

Revision Phase

**LEARN  
IT**

Strategy

# Concept Maps

Learning Style

**V**

What you'll need

**A3 paper. Different coloured pens. Notes on a topic of your choice.**

**Approx. Time : 30 minutes**

How and why:

**Concept mapping is a very effective learning tool. You start with the title of your topic in the middle of your page. Then you divide it into categories. By deciding on the categories you will be processing the information and therefore be more likely to remember it. Divide these categories into more detailed categories until you end up with lots of detail around the edges of your map. Use colour, pictures and acronyms to make it memorable.**

Example

**In Science, you could look at the two main types of bonding; Covalent and Ionic as your topic. This divides easily into metals and non-metal bonding, giant structures, electron shell diagrams etc... Make sure you include some clear rules and example compounds and molecules to help you remember the differences.**

See Also...

**Record yourself, Visualise it, Acronyms**

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# Make a poster

Learning Style

**V**

What you'll need

**A3 paper, marker pens, felt tip pens, notes on a topic**

**Approx. Time : 20 Mins**

How and why:

**A poster is a really effective way of presenting a summary of important information. You should make your poster as colourful as possible and include a range of visual symbols or acronyms to help you to remember. You should put the posters up in places where you can be sure that you will see them a few times each day over the course of the exam period. Try sticking them on the ceiling above your bed so that you can look at them before you go to sleep**

Example

**In Art you could make a poster or ideas board with images of the artist/ culture or movement and annotate the images with key words linked to the images eg. Tone, Texture, Mood . Copy sections of the work and explain how you achieved this effect. This will help you prepare for your final outcome and composition.**

See Also...

**Acronyms, concept maps.**

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# Use sort cards

Learning Style

**K**

What you'll need

**Sort cards on any topic**

**Approx. Time : variable**

How and why:

**Sort cards are a really effective way of processing and using the information which you need for the exam. Having created your sort cards you can put them to use in a number of ways: firstly, you can muddle up sequences of information and then sort them back into the correct order. Alternatively, you can use the sort cards as the basis for an answer to an exam question and use them to structure your response. The physical process of sorting the cards is especially good for those students who have a kinaesthetic learning preference.**

Example

**If you were studying economic systems and development in Geography, you could develop sort cards for open and closed systems for farming and manufacturing. These would need to be categorised and placed in to an order. An even better example of this would be to produce some sort cards for the sequencing of the process used to make steel. See page 124 and 125 of PP and T.**

See Also...

**Make sort cards, Q and A Pairs, Throw one away.**

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# Q and A Pairs

Learning Style

**K**

What you'll need

**Two sets of sort cards – one containing only questions, the other only answers**

**Approx. Time : 15 minutes**

How and why:

**Write out a series of difficult to remember facts or dates on a set of sort cards. Then write out a series of questions or prompts which are related to each fact. Then turn all of the questions and answers face down on a table in two separate areas. Pick up a card from the questions pile and then one from the answer pile. If they match remove them from the table, if not remember where you put each card so that when you do pick up the right question or answer you can remember where the corresponding card is.**

Example

**You could write down a set of questions and answers on how information systems work in ICT. Work with another student and take turns having a go at the game. The student who removes the most cards wins the game. See – who needs Playstations?**

See Also...

**Make sort cards**

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# Rhymes and songs

Learning Style

**A**

What you'll need

**Approx. Time : 15 mins per song**

How and why:

**Putting difficult to remember information into the form of a rhyme or song makes it easier to recall than a set of ordinary notes. You could use a familiar tune or make one up. Don't try and remember all of your notes in one song but put a small section into a single verse. Make sure you don't lose the meaning of your information just to make it fit into the rhyme.**

Example

**A limerick about the Treaty of Versailles: "Versailles was a very harsh Treaty  
The Germans lost land, cash and military  
With no subs, tanks or planes and no Alsace / Lorraine  
The new government got blamed for the defeat (v). "**

See Also...

