

PARENT BLAST

THOUGHT OF THE TERM

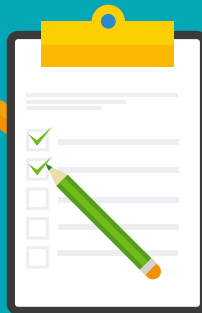
"The best preparation for tomorrow, is doing your best today"

HABITS FOR EXAM SUCCESS

As adults, we are well aware of the importance of learning, but students don't necessarily have the motivation to push themselves to do their very best. It is up to us to provide the structure and support necessary for their success.

Although a positive attitude is important, it isn't enough by itself. Having a growth mindset means that your child needs to be open to new ways of learning and is willing to form a very deliberate plan of action to help them on their way to exam success!

REVIEW, ORGANISE AND SUMMARISE INFORMATION



Do this on a continuous basis. Getting your child into the habit of regular reviewing and retrieval practice puts an end to cramming and all-nighters. Remind them - lots of practice works, but only if it is spaced! Set up a regular Routine, including a timetable, and monitor if it is being followed. Why not work together on a list of 'things to learn'. The pleasure of ticking things off is not to be underestimated.

SELF QUIZ



Encourage your child to quiz themselves on what they have learnt, to check back their answers and correct mistakes. Anything they need to remember must be periodically recalled from memory. Self testing provides a reliable measure of what they have and have not yet mastered! Apps like Brainscape and Quizlet are very helpful for this.

GET INVOLVED WITH REVISION

Ask your child questions and get them to explain certain topics to you. Being able to concisely explain something to someone else highlights how well you have or have not remembered a topic.



REFLECTION



Set aside one to one time so that your child can talk to you about any worries. Ask them what they think went well? What could have gone better? What can they do differently next time? Recognising and learning from mistakes can be a powerful way of strengthening learning and the skills used. Build their confidence by acknowledging how hard they are working and notice the specific things that they are trying to improve. Remain positive and hopeful!

MNEMONIC DEVICES



No matter what your child may set their sights on doing or becoming, if they want to be a contender, it's mastering the ability to learn that will get them in the game and keep them there. Mnemonic devices use the power of creativity and imagination to help remember information. There are lots of memory devices to encourage your child to use including first letter triggers, loci, peg words, image chains, flash cards and A-maps! Find out what works best for them.

DEEPEN THEIR KNOWLEDGE AND INTEREST IN A SUBJECT



By encouraging them to do their own research into things that take them beyond the curriculum. Ask questions to spur inquisitiveness and show a genuine interest in what they are studying to help with this.

Learn to Learn Strategies

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Learn to Learn Strategies, or Metacognitive Strategies as they're also known, are techniques we can use to improve the way we remember information. These memory techniques are particularly useful for students who need to remember a vast amount of information for their exams. The Sutton Trust Teaching and Learning Tool Kit, which looks at the impact different teaching approaches have on students, tell us metacognition and self-regulation can improve students' learning performance by over 7 months, which is huge!

Below are five of our favourite memory strategies to help your child remember information for their exams.

LOCI

Locl (Latin for 'places') is a memory technique based on the idea that we can easily remember locations that we are familiar with. If you link information that you need to remember with a place you know well, for your child this could be their bedroom, the walk to school, the exam hall or parts of their body, the location will act as a cue to help them remember what they are trying to memorise.

For example, if I wanted to remember the list of materials the blood carries around the body;

Red Blood Cells
White Blood Cells
Blood Platelets
Plasma

I could for example think about my kitchen. The red blind covering the window reminds me of "red blood cells", which is next to the white tiles that remind me of "white blood cells". On the worktop, there's a plate, that reminds me of "blood platelets". The plate is covered in pasta sauce, which reminds me of "plasma".

Then when in the exam, I can think of my kitchen to help me remember the list I need to remember for the exam question.



LOCI has been used since ancient times to memorise important information and is frequently used by World Memory Champions!

PEG WORDS

Peg Words are ideal for remembering lists of information, particularly when they need be in a specific order. They work by associating information you already know well (the numbers 1 through 20, and the letters A through Z) with the new facts you want to remember. A "peg" is just a mental hook on which you hang the information. Here we have linked the numbers 1-5 to images using rhyme.



1 - Sun



2 - Shoe



3 - Tree



4 - Door



5 - Hive

The sillier the image the better, as students are more likely to remember it.

So then if I have my list of different types of rocks for Geography that I need to remember:

Igneous Rocks Sedimentary Rocks Metamorphic Rocks

I can match them up to the numbers.

