



ST HILDA'S
CE HIGH SCHOOL

Personal Study Materials Booklet

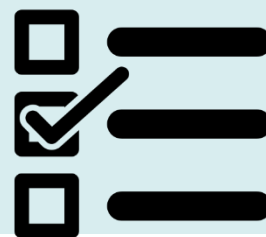
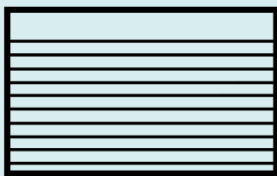
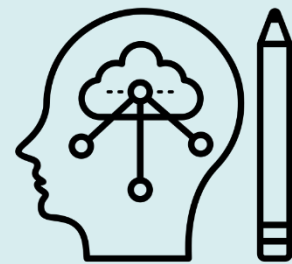
WISDOM
HOPE
COMMUNITY
DIGNITY
EQUALITY
DIVERSITY

Effective personal study habits and strategies:

A guide for students, parents and carers

Student's name: _____

Form: _____



Personal Study

What is personal study?

What are some examples of personal study?

What else can help with personal study?

How do I overcome obstacles in school/at home?

What do I do if I haven't understood a lesson?

Personal Study Habits

How do I plan my personal study with spaced practice & interleaving?

Where do I start with a personal study calendar/schedule?

What are the 4 Rs of Revision and Personal Study?

How can I stay motivated?

What is the Zeigarnik Effect and how it can it help me?

Personal Study Strategies

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What are Flash Cards and the Leitner System?

How do I use Mind Maps?

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What is a knowledge dump activity?

Target Setting

How can I set SMART targets to achieve my goals?

Personal Study

What is personal study?

Personal study (or self-study/independent learning) is essentially a method whereby students take ownership and responsibility for their own learning outside of the classroom.

This can often take a number of forms, either through completing homework that has been set or through seeking out tasks to do that will further develop your knowledge and understanding of a particular topic or subject. Personal study is all part of being an independent learner.

Personal study will look very different depending which year of school you are in:

Year Group	Personal Study	Approximate time spent per day
Year 7-9	Mostly set by teachers through homework or revision	Y7 & Y8 – 45/90 minutes Y9 – 60-120 minutes
Year 10-11	Mostly set by teachers through homework or revision More self-directed work is expected	90-150 minutes
Year 12-13	Some set by teachers through specific homework Mostly self-directed work is expected	120-180 minutes (outside of college day)

What are some examples of personal study?

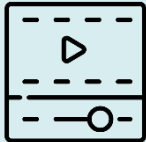
For the times where your personal study is self-directed (i.e. you are the one who decides what to do), you may often find yourself unsure as to how to spend your time. Some examples of activities you can do which can be done for most of your subjects are:

- Use some of the methods in the Revision Strategies section of this booklet to:
 - Go over your class notes to summarise
 - Create a mind map of your work
 - Quiz yourself to check your understanding of the lesson
- Use the internet to research and find out more about a lesson or topic in a particular subject or use the St. Hilda's Curriculum website
- Listen to a podcast about a lesson or topic in your subjects

- Complete any incomplete work from your lessons
- Ask your teacher questions before, during or after a lesson
- Watch/read the news to see your subject in the real world
- Complete practice questions from past exams and **ask for feedback** (Y10-13 only)

There are many more methods/strategies that you can use for self-directed personal study, if you're ever stuck – just ask a teacher!

[How to use personal study to become an independent learner](#)



Scan the QR code to find out more about how to use personal study and become an independent learner



How to become an independent learner

[What else can help with personal study?](#)

Personal study does not just happen – you have to create an environment for yourself that will allow you to work at your best, without distractions.

[Being organised](#)

[Organise your space](#)

It may seem like a great idea to complete homework or personal study from the comfort of your bed or couch/sofa; however, it has been known for a number of years that it is important to keep a clear divide between your workspace and leisure space. This can be done by simply setting up your own workspace at the kitchen table, or putting on headphones to block out distractions.

If you do not have a space where you can do this at home, there is a homework study club every Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday after school. For college students, there are plenty of work spaces around school for you to set up as your study space.

[Organise your work](#)

It is crucial that you develop systems for planning your time, organising and using resources that work for you. See the sections later in this booklet around planning your time for personal study.

Having your exercise books, textbooks, folders and other learning materials organised is critical for you to be able to easily access them when you need them.

How do I overcome obstacles in school/at home?

Whilst it would be ideal for us all to have a dedicated space at home or in school for us to complete our personal study, the reality is that this may not be the case for a wide variety of reasons!