**Mnemonics**

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# Make up a story

Learning Style

**A**

What you'll need

**Approx. Time : 10 mins per word list**

How and why:

**This is a classic memory strategy for recalling lots of seemingly unrelated pieces of information in the order in which they occurred. The basic idea is to take a list of key words or facts and put those bits of information into a story. Make the story as strange and funny as you can as this will help to make it more memorable. This strategy is particularly useful for remembering information for an exam question in which you are asked to describe the main features of something.**

Example

**In History, if you were trying to remember the key features of Roman Medicine you might put the following key words into a story: toilet (to remind you about public health), soldiers (importance of the army), two lots of blood (Galen's mistake), pigs (Galen), balance (Galen), 1000 years (how long Galen's influence lasted). 1000 years ago a soldier chasing a pig lost his balance and slipped both of them fell into the toilet, leaving two lots of blood on the wall of the toilet**

See Also...

**Rhymes and songs**

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# Bullet Points

Learning Style

V

What you'll need

Your notes, pen and paper

Approx. Time : 10 mins per page

How and why:

**There's no way you can remember everything that you have written into your book or folder over the course of two years. You therefore need to summarise the information in your notes before you start to revise from it. One really effective way of doing this is to make a limited number of bullet points (maximum 5) for each page. By deciding what to include and what to omit you will be processing the information and improving your chances of remembering it**

Example

**Choose a topic from year 11 and using your textbook summaries or revise guide turn each page into five bullet points. They should not be more than two lines long. The key words in each sentence should be in a different colour.**

See Also...

Concept Maps

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# Everything you know about...

Learning Style

V

What you'll need

Blank A3, pen

Approx. Time : 10 mins per topic

How and why:

**The aim of this strategy is to get you thinking about what you already know about a topic and, later on, to emphasise those things that you need to do more to remember. At the start of revising a particular topic, write down absolutely everything that you can recall about it. Probably the best way to do this is in the form of a concept map. Once you have finished learning about that topic, return to your original concept map and add in any information which you have subsequently learned in a different colour.**

Example

**PE: Work in pairs to create a concept map of a key topic i.e. "Fitness & Health". Once both of you have finished, compare your maps then take the best parts of each one to create a neat map which you can both use as part of your revision.**

See Also...

Concept Maps, Record Yourself

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# Exam Questions

Learning Style

**n/a**

What you'll need

**Past exam questions, mark schemes, internet access if possible**

**Approx. Time : 20 mins per question**

How and why:

**As you get closer to the exam period it is vital that you begin to practice using the sorts of questions that you will encounter in the actual exam, preferably in exam conditions – so work in a quiet place where you won't be disrupted and stick to the time limit for the exam. You can access past exam papers on most exam board's websites or your teacher will let you borrow some. Once you have completed the past paper, try and mark it yourself using an exam mark scheme (again from the web or your teacher)**

Example

**You can get past papers from your teacher. You can also access a lot of specimen materials from the websites of the exam boards such as [www.edexcel.org.uk](http://www.edexcel.org.uk) [www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk) and [www.aqa.org.uk](http://www.aqa.org.uk)**

See Also...

**Assess each other**

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# Assess each other

Learning Style

**n/a**

What you'll need

**A completed exam question**

**Approx. Time : 15 mins per question**

How and why:

**Becoming a GCSE examiner may not be the height of your ambitions, but taking the role on for another student is a really useful way for both of you to develop your understanding of both the topic which you are revising and the requirements of the exam for which you are studying. Download the mark schemes and exam questions, both of you should complete the exam questions and then assess each others work using the mark scheme.**

Example

**In RE, find an exam question on religious attitudes to divorce, both of you should answer it and mark each other's work using the mark scheme. Write a comment explaining what mark you have given the other person's work and write down two suggestions for ways in which they achieve a higher mark if a similar question were to arise in the exam. Try and focus one of your comments on content and one on exam skills.**

See Also...

**Exam questions**

Revision Phase

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## Create a Powerpoint Presentation

Learning Style

V

What you'll need

Access to a computer with Powerpoint

Approx. Time : 20 minutes

How and why:

Creating a Powerpoint presentation is a really good way of summarising key parts of a topic. Obviously, the size of the slide limits the amount of information you can include so you will process and prioritise what you are studying. In addition to this Powerpoint has some useful functions such as adding pictures, sounds and animations which will make the material much more memorable. Don't get bogged down in these features though, the main point is to summarise the information you are using.

