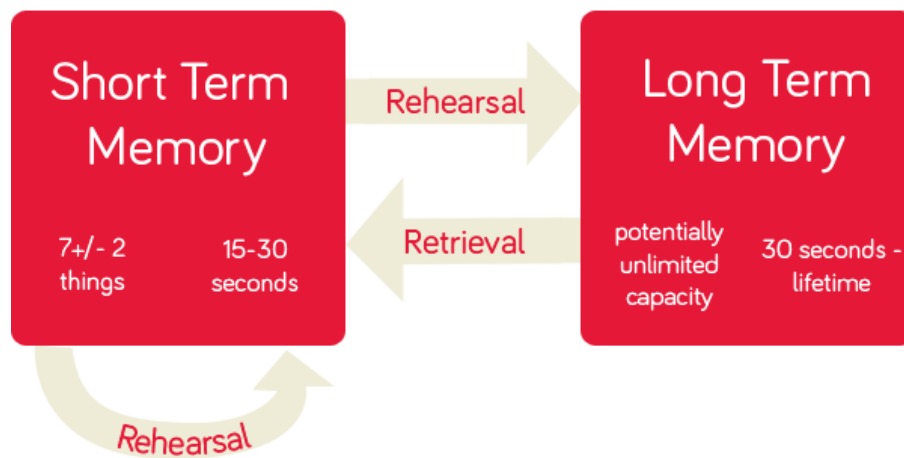


Using Revision to Promote Independence

Resilience and Independence in Learning at NDA



Before you start your revision...

You will also need to sort out your books. At the start of the course you no doubt promised to turn yourself into the type of student who had perfectly organised notes, with all the loose sheets stuck in and all titles underlined. Unfortunately if you look at your books today they may resemble a compost heap, combining the vital exam stuff, and the pretty, yet irrelevant doodles which helped you while away the long hours. For your books do the following:-

- Go through them and throw away all the irrelevant doodles.
- Stick in all the loose sheets **IN THE CORRECT PLACE**.
- Cross out the stuff you don't need to revise (coursework etc).
- Get a bright felt tip and draw thick lines between each of the sections.
- Copy up any missed notes.
- Then when the books are those beautiful creations you always wanted try listing all the titles (topics?) to get a list of what you need to revise.
- Colour code the things in the books based on how much revision they need.



Yourself and your learning environment

Before You Start Revising do The Following:

1) Tell The People in Your House and Ask Them To Help - As well as helping with your revision they can do a number of things, be quieter when you revise, give you time and space, bring you drinks for your breaks, understand that you may get stressed, irritable, encourage you to eat, drink, sleep, relax, revise etc.

2) Sort Out your Revision Space - Sometimes it helps to break the monotony of revision if you revise somewhere different for a change. But in general you will do most of your revision in one place, probably your bedroom. If so prepare it well, tidy it up so as you can spread revision notes about etc., if you share ask your brother or sister to help and understand etc.

3) Noise - As mentioned above ask those in your house to be a bit quieter. When you revise don't watch the TV, or have loud dance / rock music on. Many people are better revising with quiet, softer music on as it helps concentration, gets rid of the deathly silence or other distractions.

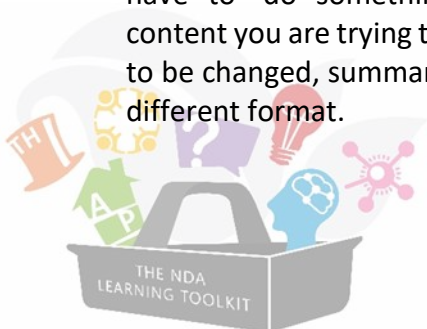
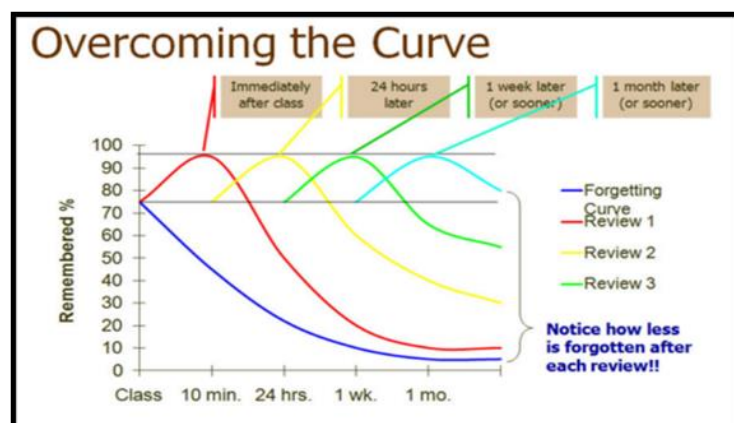
4) A healthy mind needs a healthy body - Remember when you revise that you must remain healthy and unstressed by other things. Remember therefore to sleep normally, have regular breaks / time off and most importantly eat. Revision and diets do not mix. You can easily afford to put on the odd pound during revision, you have all summer to get rid of it again; remember the brain needs lots of fuel to work!

