

## **STUDY TIPS:**

### **A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR PUPILS**



**IVERGORDON ACADEMY  
SUPPORT DEPARTMENT**

## STUDY TIPS: A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR PUPILS

**“ By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail”  
(Benjamin Franklin)**



- The purpose of this information booklet is to provide you with some practical suggestions and useful tips to help you prepare and study more effectively for exams. It will help you by getting your mind and memory in tune with the study and exam experience.
- Exams are often seen as a time of **STRESS, ANXIETY** and **PRESSURE**.
- The thought of **STUDYING** and **SITTING EXAMS** can be very **DAUNTING**.



## COMMON QUESTIONS

Let's face it..... most of us find the thought of studying and sitting exams very daunting.

There are often many questions going round in our mind, such as:

- **Where do I begin???**
- **How will I remember all the information for the exam???**
- **What other things can I do to help my study????**

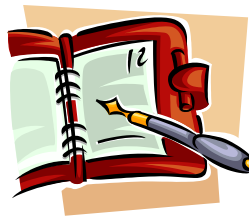


So you have a pile of books in front of you ---- what do you do next?????



**FIRST STEPS:**

1. Know or find out the **DATE** of your exams
2. **TAKE CONTROL** of your study.
3. **MAKE A LIST** of all the things you have to do.
4. Draw up a **WEEKLY STUDY PLANNER**



**Weekly Study Planner:**

When drawing up a weekly study planner, it is important to:

- **PRIORITISE** – your study – find out which parts are the most important and plan in more study time for those parts
- **BREAKDOWN** - your study into **MANAGEABLE CHUNKS**

- **BE REALISTIC!!!!** -- set yourself study targets that you know you can achieve in the time you have available
- **PLAN in BREAKS and FUN ACTIVITIES** -- get fresh air, go a walk, take exercise

### **EXAMPLE: STUDY PLANNER**

	Time	Activity	Time	Activity	Time	Activity	Time	Activity
Mon	6pm-7pm	Maths	7pm-7.15pm	BREAK	7.15-8.15pm	Biology	8.15pm	Finish-reward
Tues	7pm-8pm	English	8pm-8.15pm	BREAK	8.15-9.15pm	Physics	9.15pm	Finish-reward
Wed	6pm-7pm	Physics	7pm-7.15pm	DINNER	7.15-8.15pm	Music	8.15pm	Finish-reward
Thurs	4pm-5pm	French	5pm-5.15pm	BREAK	5.15-6.15pm	English	6.15pm	Finish-reward
Fri	6.30-7.30pm	ICT						
Sat	2pm-3pm	Music	3pm-4pm	DINNER	4pm-5pm	French	5pm	Go a walk
Sun	1pm-2pm	History	2pm-2.20pm	BREAK	2.20-3.20pm	Mod. Studies	3.20pm	Play sports

This is an example of a study planner. This will help focus your study and your time.

**WHY DON'T YOU MAKE ONE UP TO HELP WITH YOUR STUDY???????**

Go on try it, it may be easier to do than you think...



**REMEMBER:** Exams should be seen as an **OPPORTUNITY** for you to show what you know and to demonstrate what you understand

### **OTHER USEFUL STUDY TIPS**

For many years, psychologists have been studying how people remember information. Based on psychological research, here are some useful tips which may help you remember information that you study (and that you need for the exams).



#### 1. **USING YOUR PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE**

- When you come across information that you want to remember, think about previous knowledge that you have which relates to the information.

*Example: Using your previous knowledge*

<i>Information to be remembered</i>	<i>Using your previous knowledge</i>
<b>Flexibility</b> or <b>suppleness</b> is the ability to stretch muscles so that a joint has a large range of movement	I know from my gymnastics training that flexibility is important for some of the movements.

## 2. THINKING ABOUT INFORMATION IN NEW WAYS

- Think about information in a lot of different ways

*Example: Think about information in new ways:*

<i>Information to be remembered</i>	<i>Different ways to think about the new information</i>
The incisors are chisel shaped teeth for cutting and biting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I must get my incisors checked next time I visit the dentist...</li><li>• I think I'll take a look at my dog's incisors...</li><li>• My incisors are really useful for biting into an apple...</li></ul>

## 3. FORMING MENTAL PICTURES

- Form mental pictures linking the things to be remembered in your head

*Example: forming mental pictures*

<i>Information to be remembered</i>	<i>Mental pictures linking information to be remembered</i>
The German word for skirt is 'rock'	In my head I will imagine a skirt spread across a rock!
The capital of Spain is Madrid	I will remember that Madrid is in central Spain and Barcelona further north.

## 4. EXPLAIN WHAT YOU ARE STUDYING BACK TO YOURSELF

- When you have to teach someone else you have to remember the information in an organised way.
- You don't always have to explain the information to another person – you could explain it back to yourself or record your answer on an MP3 player or computer.
- You could even just read your answer aloud to yourself. Then try and remember it without looking at your notes. Practice this and see if it works!!!!

## 5. USE ACRONYMS

- Use acronyms to help you remember information. An acronym is a word made up from the first letter of each fact to be remembered. It can be a REAL word or a made up one.

