

# St. Ninian's High School



Exam  
Techniques

Raising  
Attainment

Pupil  
Handout



## Time management

- Time management in terms of revision timetable
- Revising under timed conditions
- Creating a time plan for your individual subjects



## Example Plan

English National 5 Critical Reading – 1hour 30 minutes

You have to complete 2 sections; Scottish Set Text and Critical Essay.  
The SQA recommend spending 45 minutes for each section.

How does this break down?

- |   |            |
|---|------------|
| ➤ Time spent reading questions                      | 5 minutes  |
| ➤ Plan of answer (note/highlight quotes to be used) | 5 minutes  |
| ➤ Writing answer                                    | 30 minutes |
| ➤ Proof Reading                                     | 5 minutes  |

You should then aim to remember your time plan, revise to this and use this in the exam as a guide and prompt.



## Command words

Understanding command words and ensuring you answer the question posed

**Apply** – apply your understanding of the subject

**Compare** – compare how two things are similar or different. Make sure you include both things you are asked to compare

**Consider** – you will be given information and asked to consider all of the factors that might influence a decision

**Describe** – describe is to recall some facts, events or processes in an accurate way. You may need to link together pieces of information in a logical order.

**Discuss** – you may be asked to make an informed judgement about a topic – discuss the topic and give your opinion, but support it using information provided or your own knowledge.

**Evaluate** – you will be given information and expected to use it and your own knowledge to look at evidence. Discuss advantages and disadvantages of this and come to a conclusion.

**Explain** – state what is happening and explain how or why it is happening by using ‘because’.

**Interpret** – interpret the data given to you on graphs, diagrams or in tables to answer the question.

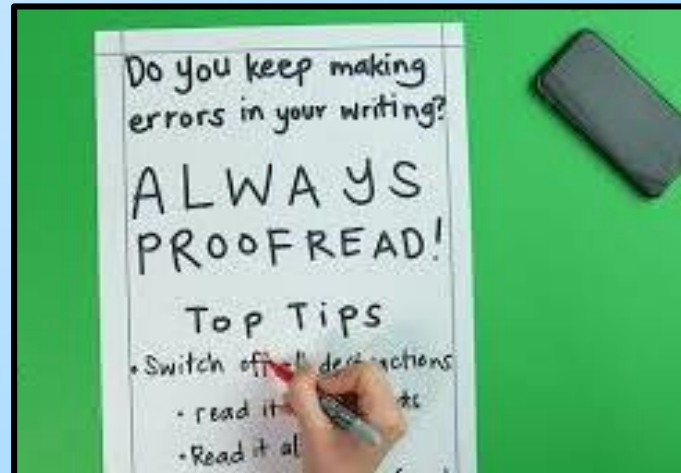
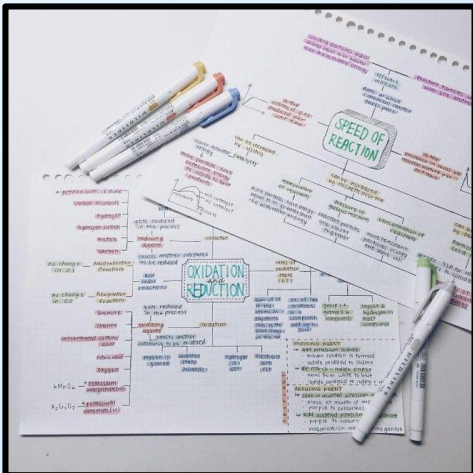
**Analyse** – you will be provided with information that you are asked to break down and interpret to provide further justification or explanation of the information.

**Justify** – provide reasons to support the opinion you have given.



# Structuring

- How to get a question started
  - Use a mind map – question in the middle – strands out for each area
  - Write quotes/facts/dates etc. down at the start
- Use paragraphs to make your answer clear for you to follow and the examiner to read through
- Sub headings can be used to organise your answer and for you to ensure you have covered all points in your plan
- Make time for proof reading – where possible try to leave time to read back over your answer, ensuring that it make sense in English and that you have included all necessary information and answered the question.



## Stress management

- Breathing techniques – breath in for 3 and out for 6. Try to breath in through your nose and out slowly through your mouth.
- Take a rest – if you are feeling overwhelmed in the exam, take a few seconds to put your pen down, close your eyes and say to yourself that you can get through this
- Answer questions in any order – if you come to a question that you are struggling with, move on and come back to it. Make sure you number your answers clearly on your answer sheet and the examiners will mark them in any order.