5) Be prepared! Revision is repetitive!

There is no single, definitive way to revise successfully. The methods in this booklet can be mixed and matched to help you get the best out of your revision programme.

The first thing to note about revision is that it involves **REPETITION**. If we repeat something lots of time, we transfer it from SHORT TERM into LONG TERM memory, and will therefore remember it better. The diagram below helps understand this.

However, psychologists will tell you that **simply repeating** information over and over in the same way is just **not effective**. Information has to be **ELABORATIVELY** rehearsed, so you have to 'do something' with the content you are trying to learn; it has to be changed, summarised, put in a different format.



Top Ten Revision Tips

1. Short bursts of revision are most effective. Concentration lapses after about **an hour** and you need to take a short break. So, aim to revise for 30 to 50 minutes at a time

2. Find a quiet place to revise - your bedroom, school, the library - and refuse to be interrupted or distracted.

3. Make sure you don't just revise the subjects and topics you like. Work on your weaker ones as well.



4. Make your own revision notes because you will remember what you have written down more easily. **Stick key notes to cupboards or doors so you see them every day.**

5. Rewrite the key points of your revision notes; read them out loud to yourself. We remember more than twice as much of what we say aloud than of what we merely read.

6. Use different techniques. Make your own learning maps, use post-it notes to write key words on, create flash cards. Record your notes on tape and listen to them back on your Walkman. Ask friends and family to test you. Use highlighter pens to mark important points. Chant or make up a rap song. **You always remember lyrics to songs you heard year ago!**

7. Practise on past-exam papers or revision tests available online or from your teachers. We also have a large variety of past-exam questions available in the LRC and within the Student Shared Area. Initially do one section at a time and progress to doing an entire paper against the clock.



8. You will need help at some stage, ask parents, older brothers and sisters, teachers or friends. If there is a teacher with whom you get on well at school ask for their e-mail address so you can clarify points you are unsure of whilst on study leave. **Use websites specifically designed for revision.**

9. Don't get stressed out! Eat properly and get lots of sleep! Sweets, crisps, chocolate and energy drinks are **not** the way to go – fruit, fresh fish and vegetables will massively you to improve your concentration.

10. Believe in yourself and be positive. If you think you can succeed you will; if you convince yourself that you will fail, that's what will probably happen.



Revision Techniques for Knowledge Retention

1. Note Taking
2. Chunking
3. Mnemonics
4. Mind Maps
5. Concept Maps
6. Card Covering
7. Loci
8. Rote Learning
9. Flash Cards
10. Past-Exam Questions
11. Some other revision techniques