Example

Use Powerpoint to learn and practise the one minute presentation for the French or German speaking exam. Break your presentation into 5 sections and put each section onto a separate slide. Add pictures to prompt you. You could make a second presentation, blocking out words, then a third one blocking out more words. Eventually, you could simply have 5 slides with the 5 short headings you are allowed to take into the test.

See Also...

Using Powerpoint Presentations, Concept Maps, Making Posters

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## Using a Powerpoint Presentation

Learning Style

V

What you'll need

A completed Powerpoint Presentation on a topic

Approx. Time : 5 mins each

How and why:

Once you have completed a presentation you need to actually use it so you should prepare some activities based upon it. You could use it as prompt to deliver a more detailed presentation on the topic, or you can try and anticipate what information will appear before it does as you view the presentation. Don't just sit there passively and watch it – use it.

Example

In RE, animate your slides on Pax Christi so that each point appears one after the other rather than having all of the information appearing at once. Then as you view the slides try and guess what will come next. Make a note of any information which you have difficulty remembering.

See Also...

Creating a Powerpoint Presentation

Revision Phase

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Strategy

# Throw one away

Learning Style

**K**

What you'll need

**Sort cards on a particular topic**

**Approx. Time : 15 mins**

How and why:

**This activity is designed to get you thinking about which pieces of information are absolutely vital for exam success and which bits you can probably manage without. It's a strategy which develops your information processing ability. Choose a set of sort cards on a related topic – then you must decide which piece of information is least important and throw that card away. Continue this process until you have established a rank order which shows the relative importance of all of your cards.**

Example

**This is a good activity to do in pairs – in History, take 6 important developments in surgery and decide between you which of the developments is least important. You must make your decisions based on evidence. If you disagree with your partner you must be able to justify your decision.**

See Also...

**Make sort cards, use sort cards, Q and A pairs**

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# Healthy Body, Healthy Mind

Learning Style

**K**

What you'll need

**Some trainers, a banana**

**Approx. Time : 5 mins**

How and why:

**Research shows that if you are feeling active and awake before you begin your revision you are much more likely to take in the material which you are studying. One way to achieve this is to do some exercises before you begin – in much the same way as a Brain Gym activity will warm up your mind. At the same time it is important to give your brain the right sort of fuel for studying by avoiding sugary junk foods which will give you a short energy burst but won't sustain you over a whole revision session.**

Example

**Before you start your revision go for a 5 minute run, come back and eat a banana.**

See Also...

**Brain Gym**

Revision Phase

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Strategy

# Create a grid

Learning Style

V

What you'll need

**Blank paper, pen**

**Approx. Time : 10 minutes**

How and why:

**Before you begin to learn the information from your notes you will need to put into a form which is much easier to use. One of the best ways to do this is by creating a grid which you then fill in using the information from your notes. This is an effective strategy because if you are unable to fill in any part of the grid you will know that your notes are not sufficiently detailed. You can use your completed grid as the basis of an exam answer.**

Example

**In History, create a grid for important individuals in Medicine. The columns along the top could be named: "Name", "Dates", "3 important advances", "factors which helped him", "factors which hindered him". You should now be able to fill in this grid on all of the key individuals that you have studied in the development of medicine course.**

See Also...

**Use a Grid**

Revision Phase

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IT

Strategy

# Use a grid

Learning Style

V

What you'll need

**Blank grid**

**Approx. Time : 10 Mins**

How and why:

**Once you have learned the information in your grid you can use a blank version of the grid to see how much information you have taken in over the course of your revision. For that reason it is a good idea to create your grids on computer where you can, this way it is easy for you to print off another blank copy. Once you have a blank copy you can try and fill it in from memory.**

Example

**See the example given on "Create a Grid"**

See Also...

