Supporting your son/daughter with their revision

Thomas Hardye School
Thursday 7 March

Welcome
It doesn’t have to be like this...
Three Truths

• Students who know more do better in exams

• Students who revise know more than those who don’t.

• Students who know how to revise do it more effectively
And some lies

• It’s too early to start yet
• It’s too late to start now
• No-one else has started revising
• You can’t revise for ….
• You don’t need to do well in ……
• Revision is boring. It’s just staring at a book
• I can revise and listen to music/watch the TV
• All you can do is do your best
Knowing how to revise

• Being **ready** to learn

• Knowing **how** you learn
Being **ready** to learn

- It’s time for a test...
THE LEARNING BRAIN
Do you know about the learning parts of your brain?

Different parts of the brain interact to allow us to learn.

- **The Neo-Cortex** - this is where higher order thinking skills such as problem-solving take place. Here the brain works out patterns and meaning.

- **The Limbic System** - this is the seat of the emotions and long term memory. We remember best when we use our emotions in learning.

There is a part of the brain which can slow down or prevent learning from taking place:

- **The Reptilian Brain** (brainstem) - this part of the brain looks after our basic survival. Under stress the Reptilian Brain blocks the Neo-Cortex and the Limbic System from thinking and remembering, so that learning is slowed down or prevented.
The Reptilian Brain
Did you know that stress causes us to “go reptilian”?

The reptilian brain is so called because it is the most primitive part of our brain. Under stress the reptilian brain takes over and we react in one of the following ways:

- **Fight** - We become aggressive. Have you ever seen anyone lose their temper with another pupil or teacher?
- **Flight** - We run away from a stressful situation. Have you ever seen a pupil bolt for the door without thinking?
- **Freeze** - We are unable to move or speak. Have you ever watched a pupil panic, become speechless and unable to think?

“If you are in any of the above states no learning is taking place!”
So, being in the right frame of mind is vital

As a parent, you can help this to happen by…
- Being relentlessly optimistic
- Using positive presuppositions
- Emphasising the positives; don’t dwell on errors
- Picking your battles – let them listen to music!
- Not joining in the anxiety – be a model of calm confidence
- Not continually referring to how you revised at school, or to how siblings revised etc
Knowing **how** you Learn

- Visual
- Auditory
- Kinaesthetic
Learning Styles
Are you a visual learner?
Do you like colour, images and shape?

Visual learners

29% of us prefer to learn by storing images in our brains.

Visual Learners should:

- use pictures, mind maps, computers, diagrams, flowcharts, key words, TV, videos, mind maps.
- use colour to help the brain remember.
- use different coloured pens and pencils to colour diagrams and when writing notes use highlighter pens to highlight text.
- write information in bullet points or as key words on “post-its” - (they come in different colours).

“See how you learn!”
**Learning Styles**

Are you an auditory learner? Do you respond to sounds and noises?

**Auditory learners**

34% of us prefer to learn by storing sounds in our brains.

Auditory learners should:

- Learn with friends - talk over the work and help each other to understand it.
- Tape notes and play them back.
- Listen to music while learning.
- Repeat their work out loud.
- Repeat their work out loud in funny voices.
- Make up rhymes or raps about their work.
- Get someone in their family to ask them questions about the work.
- Use DVDs, CD-Roms and computer programs from which they can hear the text spoken as they read.

"Have you got your ears on?"
Learning Styles
Do you like to move when learning?
Do you like to touch objects or use computers when learning?

37% of us prefer to learn by movement or touch.

Kinesthetic learners should:
- where possible touch, feel or do things practically.
- use computers.
- put their notes on cards or “post-its” and sequence them. (perhaps rank the cards in order of importance or make into sentences).
- walk between notes or “post-its” that are on the floor or on the walls.
- walk around while reading.
- do brain gym exercises.
- stand up - stretch or exercise - at least every 20 minutes.
- draw pictures, mind maps - run a finger between the words on the map, say each one out loud.
- squeeze a sponge or stress release ball while working.