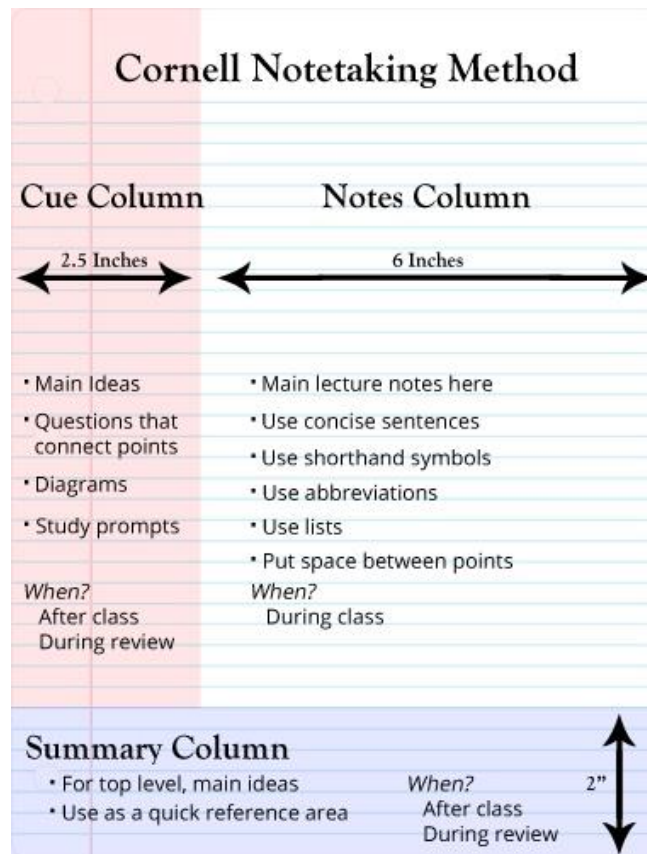


1. Note Taking

Effective note taking can have an increasingly positive impact on student results, both in terms of examinations and in life generally.

Note taking has been shown to dramatically increase knowledge retention, especially when using a format such as Cornell Note Taking

The Cornell method allows students to 'chunk' their learning, making detailed notes of specific concepts, as well as 'cues' for other areas that they need. The use of prompts can jog a student's memory, ensuring they are able to retrieve learning faster.



Series of adjectives	<p>Rule 1. Separate a series of three or more.</p> <p>☆ My \$10,000,000 estate is to be split among my husband, dog, neighbor, and favorite son.</p>
When should you use a comma between adjectives?	<p>Rule 2. Use a comma to separate two adjectives when the word "and" can be put between them.</p> <p>☆ He is a strong, healthy kid.</p> <p>☆ We stayed at an expensive summer resort.</p> <p>You would NOT say expensive and summer resort, so no comma.</p>



2. Chunking

Chunking is breaking up a big piece of information into smaller chunks rather like steps in a ladder. It can be used for numbers and words. Often students use Bullet points to break up information.

Try to remember this by breaking it up into chunks:



Example:

The average person can take in four numbers or words at a time, can concentrate on revision for a maximum of 45 minutes at a time and remembers information best shortly before bedtime.

Chunked:

- Remember 4 words/numbers at a time
- Revision max 45 mins.
- Remember best before bedtime

Chunking using acronyms: e.g. "R GON VFIT" for business

Revenue

- Variable costs

Gross profit

- Fixed costs

Operating profit

- Interest

- Taxes

Net profit

Business or accounting students will be very familiar with all of these terms, but remembering the order they go in on the income statement is tough.

Take the first letters of each: "R GON VFIT" and it's a pronounceable word – much easier to remember.



3. Mnemonics

**Stands
For
Something**

Mnemonics help you to remember by using short words that stand for something to help you. Here is a Mnemonic for REVISION. Try as hard as you can to remember it.

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



CAMBRIAN PERIOD	545–490 mya	camels
ORDOVICIAN PERIOD	490–445 mya	often
SILURIAN PERIOD	445–415 mya	sit
DEVONIAN PERIOD	415–355 mya	down
CARBONIFEROUS PERIOD	355–290 mya	carefully
PERMIAN PERIOD	290–250 mya	perhaps
TRIASSIC PERIOD	D I N O S A U R S	250–200 mya their
JURASSIC PERIOD		200–145 mya joints
CRETACEOUS PERIOD		145–65 mya creak
TERTIARY PERIOD	65–1.64 mya	terribly
QUATERNARY PERIOD	1.64 mya–present day	quietly



4. Mind Maps

Association helps a lot of people to remember, because it is much more powerful when we use our imagination. The idea is to link objects and ideas to each other in any way possible.

Mind maps (Also called Spidergrams) are good for remembering topics and sub-topics such as characters in a book on the other hand concept maps are good for remembering items where the order is important such as the storyline (plot).

