



Thornleigh
Salesian College

Strive for Success

YEAR 11 • 2026-7

*“Every moment
is a fresh beginning.”*

— T.S. ELIOT —



Name: _____



FOCUS



PLAN



REVISE



SUCCEED

Year 11,

The purpose of this booklet is to give you a variety of ideas and practical ways to memorise things and revise for your examinations. There are also reminders of where you can go to get help when you are working independently and who you can go to for support in school.

Reflect on the lessons learned from the assessments in November - what worked for you that time? What will you keep on doing? What strategies do you need to change to get the grades that you deserve in the summer?

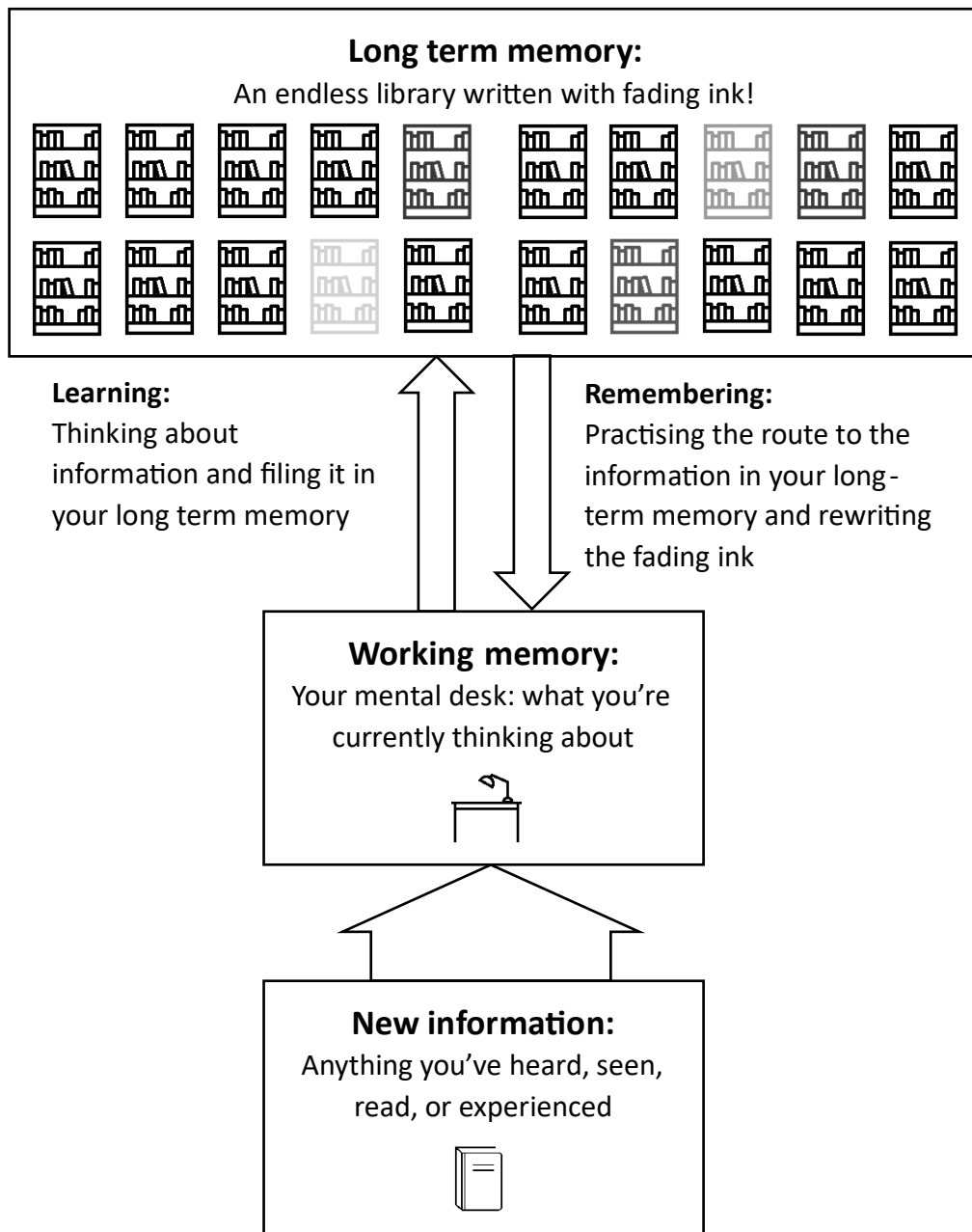
How do I learn and revise effectively?