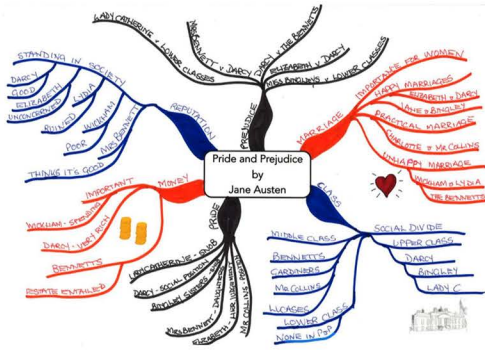
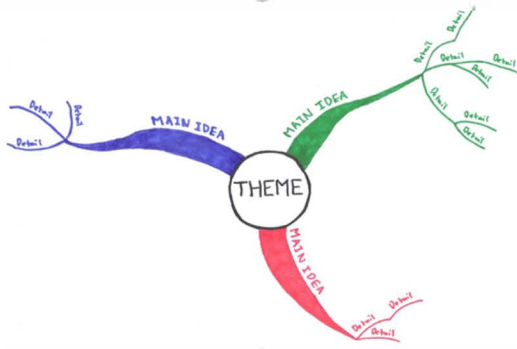
Igneous Rocks are formed from rocks that have got so hot they've become liquid (molten rocks), then cooled and solidified again to become Igneous rocks. Therefore 1 - Sun reminds me of "Igneous Rocks" because they previously got so hot like the sun!

Sedimentary Rocks are formed from broken bits of other rocks that have joined together. This reminds me of 2 - Shoe, as I imagine kicking lots of broken bits of rock with my shoe, which make "Sedimentary Rocks".

Metamorphic Rocks are formed when other rocks change due to heat or pressure. This reminds me of 3 - Tree, as I think of trees changing with the different seasons due to the different temperatures, just like "Metamorphic Rocks" morph or change with heat too.

A-MAPS

A-maps, or Association Maps as they're also known, are an excellent memory tool to help us remember key points for exams, especially effective for larger or more complex topics.



You can use them for anything that needs summarising and for any subject your child is studying. E.g. an A-map for each theme in Romeo and Juliet for English, or an A-map of the different renewable energy sources for Science. The A-map example to the left summarises the main themes from Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen.

There are a few important rules to follow when creating an A-map, which makes it easier for your brain to remember the information. These are:

1. Use colour, and stick to the same colour for each branch
2. Use curved lines for the branches
3. Use images as well as words
4. Write on the lines of the A-map

"When students use metacognition, they become tremendously empowered as learners because they begin to be able to teach themselves." Dr. Sandra Yancy McGuire

FLASH CARDS

Flash cards are a fantastic memory tool as they promote active recall, by bringing the memory back to the front of the brain again. By reviewing flash cards students are more likely to retain the information for a longer amount of time.

Our top tips when creating flash cards:

Students should create their own flash cards, so that they make sense to them.

It's important to start creating flash cards early, so there is lots of time to refer to them again and again as exams approach.

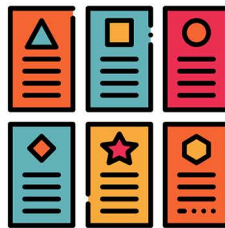
Including pictures on flash cards is great – as we've previously discussed, images help us to memorise.

Students should break down complex topics into multiple flash cards.

Simple flash cards, with the question on the front and answer on the back are most effective.

Including some of the other metacognitive strategies on the flash card e.g. peg words can help maximise the impact.

When referring to flash cards, students should walk around, say answers out loud – keep it interesting!



Learning Performance

IMAGE CHAINS

Image chains also use images to help us remember. This time we link a list of words all together to make a story using pictures. For example,

Tree House Guitar Pencil Phone

Can be made into an image chain like the below:



EVALUATION FORM

Name

School

Date

Presenter

How would you rate the presenter?

- Poor Average Good Very Good Excellent

How helpful did you find the workshop?

- Not Helpful Slightly Helpful Reasonably Helpful Very Helpful Extremely Helpful

How would you rate the ideas we covered today?

- Poor Average Good Very Good Excellent

What have you learnt today?

What will you do differently at home after this workshop?

Any other comments:

We hope you had a great day with us and continue to use your imagination and creativity to make learning easier.

If you had a fantastic time tell us about it on Twitter [@LPerformance](#)

Now. Go be awesome!