Mind maps are great because:

- **Quick** and **easy**
- Add **visual** cues for learning
- Helps to '**chunk**' pieces of revision
- Allows for **dual coding** (when linking to pictures/diagrams)
- Aids with **knowledge retention**
- Make **facts** easier to remember
- Can **link concepts** if needed

Try to remember using the following set of images:

Step 1 Create a Central Idea

•

- The central idea is the starting point of your Mind Map and represents the topic you are going to explore.
- Taking the time to personalise your central idea, whether it's hand drawn or on the computer, will strengthen the connection you have with the content in your Mind Map.

Step2 Add branches to your map

- The next step to get your creative juices flowing is to add branches. The main branches which flow from the central image are the key themes. You can explore each theme or main branch in greater depth by adding child branches.

Step 3 Add keywords

- When you add a branch to your Mind Map, you will need to include a key idea. An important principle of Mind Mapping is using **one word per branch**. Keeping to one word sparks off a greater number of associations compared to using multiple words or phrases.
- For example, if you include 'Birthday Party' on a branch, you are restricted to just aspects of the party. However, if you simply use the keyword 'Birthday', you can radiate out and explore the keyword, party, but also a wide variety of different keywords such as presents, cake etc.

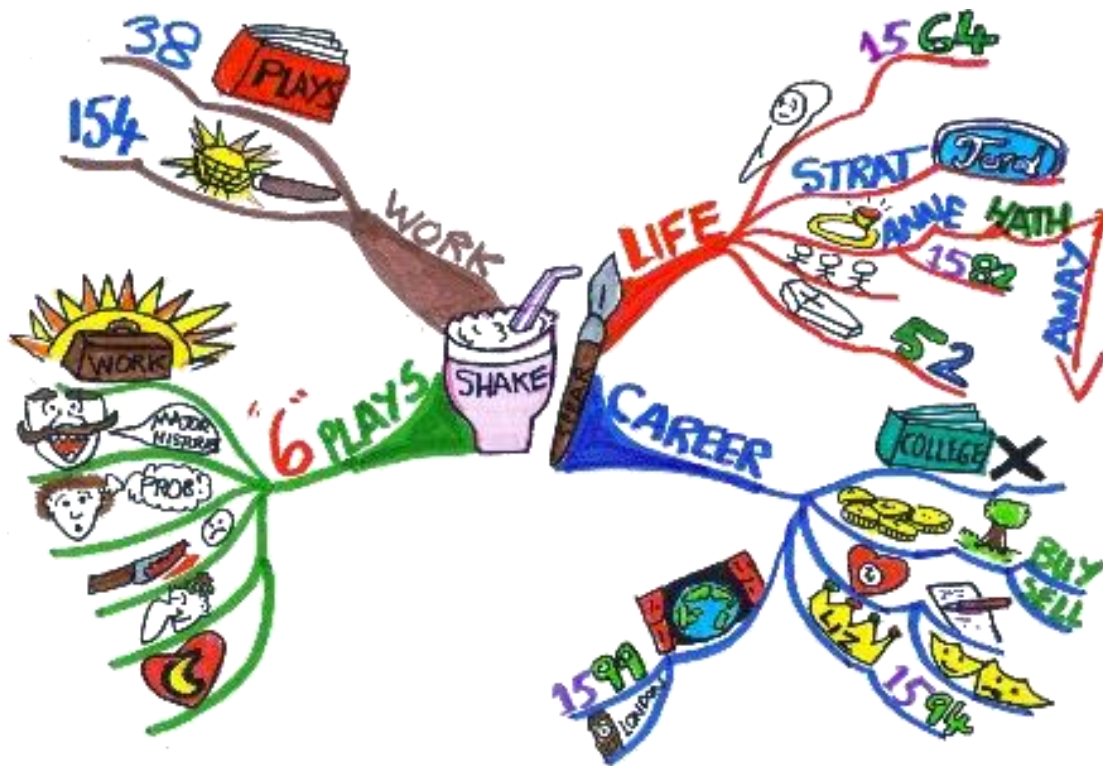
Step 4 Colour code your branches

- Mind Mapping encourages whole brain thinking as it brings together a wide range of cortical skills from logical and numerical to creative and special.



Step 5 Include images

- Images have the power to convey much more information than a word, sentence or even an essay. They are processed instantly by the brain and act as visual stimuli to recall information. Better yet, images are a universal language which can overcome any language barrier.