Learning is the process of understanding information and being able to remember it over a long period of time.

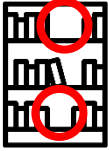
Revising is the process of revisiting information which you have already been taught to ensure that you have learned it and to ensure that you can easily use it in exams.

To remember a lot of knowledge quickly, that knowledge needs to be securely stored in your long term memory.

To make sure knowledge goes into your long term memory, stays there, and to make sure you can find it quickly, you need to spend time thinking hard about that knowledge in your working memory.



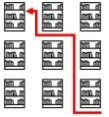
Whenever you revise, you are doing one of three things:



1. Finding and closing gaps in your knowledge.



2. Strengthening fading knowledge in your long term memory.



3. Practising recalling knowledge quickly.

Why is re-reading your notes an example of poor-quality revision?

Why is revising in a loud room an example of poor-quality revision?

Why is only revising immediately before an exam an example of poor-quality revision?

Key pieces of advice to learn and revise effectively:

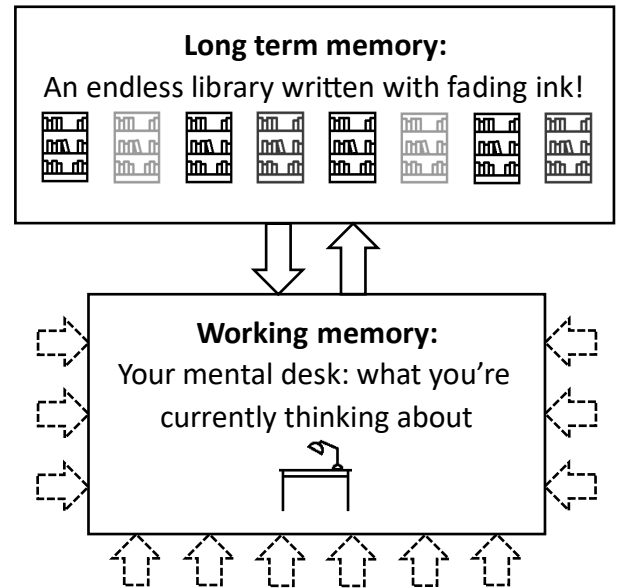
1. **Avoid distractions;** give yourself as much space as possible in your working memory to focus on the information you are learning or revising.
2. **Think hard;** if you don't think hard about the information you're learning or revising, it is unlikely to go into your long-term memory.
3. **Start early;** thinking hard about information takes time and you need to revisit information regularly to strengthen those memories. Leaving revision until the last minute is likely to be overwhelming and will limit how effective your revision is.

Where should I work and revise?

When you revise effectively, you pull information from your long term memory and strengthen it in your working memory. You may also be finding gaps in your long term memory and closing them by thinking hard about new information in your working memory.

Your working memory can only hold a small amount of information at once. In order to revise and learn effectively, you should use techniques which stop your working memory from becoming overwhelmed.

Anything that you are currently experiencing or paying attention to takes up space in your working memory. One way that you can free up space in your working memory is by working in an environment which is free from distractions.



When creating a space to revise...

Do:

- ...work in a tidy environment where you have the tools you need to revise effectively.
- ...work in a quiet environment.
- ...put your phone in another room or use an app on your which blocks social media.
- ...work in a space which you only use for home study, schoolwork or revision.

Don't:

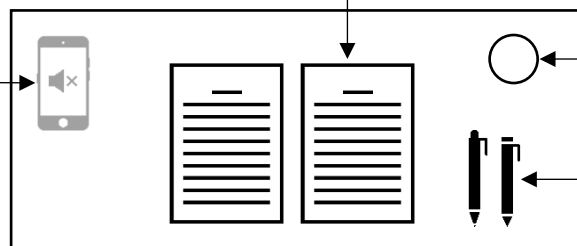
- X ...work in a cluttered environment.
- X ...distract yourself with (loud) music or noise.
- X ...work near your phone or other devices which can access social media.
- X ...work in the same space where you relax.

An example of an effective revision space :



A quiet environment, such as a classroom or library

Put your phone on silent if you will need to use it or put it in another room.



The resources you will need to revise using your chosen method

A drink, such as a glass of water

The pens and pencils you will need to revise

A chair which is similar to the chair you use at school (not a sofa or bed)

Where do you normally do your home study and your revision?