**Create a grid**



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Strategy

# Test each other

Learning Style

A

What you'll need

**A friend.**

**Approx. Time : 10 mins**

How and why:

**It may not be the first thing you think of when you are with your friends, but using each other to test what you know during the revision period is a really effective way of seeing how much information you have taken in. It's also useful because your friend may come up with ideas, questions and information that you hadn't considered.**

Example

**Decide on a topic- prepare and learn the material at home during an ordinary revision session. Phone your friend and ask each other questions on the topic. You can refer to your friend as your "study buddy" if you are really cool.**

See Also...

**Assess each other**

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# Mnemonics

Learning Style

A

What you'll need

**Pen and paper**

**Approx. Time : 5 minutes each**

How and why:

**A mnemonic is any strategy which helps you to remember something. One of the most effective ways of remembering is to use an acronym. For example, the 6 P's of revision: "Proper Preparation and Planning Prevents Pretty Poor Performance". If you have a tricky sequence of events or a list of people to remember try and create a mnemonic to help.**

Example

**In English, remember to PEE ! Use Point, Evidence, Explanation in your answers. This should be used on Paper 1 and Paper 2 in Section A as well as in the English Literature exam in all sections. Alternatively, some of you might remember to use PQA – Point, Quotation, Analysis.**

See Also...

**Rhymes and Songs**

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# Sort your room out

Learning Style

n/a

What you'll need

**A place where you normally revise**

**Approx. Time : Depends on your room**

How and why:

**Before you start your revision its important to have a regular place to work. Establishing a routine is a helpful aid in making revision less of a nightmare. If possible you find a quiet corner of your house (preferably your bedroom) and set up a space where you can work without interruption. If you share a room try and negotiate with the other person so that the room is left quiet and empty during certain times of the day. This will help you to stick to your revision timetable.**

Example

**You should really know how to tidy up a room. If you are really messy and you've got junk everywhere which you just can't bear to throw away. Go to the supermarket, get some empty cardboard boxes and store your stuff in there during the exam period. If you've got a desk or table that you can use then do so. If you are really stuck for a quiet place to do your revision, talk to your teacher about it.**

See Also...

**Healthv Body, Healthv mind**

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# Get organised

Learning Style

n/a

What you'll need

**Blank revision Timetable or Excel Spreadsheet**

**Approx. Time : 30 mins**

How and why:

**You are already taking a big step towards getting organised by carrying out this activity. Obviously, you will also need to plan when your are going to revise for your other subjects as well, you should do this well before you begin your revision. In order to do this you could create a calendar using Excel which covers the build up to the exams and the exam period itself.**

Example

**Break down all of your different subjects into revisable "chunks". Allocate a different day to each chunk, making sure that you leave at least one day a week to catch up on any session that you miss. You should also build in some rewards and the odd day off.**

See Also...

**Sort your room out**

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Strategy

**30 words**

Learning Style

**V**

What you'll need

**Notes on any topic, pen and paper**

**Approx. Time : 10 minutes**

How and why:

**Summarising information is a really useful way to reduce your notes down to a manageable size. At the same time, deciding which bits of information are important and which aren't is also an effective way to process the information which you are revising. Take any topic and describe it in fewer than 30 words, making sure that you cover the main points of the topic and write in good English**

Example

**In English, this is useful for themes or characters in your exam texts.  
Eg. Steinbeck explores ideas of loneliness, friendship, economic depression, death, dreams and desires for a brighter future in 'Of Mice and Men'.**

See Also...

**Bullet Points**

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**Visualise it.**

Learning Style

**V**

What you'll need

**A list of facts or dates**

**Approx. Time : 5 mins**

How and why:

**If you've got a difficult date, figure or spelling to remember you can use a technique known as visualisation. You need to find a quiet place and then imagine you can see the thing you have to remember written in a bright colour on a white sheet of paper. Then imagine that you have a remote control which can change the colour and brightness of the word. Turn the colour and brightness up so that the word really stands out on the page. Now imagine a voice saying the word, increasingly loudly. This sounds strange but it really works.**

Example

**In History, the name of the drug "Salvarsan 606" is often difficult for students to remember – try the technique outlined above and see if it works. You can also try it with acronyms.**

See Also...