5. Concept Maps

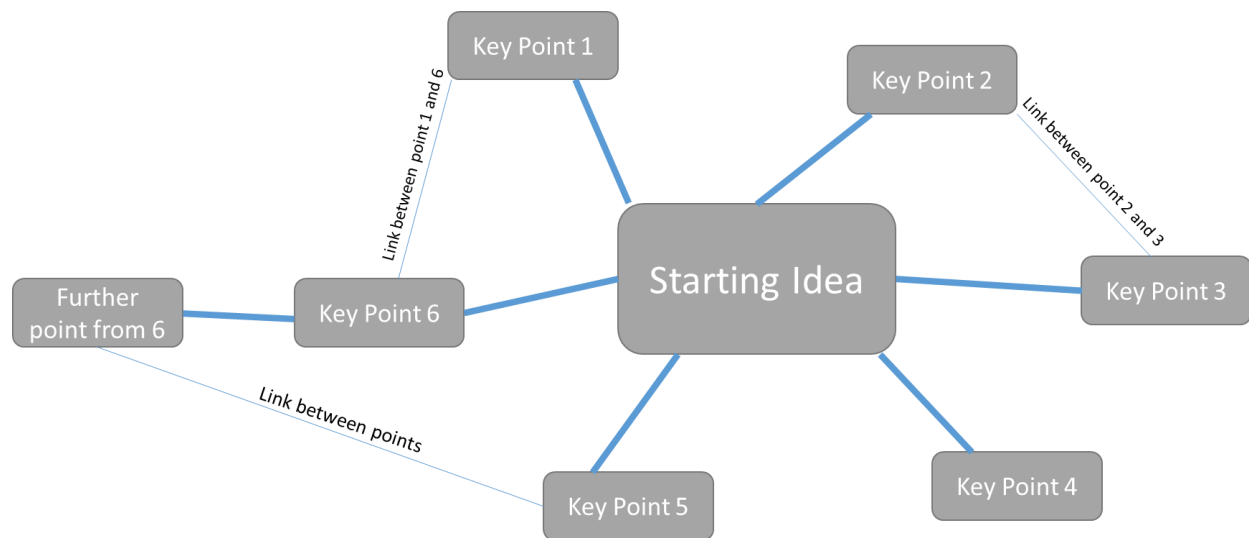
These are similar to mind maps, but link **concepts** instead of linking **ideas**.

Why bother with concept maps?

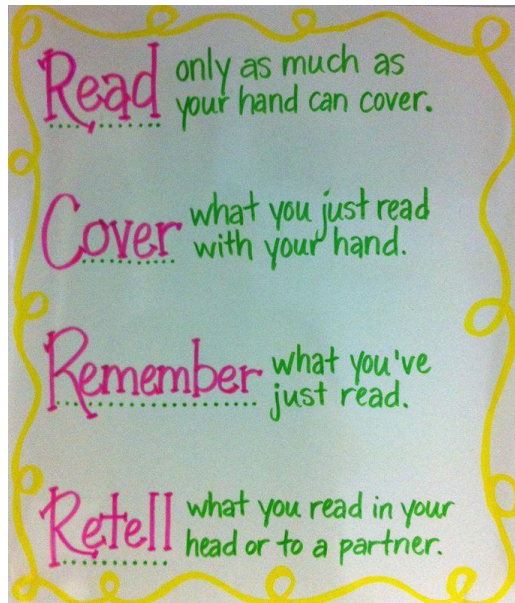
- Quick and easy
- Can form links between different concepts
- Increases thought
- Can allow for dual coding by linking the content to the structure
- Creates a visual cue for linking content
- Can link to any subject
- Can help with planning extended responses for essays (English/History/Geography etc)

Concepts can be as obscure as you like – as long as they form links between concepts.

A concept map looks like:



6. Card Cover



Some ways to practice with cards:

1. Put the answers on the back, but you will need to remember more at once before you check
2. Use a piece of paper and move down to reveal answers as you guess the contents.
3. If this is the answer, what is the question? – Write the answer down on the card and work together to come up with as many questions as possible that would give the required answer.

These techniques are very useful for checking that you know key facts.



7. LOCI



Loci is the memory trick of memory masters. It involves thinking about a journey that you know well and the landmarks along the way. You then add in images to help you remember information. (They do not have to be famous, but things that you notice as you go by.)

