

Hillhead High School *Exam Revision and Study Guide*



This guide is designed to help support students in the run up to the examination period. It contains all of the key information that will enable students to study and revise more effectively in preparation for their exams.

Making Your Schoolwork a Priority

Why is this year so important?

Since S1 you have spent around 200 weeks in total studying and learning at school in Hillhead High.

You now have the final few weeks to prepare for success in exams and to consolidate all of the learning you have achieved up to this point in time. It is now time to make sure you are organised and prepared for your upcoming exams.

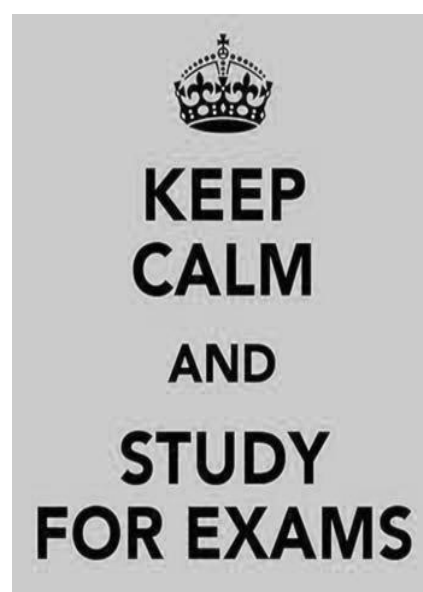


Beginning to Organise Your Time

Always try to be positive. Believe you can do it and you are halfway there. If you revise and study a little every day and then do more and more as your exams get closer, you will feel less stressed because you will be prepared.

You should start with **a plan for learning** new information or going over what you have learned already. If your brain is going to pay attention, you should begin by making connections to what you already know. Then, identify what you do not know and **map out what you need to do**.

Preparing for exams is best **viewed as a project** that needs to be managed. An important project management skill is the ability to create **good plans** and **good revision timetables**.



Where to study

Try to study in the same place and at the same time each day.

Study in a room that is quiet.

Sit in a chair. Study at a desk or table. You will feel more tired if you study lying on your bed or the floor.



Work under good light. Use a 60 or 75 watt bulb desk lamp. Always have a softer light behind you. Make sure there is no glare. This will hurt your eyes and make you tired.

Make sure you have all you will need with you. Keep a box with spare things like pens and pencils, paper, a ruler, scissors, index cards, highlighter pens, and a maths set.

Don't study with music or the TV on. Yes, you can read and write with them BUT they will take some of your attention and concentration. This will decrease what you will take in.

Creating an effective work space

A clean, well equipped study environment helps revision. It removes distractions and promotes an

organised approach to study. Things you can include:

Creating a tidy undisturbed place to work

Having a comfortable chair

Using a table which has enough room for books, etc.

A bright lamp

Having a clock nearby

Pens, pencils and other equipment including scrap paper



When to study:

Don't study when you are hungry or tired. It is very hard to learn when you are hungry or tired.

Some pupils find the morning is the best time to study. Think about when is your best time to study.

Take a **5 minute break for every 30 minutes** that you study.

Do not study for too long at any one time. Trying to take in too many new things at once may only confuse you. It is better to **study well for a short time** than to just sit looking at a book.

Use your spare time. While you are waiting for a bus or walking the dog, you can be trying to remember something. **Carry your study cards with you.**

Keep a calendar where you study. Mark in the dates of tests and exams. Mark each day that you study and for how long.

Before an exam make a timetable of when you will study and what you will study

March						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

The Planning

You need to **organise your homework and coursework** requirements first, then add in **study and revision time.**

Your aim is to **prioritise the difficult subjects first**, organise them and move on to the easier areas in good time for each of your deadlines.

That means you need to know **when your deadlines are** and **how much time you have left** for each of your subjects.

April						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

May						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Then, based on your audit, you need to start to **plan your study time.**

Remember that **30 minute sessions are best**, and then have a short break.

It's better to do **1 hour a night** over a long period than **cramming it all in at the last minute.**

You should aim for **3-4 hours study on a non-school day** (over Easter for example).

Attend after school and holiday **supported study classes.**

That's not as easy as it sounds because to do it really well you have got to plan ahead in detail.

Studying

Go to all of your lessons and make them work for YOU.