Example: *using acronyms*

<i>Information to be remembered</i>	<i>Acronym</i>
The names of the Great Lakes are: Huron, Ontario, Michigan, Erie and Superior	HOMES

## 6. SURVEY, QUESTION, READ, RECITE, REVIEW (SQ3R)

- Use the survey, question, read, recite, review (SQ3R) method when reading material such as that in a textbook. These activities are designed to increase the depth to which you process the information you read, making it more memorable!

Example: *Activities in SQ3R method*

<i>Survey</i>	Take a few moments to skim the chapter. Look at the section headings. Look at the way the material is organised
<i>Question</i>	Before reading a section, ask yourself what content will be covered and what bits you need to focus on.
<i>Read</i>	Read the text, but don't forget to keep thinking as you read. Ask yourself if the questions you raised earlier are being answered.
<i>Recite</i>	At the end of the section, recite the main points
<i>Review</i>	At the end of the chapter, review all the material you have covered. You should see the connections between the sections in the chapter





### **STUDY TIPS – OTHER IDEAS**

- Organised and structured information is more easily remembered.
- Some of the tips outlined in this pack so far can help you organise information.

1. Another way to organise information is to use a *Mind Map*.

A *Mind Map* is a diagram used to represent words, ideas, tasks or other items linked to and arranged around a central key word or idea.



### **2. USE TIME SENSIBLY**

- Spread your study out

- Work in short bursts (20-30 minute bursts) – deepens your understanding
- **Distributed** study practice is more effective than **cramming** for remembering information
- Breaks in between study sessions are **GOOD!!!**
- This will help you stay **FRESH** and think about the information you have learned in different ways.

### 3. **RECONSTRUCTING THE SITUATION**

- When trying to remember information you have studied, you can help your memory by trying to reconstruct as much as you can of the situation in which the study took place.
- So try to remember the way you felt when learning the information, where you were sitting, what books or objects you had around you at the time.

*Example: **reconstructing the situation***

<i>Information to be remembered</i>	<i>Reconstruct the situation you learned the information in</i>
The Pavane and Galliard were two dances which were popular in the 16 <sup>th</sup> and 17 <sup>th</sup> centuries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I was sitting at my desk in my room.....</li> <li>• I remember I was feeling relaxed as I'd just had a bath.....</li> <li>• I remember I had my magazine open at a page which looked at dance costumes.....</li> <li>• I remember imagining dance costumes from the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries.....</li> </ul>



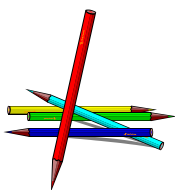
#### **4. EVERYONE IS DIFFERENT!!!**

- **Everyone is different! You might find some study techniques work better for you than others.**
- **Learn about ways to help you relax during study and exam time**
- **You could relax by: reading a magazine, watching your favourite TV show, playing a sport, going for a walk, having a bath.**
- **If you are feeling stressed or worried, talking about it can help to rationalise your thoughts and help you feel better.**
- **Some useful websites for studying and revision are:**
  - <http://www.bbc.co.uk/scotland/education/bitesize>
  - <http://www.Itscotland.org.uk/studyskills/15to18/index.asp>
  - <http://www.childline.org.uk/Examstress.asp>



### **OTHER USEFUL STUDY HINTS**

- Take your own study notes to help you remember information
- Mark important parts of your notes (parts which you need to remember) – with a highlighter pen
- Organise your notes into bullet points – makes it easier to read and remember



- Go over past papers of the subject exams you are sitting - this will give you some idea of what the exam paper will look like and the type of questions that may be asked of you.
- Try doing a 'mock' exam --- writing your answers in the time you will be given for your 'actual' exam.

- If your friends are doing the same exams or subjects ---- why don't you find yourself a '**STUDY BUDDY**' - and support each other whilst learning.



## **PREPARING FOR THE DAY OF THE EXAM**

**You will want to get everything right on the day of the exam. So here are a few helpful hints and tips to help you prepare properly for the big day!!!!**

### **On Night Before the Exam:**

- Pack all your materials for the exam, lay out your clothes for the morning
- Try to get to bed at a reasonable time
- Do not be tempted to stay up and try and cram more information in ---- the chances are you will become confused and start to forget what you already know.

### **On Day of the Exam:**

- Eat a good breakfast
- Try not to revise immediately before the exam; you are likely to start panicking
- Arrive in good time for exam ; not so early that you're hanging around anxious

### **On Entering the Exam Room:**

- Sit down and take several deep breaths.
- Tense and then relax your shoulders



**During the Exam:**

- Remember to READ – all the questions carefully
- Do not attempt to cheat or look at someone else's paper. You will get caught and probably removed from the exam. All your previous efforts will have been wasted.
- Don't panic if the information you have learnt does not come to you immediately – sometimes your brain will take some time to recall information
- If you find yourself running out of time - - - then put down as much information as you can, even if it is not presented well, you will gain marks for what you write
- If you have any spare time, read and check your answers. There are no points for being the first person to leave the exam.



**AND FINALLY.....**

**ALL YOU CAN DO..... IS.....**

**DO YOUR BEST!!!!!!**

+

**STAY POSITIVE!!!!**

+

**GOOD LUCK!!!!!!**