

How should I revise?

Try one of these.....

A: MIND MAPS:

Make mind-maps or association maps rather than taking linear notes. Mapping your notes by radiating key words out in a pattern of links from a central point will make best use of your memory. If you use colour and images on the maps, you'll be harnessing the power of both sides of your brain - creative and logical.

How to mind map:

1. Start with the theme in the middle of the page.
2. Then develop your main idea.
3. Each branch must relate to the branch before it.
4. Use only key words and images.
5. Key words must be written along the branches.
6. Printing your key words makes them more memorable.
7. Use highlighters and coloured markers to colour code branches.
8. Make things stand out on the page so they stand out in your mind. (This doesn't show up well on a black and white photocopied booklet! You should use a different colour for each main branch and all its sub-branches)
9. Brainstorm ideas. Be creative.
10. Design images you can relate to which will help you remember key information.

Mind maps can be mostly text...

Or they can include more images (much easier to remember!) Look at this one summarising William Shakespeare's life..... (again – much better in colour!)

B: READ INTELLIGENTLY.

Spend five minutes flipping through a book or your notes looking at headings and summaries. Then attempt to mind map what you have spotted and what you can remember.

C: USE CARDS.

Write questions on one side and answers on the other. Then get your family to test you. Merely creating the cards will help your recall. You can also use them to test yourself when faced with 'dead' time at bus stops or waiting for someone.

D: PHYSICAL LEARNING.

Use the environment Use a different room for each subject.

.. Notice aspects of the environment such as the light or feel of the room - how do you feel in that place?

.. Attach your notes to the furniture. Notice their location.

.. Associate a different location with each subject. Associate furniture, windows, plants and ornaments with particular topics.

Using your clothes

.. Associate items of clothing with topics in your learning - a shoe could represent one aspect of foreign policy; each button on a shirt could represent a quotation. Clothes with patterns, pockets and buttons are especially useful.

Using the parts of your body

.. Parts of your body are especially helpful as triggers to memory, as your body will be there in the exam room! For example, each hand could represent an essay plan – each finger one major topic; each segment of each finger a principal reference you would use. The fingernails could represent counterarguments; the knuckles could be associated with relevant quotations.

Use motor memory

.. Study on the move. If you exercise, associate each movement with something you wish to remember. To refresh the memory, go through the exercise in your mind. Writing, drawing and speaking also use motor memory: the fine-muscle sequence is recorded by the brain.

E: CONDENSE.

Fitting notes onto one side of paper makes them easier to stomach, so rewrite and cut down as you go.

F: HIGHLIGHT.

Target key areas using colours and symbols. Visuals help you remember the facts.

G: RECORD.

Try putting important points, quotes and formulae on tape. If you hear them and read them, they're more likely to sink in.

H: TALK.

Read your notes out loud, it's one way of getting them to register.

I: TEST.

See what you can remember without notes, but avoid testing yourself on subjects you know already. Why not ask someone else to test you?

J: TIME.

Do past exam papers against the clock; it's an excellent way of getting up to speed and of checking where there are gaps in your knowledge.

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