When revising you could do the following:

1. Read through your books
2. If you do not understand something ask somebody.
3. Now choose the memory tricks that work best for you
4. Create posters to help you to organise information
5. Create cards with key points and practice
6. Use past papers to practice answering questions

Now let us take a journey from Newport Bridge to Macmillan Academy.

1. On the bridge itself you see a huge book
2. You reach the large roundabout and see your teachers, parents and friends.
3. You see the houses on the left and there is a magician performing magic tricks.
4. On a billboard on the fence of Macmillan you see a huge poster with your revision on it.
5. As you walk into the gate you see a huge pile of cards.
6. When you arrive into the canteen you see test papers set out for you on all the tables.



8. Rote Learning



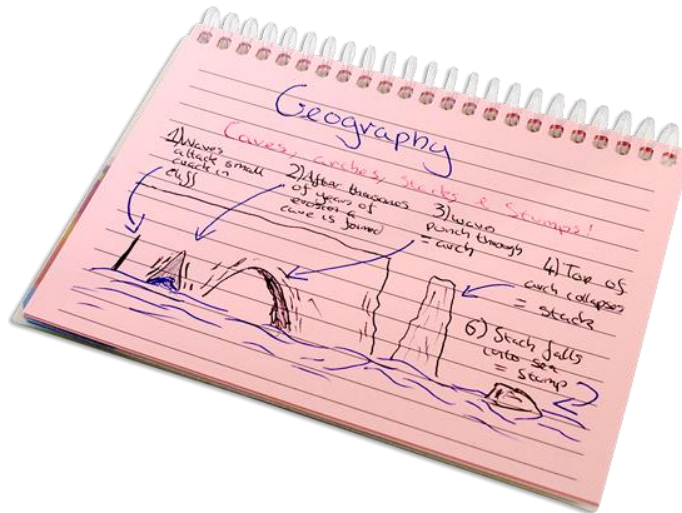
Learning by rote is simply **reading the text over and over** until you remember it. It is the most basic kind of revision, but without the help of other techniques may not be very effective and it can be very boring. There are a few students with excellent auditory memories, who can learn effectively this way.

Try reading the passage above again and again and see how much you can remember. If you forget any key information, repeat the process. This will take lots of time and is NOT effective for all students.