Use the scorecard below to rate the quality of your learning environment:

	/1
My chosen environment is quiet (e.g. There is no music playing and there are no conversations happening in the background.).	
I am unlikely to be disturbed in my chosen environment (e.g. It is unlikely that I will be asked to move so the table can be used for something else.).	
I only use my chosen environment for home study or revision.	
I don't have my phone with me while I complete my home study.	
I don't have other possible distractions near me when I complete my home study (e.g. games consoles).	
I use a desk which is similar to the desk I use in lessons.	
I have an office chair or a chair which is similar to the chairs I use in lesson (not a sofa or bed).	
I usually have the equipment I need with me when I complete home study (e.g. a computer)	

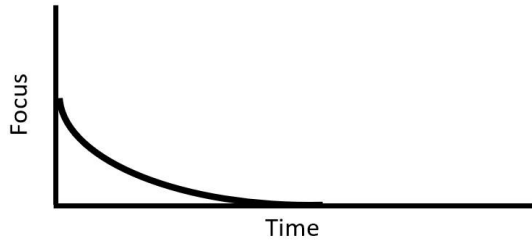
6-8	This is likely to be a positive learning environment. Working in this environment will allow you complete your home study and revision effectively and efficiently. In theory, this will mean that you will have more time for yourself to relax.
3-5	This is likely to be a reasonably positive learning environment. However, it is still likely that you will be distracted while you are completing home study and revision. This will mean that it may take you longer to complete home study and you may need to complete more independent revision than expected in order to be successful. You should make some tweaks to your learning environment and, if these tweaks aren't possible, you should attend study base.
0-2	This likely to be an ineffective learning environment. Working in this environment may mean that you have to spend a lot more time to complete your home study and revision. It may also mean that you complete your home study and revision to a much lower quality, meaning you will have to do more revision in order to be successful. You should make some major changes to your learning environment and/or attend study base.

Give one improvement which you are going to make to your learning environment to make it more effective:

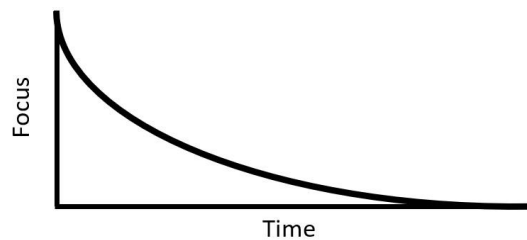
When should I revise?

In order to revise effectively, you have to think hard. Thinking hard is tiring. Therefore, when you revise, you should choose a time when find it easiest to focus. This should be a time when you are well-rested and when you are used to working.

Revising when you are tired:

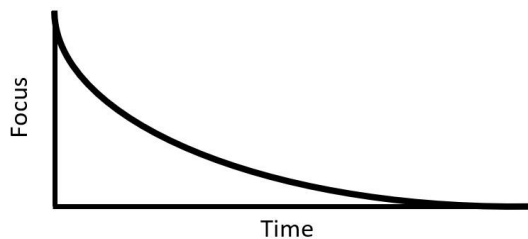


Revising when you are well-rested:

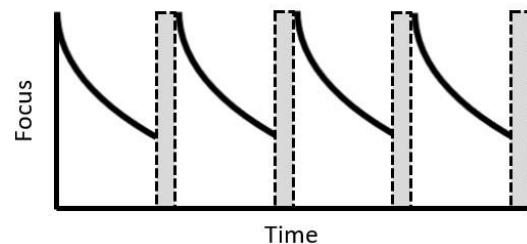


You should also take regular breaks when you revise. These breaks can be structured using a method called the Pomodoro technique.

Revising without a break:



Revising with small regular breaks:



When revising:

Do:

- ...get into a routine of revising at a particular point every day.
- ...revise when you are well-rested or at a time when you are used to working.
- ...take regular small breaks.

Don't:

- X ...depend on when you *want* to revise.
- X ...revise late at night or when you are tired.
- X ...try to force yourself to work for long periods of time without a break.

Self-quizzing

Self-quizzing is when you answer a series of questions about a topic from memory. It is a useful tool for finding specific gaps in your knowledge within a topic and it allows you to quickly check whether you have remembered something correctly.

Self-quizzing can be completed in lots of different ways. For example, you could answer specific questions, you could complete gap fill-activities, or you could fill in a diagram from memory.