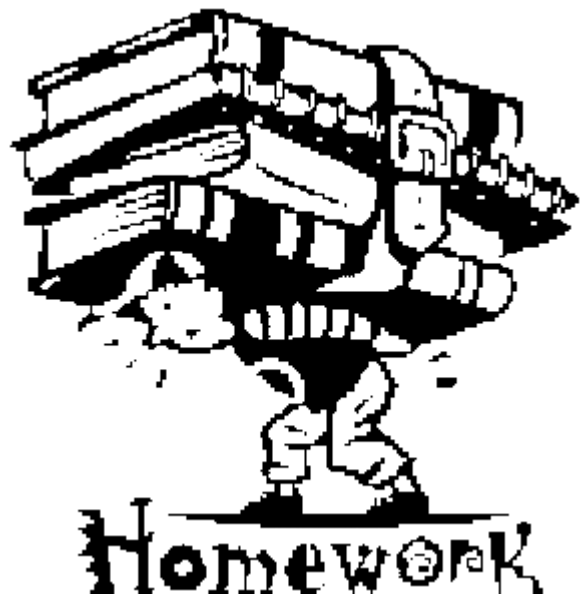
Make the most of your subject teacher's knowledge about the subject as well as revision and exam techniques.

Find out about different learning techniques and try them out to **find out what works for you**

Spend time to **learn new material covered in class**; this makes revision easier later on.

Make revision notes for each subject.

Get hold of past papers from your teachers or from the internet. **Use BBC Bite Size** as a good place to revise (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/levels/z6gw2hv>)



Have clear and specific goals for each study session, for example: “at the end of this session I will be able to answer one set of speaking questions in French and include tenses.” Have a start and finish time and stick to it.

Study Skills

Revision Cards

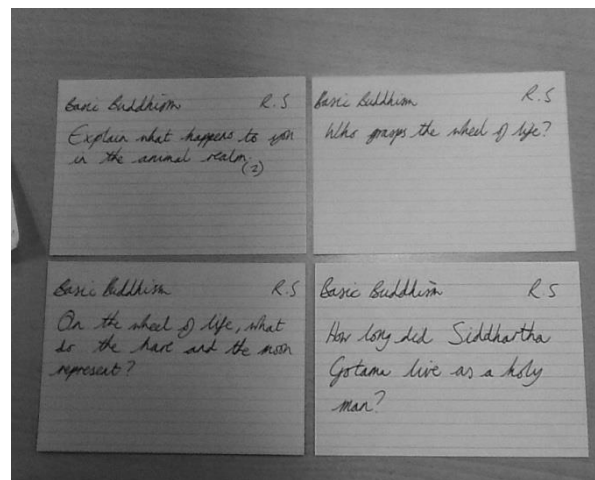
A very good way to turn lesson notes into a form that is more manageable when you come to revise is to make a set of **REVISION CARDS**.

A good REVISION CARD should **contain all of the KEY POINTS** on a topic in a clear and concise way.

It should be a **condensed version of your notes** and you should be able to take in the information on the card at a glance.

By transferring information from your notes to the REVISION CARD you are re-learning what you have covered in class. This is because you have to **put information in your own words**, and to do that you have to understand it!

A REVISION CARD should just have the key points on. It **shouldn't have too much detail**. If you come back to a REVISION CARD and you don't understand it, use your more detailed class notes.

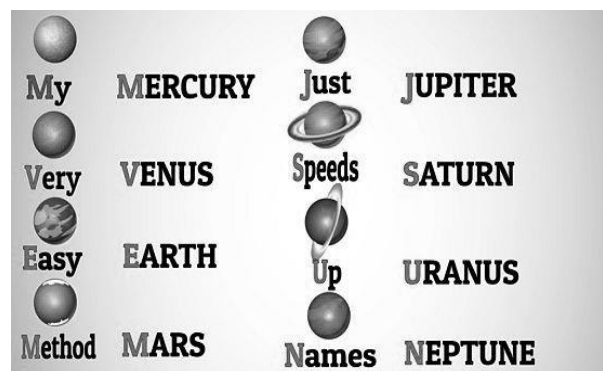


Mnemonics

Mnemonics are really simple but very useful for revision. You can use them to remember a sequence of events, a list of facts or parts of a process.

To create a Mnemonic all you have to do is **write down a list of facts or information**. Here's an example designed to help remember the order of the planets that circle our sun.

The first thing to do is write them down in order:



Mercury – Venus - Earth – Mars – Jupiter – Saturn – Uranus – Neptune - Pluto

Then take the first letter from each of the planet names:

M V E M J S U N P

You can **create a memorable sentence or phrase** that uses each of the letters above in turn as the first letter of each word in my new sentence:

My Very Easy Method Just Speeds Up Names Perhaps

Doing this helps you to create something memorable that you can decode when you need to.

Mind Maps

Mind mapping is really useful for listing lots of ideas and connecting them together. You can use it to record information as you are revising or you can use it to see how much you know or have remembered about a topic, area or subject.