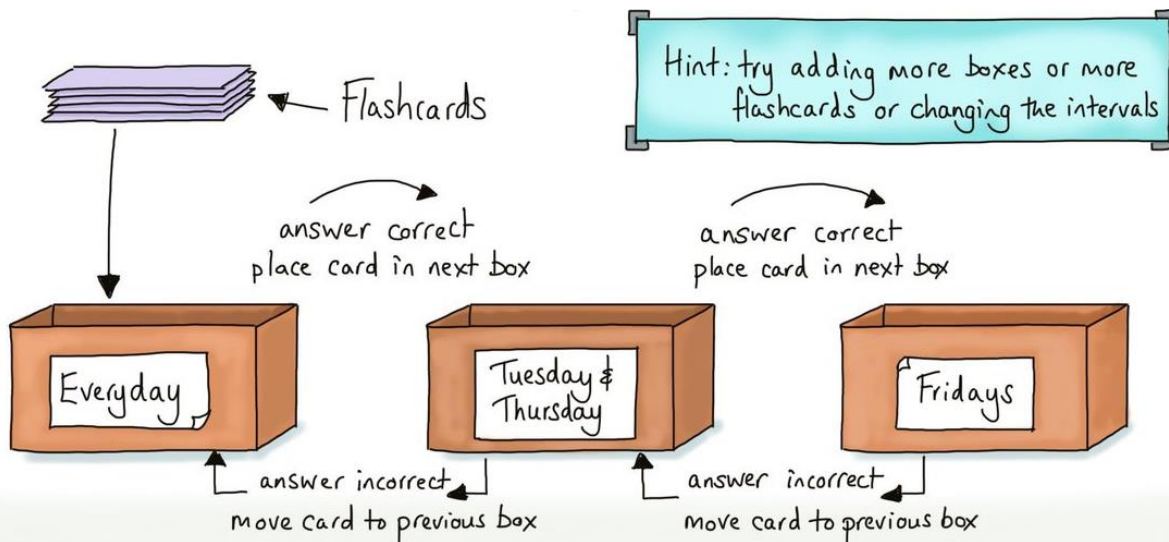


9. Flash Cards

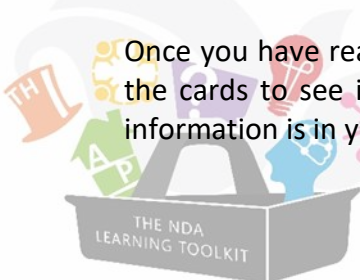
- Put key information onto small cards and dot them around your house – put them everywhere you go....on the fridge, in the look in your bedroom.
- Every time you look, you'll be reminded of a key term, a diagram, a quotation – anything!!



Using the model below, flashcards can easily be used to memorise and retrieve key information. The key around using flashcards effectively is continuous **testing and repetition**.



Once you have reached the point of practising weekly, try to reduce the frequency you look at the cards to see if you still remember the content. Try fortnightly or monthly to ensure the information is in your long-term memory.



10. Past-Exam Questions

Working through past-exam questions has clear evidence of impact, especially when a clear reflective process is followed. Students need to work through as much content as possible, test themselves on it through past-exam questions and reflect effectively, closing the 'loop' of learning.

Some pointers for past-exam questions:

Checking on your progress isn't just about using past papers.

- Check out command words carefully to understand what the question is asking of you!
- Use past papers to make sure that you are managing your time well. Set yourself a time frame to complete each question
- Go through past paper answers with a different colour pen to highlight any marks you lose or mistakes you make
- Test yourself. Find out if your revision has been effective by using past papers or ask someone to test you
- If your notes are all bullet points, past papers might be the first chance you have to write in clear and linked sentences!
- Examiner reports can give you an idea of where students went wrong in previous exams
- Repeat your testing – it is important you test yourself more than once. Try it ten minutes after revising a topic, one day after, then a week later.

Command words and their definitions

Describe:	say what you see - no need for reasons
Explain:	give reasons
Outline:	give a brief summary
Analyse:	go into detail
Compare:	what are the similarities and differences?
Contrast:	what are the differences?
Calculate:	use numbers given to work out the value of something
Define:	give the meaning of something
Evaluate:	consider both sides - pros and cons
Justify:	give evidence to explain something
To what extent:	Judge the importance or success of something - has it worked or not
Argue:	present a case with evidence or reasons
Assess:	Weigh up / give an informed judgement
Comment on:	give your opinion on something
Debate:	give different perspectives



11. Other revision strategies

Podcasts/ Videos – This is a great technique for many subjects, but it works especially well with languages. Record yourself speaking key facts or terms and play this while you are in the car, in bed, wherever really! You could produce question and answers on video. There are also lots of readymade videos and podcasts available on the internet.

Flowcharts – If you're trying to learn a process, series of events or plot of a book producing a flow diagram of the events can be effective.

Highlighting – This should be used for all methods of revision notes. Highlight or underline key words and these will stick in your brain more effectively. This is NOT effective for everyone.

Clock Diagrams – Each part of the story is written onto a clock face, then link the parts of the story to the time on the clock.

Roman Speeches – Each part of what you are trying to learn is linked in your mind to something in your bedroom. Then when you are in the exam, run through the things in your room, you should then be able to remember the relevant bits of information.

Pictures and Paintings – Turn what you need to revise into pictures and paintings.

Big Words – Stick important words, formulas etc all over the house, so you always see them.

Models – Make models to illustrate what you need to learn.

Question Following – Rather than just staring at your notes find a question and try to answer it in your head by following your notes. This works especially well with mind maps.

Key Words – Write down the key words (which you should have highlighted for a particular topic) and try to reproduce your notes around them / answer questions based on them.

Reproducing Notes – Continually turn your notes into different tables, flow charts etc. By doing this you will learn them better.

Posters – Stick key words, equations etc on big bits of paper around your room and house to continually remind you of them.

Friends – Learning with friends can be very important as it's less lonely, more fun and you can help motivate each other as well as help each other. But beware friends can also be the biggest distraction!

REMEMBER YOU MUST KEEP GOING BACK OVER WHAT YOU HAVE ALREADY REVISED.