Public Health in the Industrial Revolution

Questions:

1. Give two reasons why people migrated to urban areas during the Industrial Revolution.
2. Why did increased population density increase the risk of epidemics in urban areas?
3. Give an example which shows that many public health systems in urban areas were overwhelmed during the Industrial Revolution.
4. Why did many people living in damp and overcrowded housing increase the risk of epidemics during the Industrial Revolution? 5. Why didn't the government in the early Industrial Revolution take steps to improve public health services and living conditions?
6. Give an example of a disease, caused by poor public health, of which there were epidemics during the Industrial Revolution.

Answers:

1. Improvements in agricultural technology and the invention of the factory
2. Diseases could easily spread from person to person.
3. Multiple families would share one overflowing cesspit.
4. People had weak immune systems which made them less able to fight off diseases.
5. The government had a laissez-faire attitude to public health, meaning that they did not think that improving public health should be their responsibility.
6. Cholera or typhus

When answering quiz questions:

Do:

- ✓ ...answer every question, even if you are unsure.
- ✓ ...write the answers to the questions from memory.
- ✓ ...answer the questions in as much depth as you can.
- ✓ ...mark and correct your answers after you have finished.
- ✓ ...improve your knowledge of incorrect answers after you have marked your answers.
- ✓ ...keep a record of your scores.

Don't:

- X ...write single word answers so you can answer the question as quickly as possible.
- X ...assume that your answers are correct.
- X ...skip questions because you find them difficult or you are unsure about the answer.
- X ...answer the questions using textbooks or knowledge organisers.
- X ...throw the quiz away as soon as you have finished it.

How to write quiz questions:

1. If you can, get a set of questions from your teacher or from a website such as Quizlet!
2. If you can't find pre-made questions, find the information you want to convert into questions using your existing revision resources (e.g. a knowledge organiser).
3. Fold a piece of in half.
4. On the right-hand side of the page, write down the most important facts about your chosen topic. Use a knowledge organiser or textbook and write your facts in a numbered list. These are your answers.
5. For each numbered fact, write a matching question on the left-hand side of the page. Check that your questions don't accidentally give the answer away.

Topic	
Question 1	Answer 1
Question 2	Answer 2
Question 3	Answer 3
Question 4	Answer 4
Question 5	Answer 5
Question 6	Answer 6

How to answer quiz questions:

1. Cover up the answers to the questions you are answering.
2. Use an empty piece of paper.
3. Write the date at the top of the page.
4. Answer each question, even if you are unsure.
5. Once you have finished answering all of the questions, check and correct your answers using a different coloured pen.
6. Write down the total of correct answers at the bottom of your quiz.
7. Keep track of your scores. This will allow you to see your success over time.

Useful resources:

www.quizlet.com – This free website allows you to quickly create sets of questions and answers. It also allows you to generate different types of quizzes on that information.

Flashcards

Flashcards are small sheets of paper or card with matching pieces of information on either side. They are a useful tool for learning facts and allow you to quickly check whether you have remembered something correctly.

1861	groynes	osmosis	Where is the pharmacy?
Pasteur published his paper about germ theory.	A low wall on the coastline which slows longshore drift	Net movement of water from a high concentration to low concentration across a partially permeable membrane	Où est la pharmacie?

When making and using flashcards:

Do:

...make flashcards quickly.

...put a single piece of information of each flashcard.

...sort your flashcards according to your confidence with them (see below).

...test yourself on the flashcards from memory.

Don't:

X ...spend more time *making* flashcards than actually using them.

X ...put lots of information onto each flashcard.

X ...revise the flashcards in the same order every time that you use them.

X ...only read through flashcards.

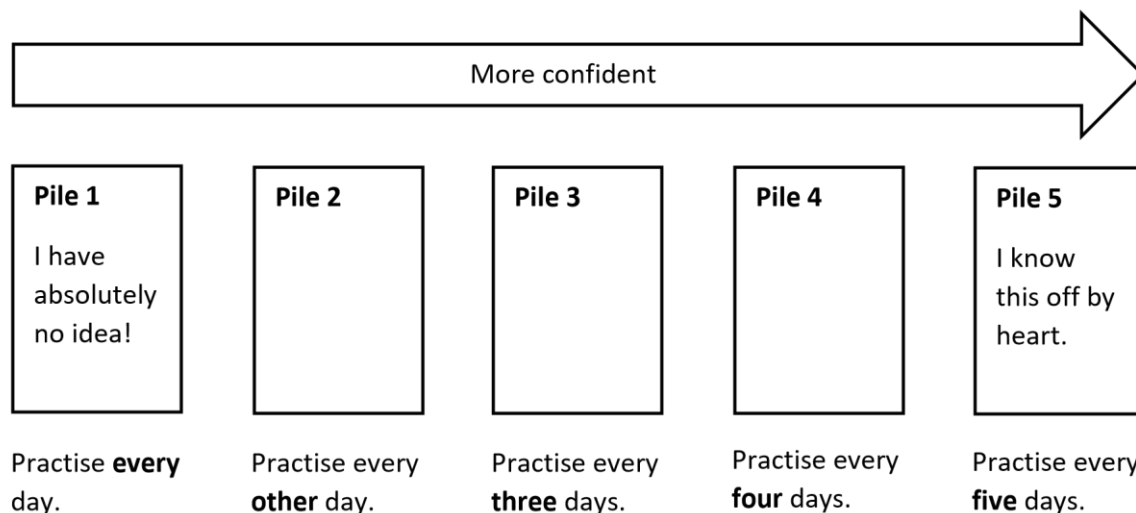
How to make flashcards:

1. If you can, get a set of flashcards from your teacher or from a website such as Quizlet!
2. If you can't find pre-made flashcards, find the information you want to put onto flashcards using your existing revision resources (e.g. a knowledge organiser).
3. Fold a piece of A4 paper into 8.
4. Write the questions on the top half of the paper.
5. Write the answers on the bottom half of the paper.
6. Cut the paper along the short folds.
- 7.. Fold the strips of paper so that the writing is on either side.
8. If you can, glue the pieces of paper together.

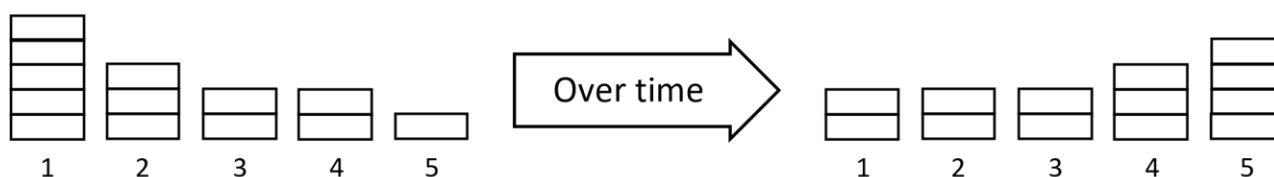
Definition 1	Definition 2	Definition 3	Definition 4	Definition 5
Answer 1	Answer 2	Answer 3	Answer 4	Answer 5

How to use flashcards:

9. Test yourself using the flashcards.
10. As you test yourself, sort the flashcards into up to five piles according to how confident you are with the content.
11. Put the piles into numbered envelopes (1-5).
12. Test yourself on the different piles on different days (see below):