“Make learning a moving experience”
Variety and Novelty

- Subject
- Length of time
- Revision or learning style
Ten revision methods

Spend some time each day on rote learning.
Revision Methods

Do exam questions from past papers (for an hour or ten minutes or …)
Revision Methods

Invent and learn mnemonics

**because**

- big
- elephants
- can
- always
- upset
- small
- elephants

For example, Romeo and Juliet…
Romeo and Juliet

- **R** = Romantic
- **O** = Order vs Chaos
  - **M** = Mercutio
  - **E** = Exile
- **O** = Old vs Young
Revision Methods

Read one page in five
(and a whole book in an hour)

Read just the introductions and conclusion to chapters
(and a whole book in an hour)
Revision Methods

Reduce everything you know on a topic to 500 words, then to 200, then to 50, then to 10. Write those ten on a card for the morning of the exam.
Revision Methods

Use the internet or buy revision guides

Watch BBC Bitesize
Revision methods

Make flow charts, diagrams, graphs, drawings as well as notes.
Revision methods

Make podcasts and then listen to them repeatedly
Revision methods

Go to after-school revision classes
Revision Methods

Make mind maps, put them on your wall and add to them every day

1. Start at the centre of a blank, landscape page, ideally with a colourful image to represent your subject.

2. Use words and pictures throughout your map. Wherever possible use single KEY words, printed along a line. Each word or picture sits on its own line.

3. The lines make the associations between ideas as clear as possible. Make them flowing and organic, each line the same length as the word or image. Always ensure that lines connect to the end of the line at the previous level. Typically lines will be thicker at the centre and thinner further out.

4. Experiment with different ways of linking and emphasising different aspects. Use highlighters, codes and arrows as necessary.

5. The structure that should develop will be a 'radiant hierarchy', with ideas radiating out from your central theme and main branches.

EMPHASIS

Fun

Personal Beauty

Style

Clear

Radiant

Hierarchical

Associations

Structure

How to Mind Map

Word

Image

Flowing

Thinner

Thicker

Connect

Lines

Length

Organic

Print

Images

Colour

Key

Paper

Landscape

Centre

Start

Blank

Use
Revision Methods

• Work with a friend to teach each other
Revision methods

At the end of each day, write everything you have learned in very quick bullet points. And then read them first thing in the morning.
# Revision timetable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Times</th>
<th>What</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.4.13</td>
<td>Physics</td>
<td>4.00 – 4.30</td>
<td>Three exam questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>English</td>
<td>4.45 – 5.30</td>
<td>Read R+J Act 1-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RE</td>
<td>5.45 – 6.00</td>
<td>Learn 5 key quotations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maths</td>
<td>7.00 – 7.20</td>
<td>Exam questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>7.30 – 8.15</td>
<td>Make notes, Circulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>French</td>
<td>8.30 – 9.00</td>
<td>Revise traffic and camping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All</td>
<td>9.00 – 9.05</td>
<td>Ten things I learned today</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Learning Environment

• The place
• The time
• The calm
• Food and drink
• Built in rest time
• Physical activity
Some thoughts

• Some is better than none; a lot is better than too much.

• It is unwise to do too much on one day and none on another.

• Your concentration span is constantly changing. It depends on the time of day, what you’re doing and what you’ve done before. Half an hour is an accepted average before you need a change of activity. Sometimes it’s ten minutes, sometimes three hours.

• Students should have one day a week free from revision, as long as they work eight hour days the rest of the week.

• Breaks are essential, a 20 minute break every 90 minutes will refresh you.

• Walking, the sea and fresh air are good for the brain.
Parents…

• Know how your son/daughter learns best
• Know when they learn best
• Know where they learn best
• Give them the space and the opportunities
• Be positive & encouraging; don’t dwell on errors
• Get involved
• Don’t join in the anxiety; be a model of serene confidence
• If in doubt, contact the school…
  tennion@thomas-hardye.net