How to Mind Map

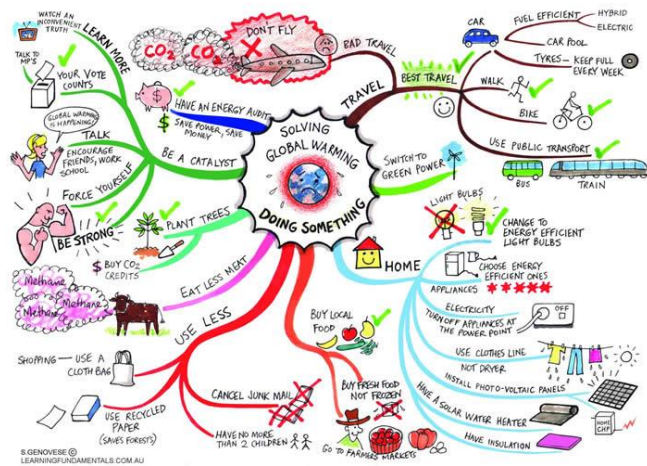
Use just **key words**, or wherever possible images.

Start from the centre of the page and work out.

Make the centre a clear and **strong visual image** that depicts the general theme of the map.

Create sub-centres for sub-themes.

Put **key words** on lines. This reinforces the structure of notes.



Print rather than write in script. It **makes notes more readable and memorable**. Lower case is more visually distinctive (and better remembered) than upper case.

Use colour to depict themes, associations and to make things stand out.

Anything that stands out on the page will stand out in your mind.

Think three-dimensionally.

Use arrows, icons or other visual aids to show links between different elements.

Don't get stuck in one area. If you dry up in one area go to another branch.

Put ideas down as they occur, wherever they fit. Don't judge or hold back.

Break boundaries. If you run out of space, don't start a new sheet; paste more paper onto the map.

Be creative. Creativity aids memory.

Summary Maps

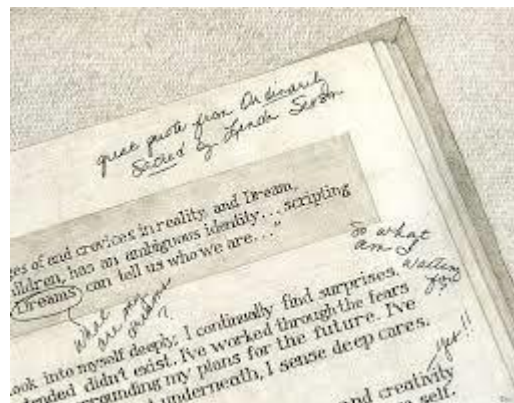
When required to revise more complex texts, another option is to create summary maps. Begin by **annotating with key words**, symbols and colour in the margins of the text, as shown below.



Using Annotations

Whatever text you are studying, it is very helpful to have the freedom to write annotations (**eg: keywords or symbols**) in the margins.

Annotations are best written using a **selection of colours**, but if the texts that you are reading belong to a library then you may need to photocopy sections or use a very light (eg: 2H) pencil and then carefully erase all of your annotations before returning texts you have borrowed.

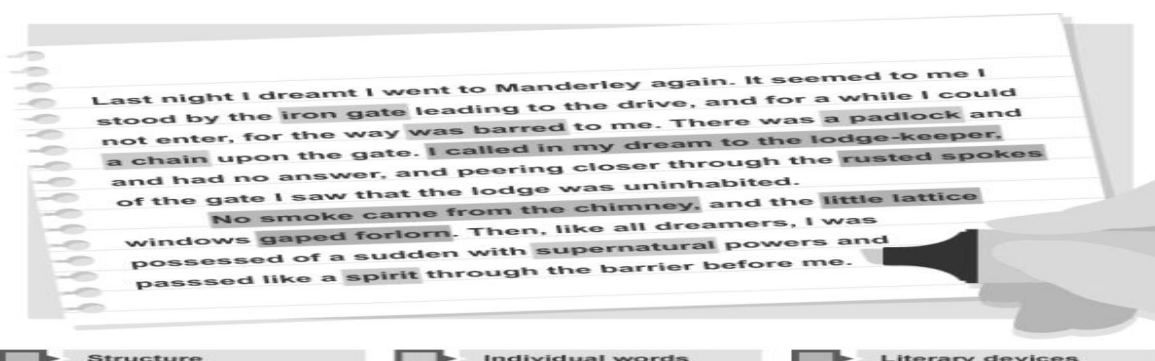


The next few sections illustrate how you might **use key words, symbols and colour** to annotate text - in this case about the life of David Beckham.

Key Words

You **do not need to use sentences** when writing revision notes.

Underlining the **key words** would be enough to trigger your memory.