13. As you test yourself on the different piles, move the cards into different piles as you become more confident.

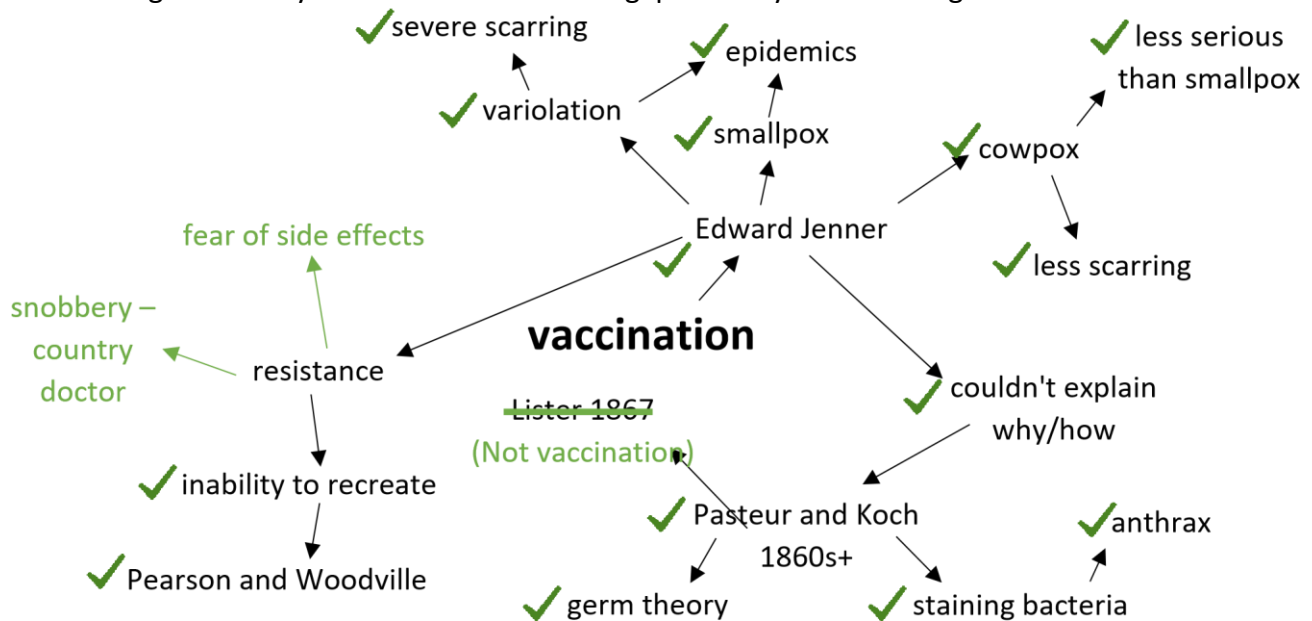


Useful resources:

www.quizlet.com – This free website allows you to quickly create flashcards which you can print, use on a computer, or use on your phone.

Knowledge dumps

A knowledge dump is when you write down everything you can remember about a topic. They are a useful tool for finding out what you know and where the gaps are in your knowledge.



When writing knowledge dumps:

Do:

- ...write from memory.
- ...check what you have written against a textbook or knowledge organiser.
- ...connect information together in a spider diagram format (see below). This will allow you to remember more.

Don't:

- X ...copy information from textbooks and knowledge organisers.
- X ...assume that everything you have written is correct.
- X ...write a list (see below).

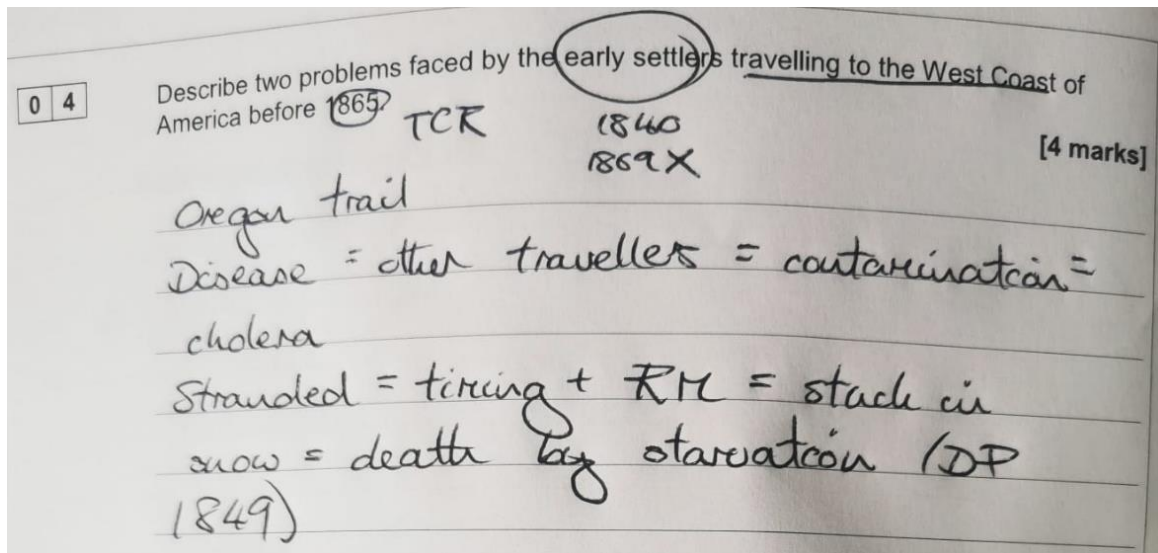
How to write a knowledge dump:

1. Use an empty piece of paper and write the date at the top of the page.
2. Without any support, write down the first thing you can remember about the topic you have chosen. Use single words or phrases.
3. As this fact triggers more information, write those facts down. Connect the facts together with lines or arrows.
4. Once you can't remember anything else about the area you started writing about, try to remember another fact to start another 'web' of knowledge. Stop once you can't remember anything else.
5. Using a knowledge organiser or textbook, check and correct your knowledge using a different coloured pen.
6. Keep your knowledge dump. This will allow you to compare knowledge dumps over time so you can see your success.
7. Note down what you corrected or added. Practise these gaps using flashcards or quizzing.

