to when an exam is due.

A good site for further information is: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zn3497h>

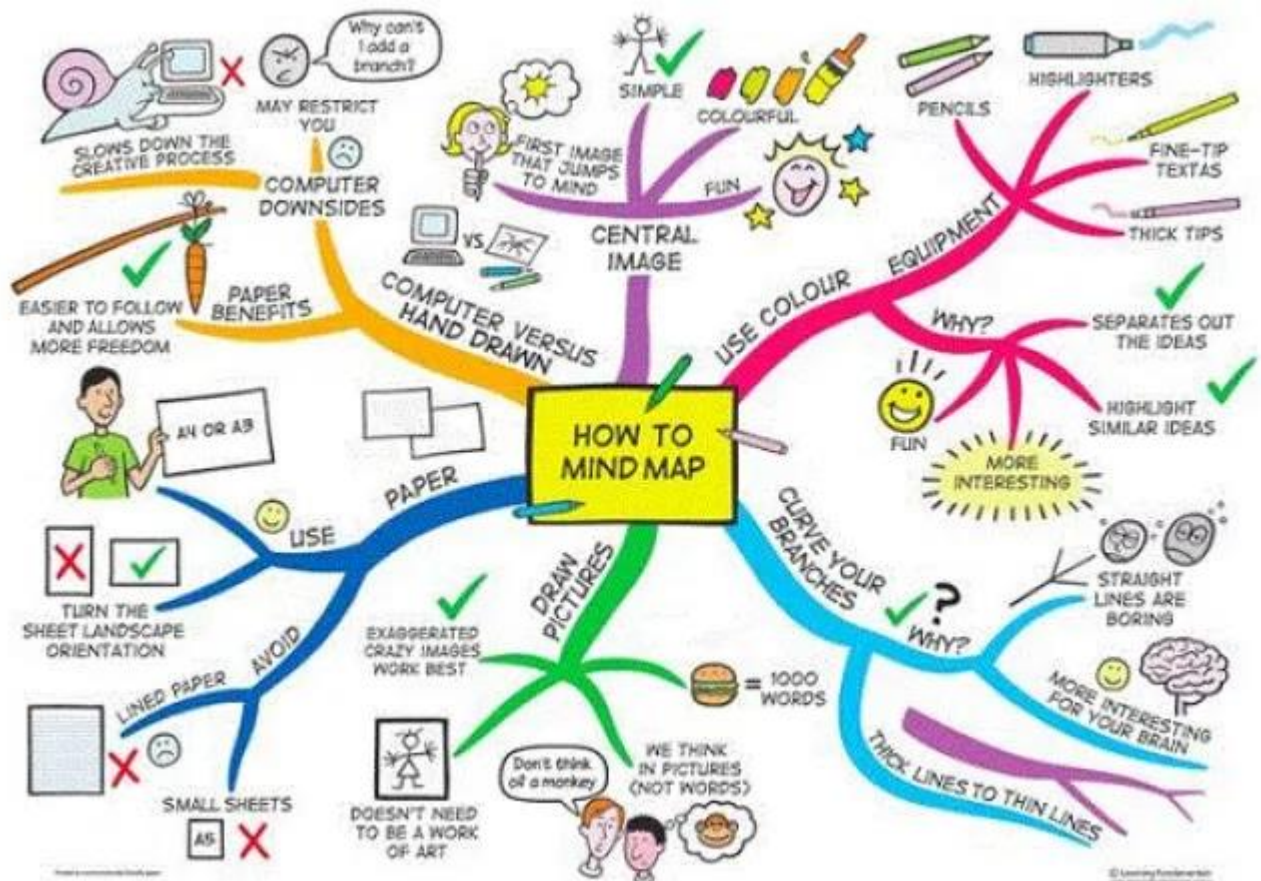
2. Flash cards

These are reasonably cheap to pick up and are often called revision notes. The idea is a question or key fact is written on one side and then the answer is written on the other. The process of writing your own flash cards can be very useful. These can then be given to someone else to use as a means of testing – for example family members can ask a number of recall, fact based questions and check the correct answer.



3. Mind Mapping

This is a process where a topic is put in the centre of a page and the relevant information is then connected to it. The information can be in the form of pictures, bullet points or key words, but should all be connected. This is another useful way of recording key points – over time your child should rewrite these, leaving out basic facts they now know well and making more detailed connections. Mind maps can be used to summarise the parts of a topic to be learnt or to make connections needed for an extended piece of writing/essay.



4. Exam questions

One of the best ways of revising. Subject teachers will be directing students to websites where banks of exam questions can be found. The following website has access to all boards past exam papers as well as having lots of hints and tips for studying.

<https://www.thestudentroom.co.uk/gcse/>

5. Post it notes

Very useful for key facts. These can be written and organised into colours for subject. They can then be arranged into 'I can remember' and 'I need more help on'. Encourage your child to let their teacher know the 'I need more help' topics.

6. Revision mats

These are a bit of an expansion on mind maps. When all the information is written on an A4 piece of paper in the form of a mind map or easy to read diagrams or pictures, they are then placed into a plastic A4 wallet and used as a place mat for dinner, or breakfast. This then ensures that the information is read and then re read.

7. Regular quizzes

Information can be well revised but if not revisited easily forgotten, so it is important to make sure that mini low stakes tests are done. A good way to do this is to use a revision card to write down 3 key questions on a topic and store it in a separate box. Then a system can then be put into place where a card is taken out, questions asked and see if the information is retained. The more often done the better the retention.

8. Subject Teachers

All subject teachers will be talking to your child about how to revise for their subject. Get them to keep a note of the best ways for each subject.

9. General information:

- Your child will need a quiet space to revise. The exam itself will be silent and there is a lot of research stating that similar circumstances help promote better recall.
- Take their phone away. It is a distraction. If they are using an online forum such as Seneca, get them to mute all notifications
- Ensure that they take a break and get up and move around at least every hour.
- Encourage good sleeping habits, very important once the real exams come around and anxiety rises.
- Make sure they stay hydrated; the brain does not work well without liquid and often students are not aware that they are getting thirsty.
- Try to encourage healthy snacks with small treats built in. Snacks high in salt and sugar are not ideal for concentration, but as we all know occasionally we do need a treat!
- If students start to panic, stop them revising for a short while then go back and break the task down into smaller pieces which are more manageable.
- Encourage any student who experiences high levels of anxiety to talk to school so we can help them start to manage their workload.
- Homework will now be relevant to exams. Please encourage this to be done.

More support regarding revision:

<https://www.cgpbooks.co.uk/info/exams-or-demon-fighting/essential-revision-tips>