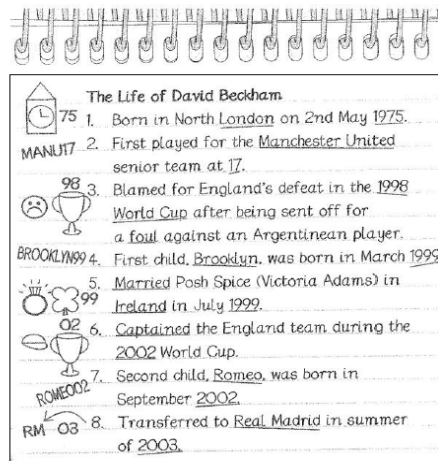


Symbols

Symbols represent or remind us of something else.

Using a biography of David Beckham as an example, a symbol of Big Ben with the number '75' next to it will, for example, remind us for example that David Beckham was born in London in 1975. Similarly,

drawing a cap and a trophy with the number '02' above it will remind us that Beckham captained the England team during the 2002 World Cup.



Test Yourself

Talk through Beckham's life aloud.

Close your eyes and try to visualise the key contents of the text in your mind's eye.

Ask a friend or a member of your family to test you on Beckham's life.

You may well be surprised just how much you can remember!

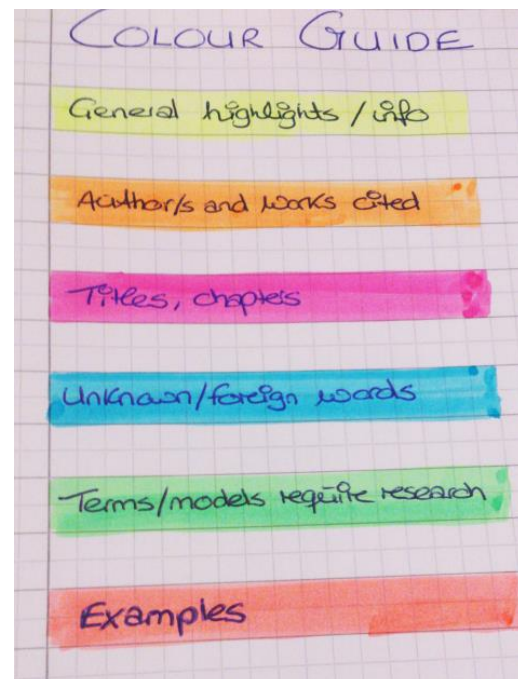
Colour

When studying and revising, using a selection of coloured pens to highlight is a good way to separate and sort information. **Colour separates information** to a much greater degree than any other technique you might use. You use a colour key on the front of your jotter which will help you to easily identify each individual topic.

Test yourself out loud – work as a team

Working with a friend who is studying the same course work can be a really useful way to help you remember the course content. A question and answer session can help you to have a clearer idea of the areas of the course you still have to work on.

Making up a range of questions with answers for your study friend is another approach you can use to have a greater understanding of the course work. If you discuss the Q's and A's each person can bring their strengths to the study session.



Exam Information

Exam Timetables and Conduct

Examinations have really strict rules. If they are not followed, in a worst case scenario, a student can be disqualified. This section outlines the basic examination rules laid down by the SQA (the government body that oversees external examinations).

The exam timetables will be issued to each pupil, so it is important to:

Read through your exam timetable carefully and know **when** your exams are;

the date, the day and the start and finish times.

Display your exam timetable in a **prominent place** as a reminder of your exam schedule

Memorise your candidate number and have a copy with you in the exam

Know **where** your exams are going to take place

Be prepared and have everything you might need for the exam (pen, pencil, rubber, ruler, calculator and glasses if you need them etc. and remember water)

Make sure you have had a **good night's sleep the night** before the exam. Your brain and memory will function much better

Arrive at least **30 minutes before your exam** starts to allow for time to be settled and ready to begin

Don't make comparisons between yourself and others regarding exam preparedness. Everyone will have their own approach to getting ready for exams. You will know what suits you best

Additional Assessment Arrangements

Some students may have **additional arrangements** put in place for their exams. This means they may be entitled to additional time **at the beginning or at the end** of their exam. Your Support for Learning teachers will let you know whether you are one of those pupils. If you are unsure you should speak to them a few weeks before the exams. You will probably be given your own **individual exam timetable** which will show all the **starting and finishing times** of your exams. Note down which if any exams that **begin early** so you can arrive in plenty of time for the start of your exam.

Useful Websites

Revision websites can be useful resources to help you revise for your exams. You may find some of the websites helpful in the lead up to your exams. Speak to your subject teacher for **advice on the best websites** to help you study for your exams.