Exam questions

You remember what you think hard about. One of the best ways to think hard about knowledge you have learned is by completing exam questions. Practising exam questions will also allow you practise exam techniques, such as writing in timed conditions or annotating questions.

Get exam questions from your teachers and complete them as closely to a real exam as possible.



One problem which early migrants faced was disease. Between the 1840s and the 1860s, thousands of people travelled along the Oregon Trail from the East Coast. Because different groups along the trail used the same water sources both for drinking water and waste disposal, many commonly used water sources became contaminated. As a result, some migrants suffered from diseases such as cholera on the Oregon Trail.

Second, migrants often risked death from starvation. The Oregon Trail required travellers to pass through the Rocky Mountains using covered wagons. In the early years of the Oregon Trail, trading posts were extremely far apart. Because of this, if travellers set off too late into the year or took longer routes, there was a risk that they would get stranded in the snow of the Rocky Mountains and would be unable to get reliable sources of food. As a result, some migrants, such as members of the Donner Party in 1846, starved to death when they became stranded while travelling West.

When answering practice exam questions:

Do:

- ...write from memory.
- ...write in timed conditions (ask your teacher how long you should take)
- ...ask your teacher to give you feedback or to give you a mark scheme so you can check your own answer.

Don't:

- X ...use textbooks or knowledge organisers while you're answering questions.
- X ...assume that everything you have written is correct.
- X ...type your answer if you won't be able to use a computer in your exam.

How do I decide what to revise?

Whenever you revise, you are doing one of three things:

1. Finding and closing gaps in your knowledge.
2. Strengthening fading knowledge in your long-term memory.
3. Practising recalling knowledge quickly.

Whichever purpose your revision has, it is important that you focus on the weaknesses within your knowledge. It is tempting to revise topics you're already good at. However, if you do this, you waste valuable revision time and you could get a nasty shock when you don't do well in exams or assessments.

Before you start revising for a subject, you should decide what you need to focus on.

When deciding what to revise:

Do:

- ...gather information about the topics which you need to revise.
- ...break subjects and topics down into manageable chunks.
- ...revise topics which you don't enjoy or which you find difficult.
- ...keep a record of the topics you have chosen to revise and the revision you have completed for those topics.

Don't:

- X ...spend more time making lists of what to revise than actually revising.
- X ...write down entire subjects or topics as areas to revise.
- X ...revise topics you enjoy or topics in which you are already successful.
- X ...expect yourself to remember the areas which you need to revise.

How to decide what to revise:

1. Use information from a range of sources to find out where your weaknesses are.

What topics **don't** I enjoy or feel success in?

What does my teacher think I need to revise?

What are my weakest areas on platforms like Sparx?