**Mnemonics**

Revision Phase

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Strategy

# Create your own questions

Learning Style

**n/a**

What you'll need

**Your notes, passed exam papers**

**Approx. Time : 15 minutes per topic**

How and why:

**An effective way to discover whether you really have understood what you are revising is to devise your own questions on a topic. You should try and base your questions on the sort of things that are asked in the actual exam (get a passed paper from your teacher or from the exam board website). Once you have created the questions you can test your knowledge by answering the questions or by creating a mark scheme for the question and swapping it with a friend**

Example

**In RE, write down all the information you have about Christian attitudes and teachings on the family. Try and work out a list of different questions that you could be asked in the exam. Swap your lists with each other and try and answer the questions your classmates have set.**

See Also...

**Exam Questions, Test Each Other**

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# Make Sort Cards

Learning Style

**n/a**

What you'll need

**Record cards, felt tip pens, notes or concept map**

**Approx. Time : 20 mins per topic**

How and why:

**Sort cards are cards which contain just one or two pieces of important information. You should try and make them as visually memorable as possible by using colours and images. Try and get each topic onto at most 10 cards. Just by deciding what you are going to include on each card you will be processing the information and thereby improving your chances of remembering it.**

Example

**In Geography, you could look at the 4 different climate types of the British Isles (North east, South East, South West, North West). Added to this, you could make sort cards for the actual conditions such as warm, cold, rainfall all year round, etc. See pages 42 and 43 of your textbook for this. There are many other opportunities for this type of activity in the book. Either use this example or make up your own ... or do both if you are really keen.**

See Also...

**Using sort cards**

Revision Phase

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# Brain Gym

Learning Style

K

What you'll need

A brain

Approx. Time : 2 minutes

How and why:

Brain gym is a way of warming up your mind before you begin to learn, in the same way as you would warm up your muscles before you started exercising. There are a whole range of different things that you can do as Brain Gym: <http://esl.about.com/library/lessons/blbrainoverview.htm> has lots of information and exercises as does <http://www.salt.cheshire.gov.uk/mfl/TOOLKIT/BRAINGYM.HTM> . There is also an example below.

Example

The Energiser - Sit comfortably in your chair and rest your forehead on your desk.. Place your hands on your desk in front of your shoulders, fingers pointing slightly inwards. Breath in slowly, be aware of your breath. As you breath in, slowly lift your head, pull back your shoulders and straighten your back, until you are in an upright position. As you breath out slowly, lower your head and shoulders gently until your head is back on the desk. Repeat 3 times

See Also...

Revision Phase

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Strategy

# Go online

Learning Style

K

What you'll need

Computer with internet access

Approx. Time : 20 mins

How and why:

There are loads of different websites which are supposed to help you revise for your GCSEs. You should avoid the ones which just give you a page of information on a topic but instead use those sites which actually get you to something with what you know in the form of online activities.

Example

Get hold of some headphones and do some French and German listening practice online. This is a really difficult skill to practise at home, but using the Internet can make it much easier. Good websites are [www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk) and [www.zut.org.uk](http://www.zut.org.uk) (get the password from your teacher). There are plenty of others too, but try to pick ones where you can check your answers or even download the transcript.

See Also...

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# Just a minute

Learning Style

A

What you'll need

**A clock , a friend.**

**Approx. Time : 1**

How and why:

**This is a useful activity to do in a pair in order to see how much you know about a subject. You must select a topic and then talk about it for one minute, putting in as much detailed evidence as you can. Your friend should then give you a mark out of ten for how well you have explained the topic. The person who gives the mark must explain why they have awarded that mark and be able to identify any important aspects of the topic which you have missed out.**

Example

**English: Students have one minute to say as much as they can about a specific character from the text they have been studying. Class act as 'judges' awarding marks or pointing out repetition/hesitation etc.**

See Also...

**Test Each Other**

Revision Phase

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Learning Style

What you'll need

**Approx. Time :**

How and why:

Example

See Also...