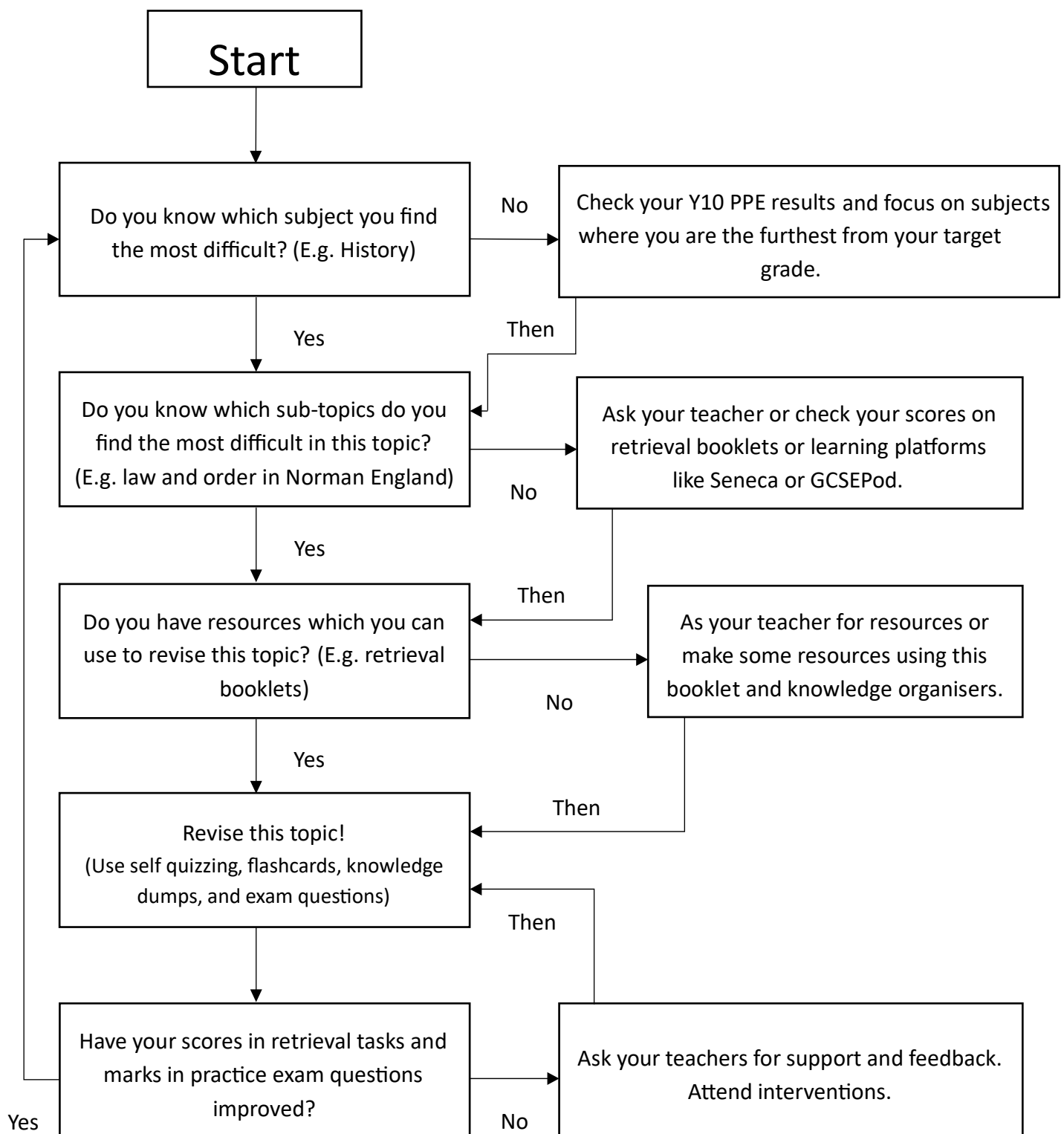
In which topics or questions did I struggle in my last assessment?

2. Create a table of topics and subjects on which you need to focus.

Topic:	Scores:					
Reasons why people migrated West in the 1840s	20%	15%	37%	45%	50%	
The Catholic Church and medicine in the Middle Ages	40%					
Clashes between Norman Kings and the Church	30%	33%				

3. As you complete revision on these topics, fill in your scores. This will allow you to see your success over time.
4. As you become more successful in the areas you have identified, go back to step one. This will allow you identify any gaps in new knowledge or any information which has faded since you made your first list.

Use the flowchart below to figure out one topic which you need to revise. This will only be one topic for one subject. You will then be able to use this method to help you decide what other topics should revise, both within the subject you choose and within other subjects. You can still use other methods.



Writing a revision calendar

Make a revision timetable – it helps you to feel in control.

- Revising burns a lot of energy so it's important to eat properly and regularly. If you need to snack whilst working try eating fruit or nuts rather than fatty foods. Drink water rather than fizzy drinks which are full of sugar.
- Display your timetable. This will reduce pressure from family and reduce your stress levels.
- List all the subjects you do and break them down into sub-categories. English Literature, for example, may be broken down into the different books you are studying and then further into chapters/themes/quotes etc. Highlight or circle the different subjects using different colours.
- Mix your subjects up. Don't put all your 'nightmare' subjects on one day, and the ones you like on another day.
- Decide which tasks you should only spend short bursts of time on and you should maybe spend a whole day on to get out of the way. The second should be reserved for big projects that you won't get tired with.
- Out of the remaining days, make sure you write down any other commitments you have e.g. a job, lessons, training or social events.
- Decide what times you work best and put the tasks that require more energy or concentration during your optimum times. It has been said the optimum concentration time is 32 minutes so keep this in mind when deciding how long each session should last.
- Start your day off with something you know you can accomplish. This will give you motivation for the rest of the day. Make sure the next slot is something heavier so you don't put off your worst subjects until the end.
- Give yourself regular breaks. If when doing your revision you are doing well, you can always decide to keep going.
- Cross things off as you do them because it will give you a sense of accomplishment.
- Be realistic about what you can achieve but remember it is all about trial and error. Even if it goes wrong, you can always adjust your timetable.
- **The most important thing – don't panic.**