Some of the most common obstacles we hear of are listed below, with some potential ideas to try and overcome those obstacles:

<u>Obstacle</u>	<u>Potential Solution</u>
“I don’t have anywhere at home I can study/do work.”	Ask your parents/carers if you are allowed use of the kitchen table for an hour or two each evening or make use of the homework club in school on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays. You could even go to a local library or café and work there.
“My house is very noisy and I cannot concentrate.”	Make use of the homework club in school on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays. You could even go to a local library or café and work there. You could also make use of headphones to block out some noise! Just make sure you don’t get distracted by choosing songs.
“I am too busy after school with clubs/hobbies/my friends etc.”	You should make use of the planning sections of this booklet to help plan your time and stick to this plan. We value your down time outside of school as much as we do the personal study we expect you to do – we want you to strike a balance!
“I just can’t be bothered to do work...”	This comes down to having goals and being motivated to achieve them. Make use of the SMART goal setting and Motivation sections in this booklet to give yourself something to work towards – attach rewards to mini-goals to keep you going!
“I don’t know what to focus on...”	The best place to start is going to be the topics or subjects that you are least confident in or don’t like . The fact that you don’t like a subject or topic is most likely because you find it difficult. These are the areas to focus on as you have the most improvements to make.
“I’m too tired to do work”	Having a regular sleep routine is important. The body likes to have a regular routine so it knows what to expect. Try to go to bed and get up at the same time every day – if you are out of practice with this it will take a few weeks for you to feel the benefits, but they will come!

What do I do if I haven't understood a lesson?

There may be times where you are in a lesson and you haven't quite understood what has been explained or what has gone on in the lesson. Don't worry! This happens to all of us. What is most important is what you do about it. Rather than just hope you understand it next time or that it won't come up in an exam – the sooner you do something about it the better!

Below are some scenarios that you may have experienced yourself at some point during school:

<u>Scenario</u>	<u>Ideal Next Steps</u>
"Today I had an English lesson where the Shakespearean language confused me – I don't think I'm going to be able to analyse that scene if it comes up in my exam."	I am going to re-read the scene using the glossary and No Fear Shakespeare. If that doesn't help, I'm going to go and see my teacher.
"Today I scored 60% in a knowledge test, it's good but I should be getting 80%"	I'm going to mind map/use flash cards for all of my knowledge gaps (which are the questions I got wrong) and then self-quiz to see if I can improve my score.
"I don't get what sir/miss is saying in this lesson and I am really confused..."	I am going to use a knowledge organiser, revision guide or the internet to see if I can learn more about it. I am going to ask a friend after class if they could help and explain it to me in a different way. I am going to ask sir/miss after the lesson or after school if they can explain it to me again.
"I know I know the knowledge, but I can't seem to apply it effectively in exams."	I'm going to ask for more past papers so that I can practise regularly, using a timer. I am going to use the mark schemes of past papers to give me a better idea of how I can apply this knowledge to questions.

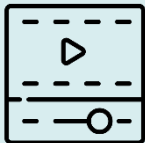
Personal Study Habits

How do I plan my personal study with spaced practice & interleaving?

“Start planning early for exams and set aside a little bit of time every day. Five hours spread out over two weeks is better than the same five hours all at once.” This is spaced practice & it is regarded as one of the most effective revision strategies



- Divide your revision time up into short, manageable chunks of time. When revising, aim for **20-30 minutes** before taking a short break.
- Mass practice (or cramming!) is not effective and can be stressful. This is when you study for a very intense period of time just before the exam.
- You need to plan your time carefully to ensure all subjects and topics are covered in shorter chunks over a longer period of time.



Scan the QR code to find out more about **spaced practice** and why it is useful.

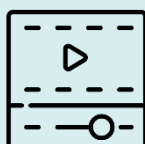


Learning Strategies – **Spaced Practice**

“**Interleaving** is a process where students mix and combine multiple subjects and topics while they study in order to improve their learning.”



Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday




Scan the QR code to find out more about **interleaving** and why it is useful.



Learning Strategies – **Interleaving**

Where do I start with a personal study calendar/schedule?

When revising, it is important to plan out or schedule what work you will do when and stick to it. This not only keeps you organised, but also helps you to keep track of your progress. Use the templates below to plan out your own revision timetable.



www.getmygrades.co.uk

Week commencing: _____

My Weekly Revision Timetable

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
8:00 am							
9:00 am							
10:00 am							
11:00 am							
12:00 am							
1:00 pm							
2:00 pm							
3:00 pm							
4:00 pm							
5:00 pm							
6:00 pm							
7:00 pm							
8:00 pm							

Tip 1: Stay positive - if you work hard and practise effectively, you will succeed!

Tip 2: Test yourself, don't just read. Use practice questions and mark them or re-write notes from memory.

Tip 3: Be disciplined - stick to your plan! You can change/move it, but make sure you stick to it!

Week commencing: _____

My Weekly Revision Timetable

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8:00 am							
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12:00 am							
1:00 pm							
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8:00 pm							

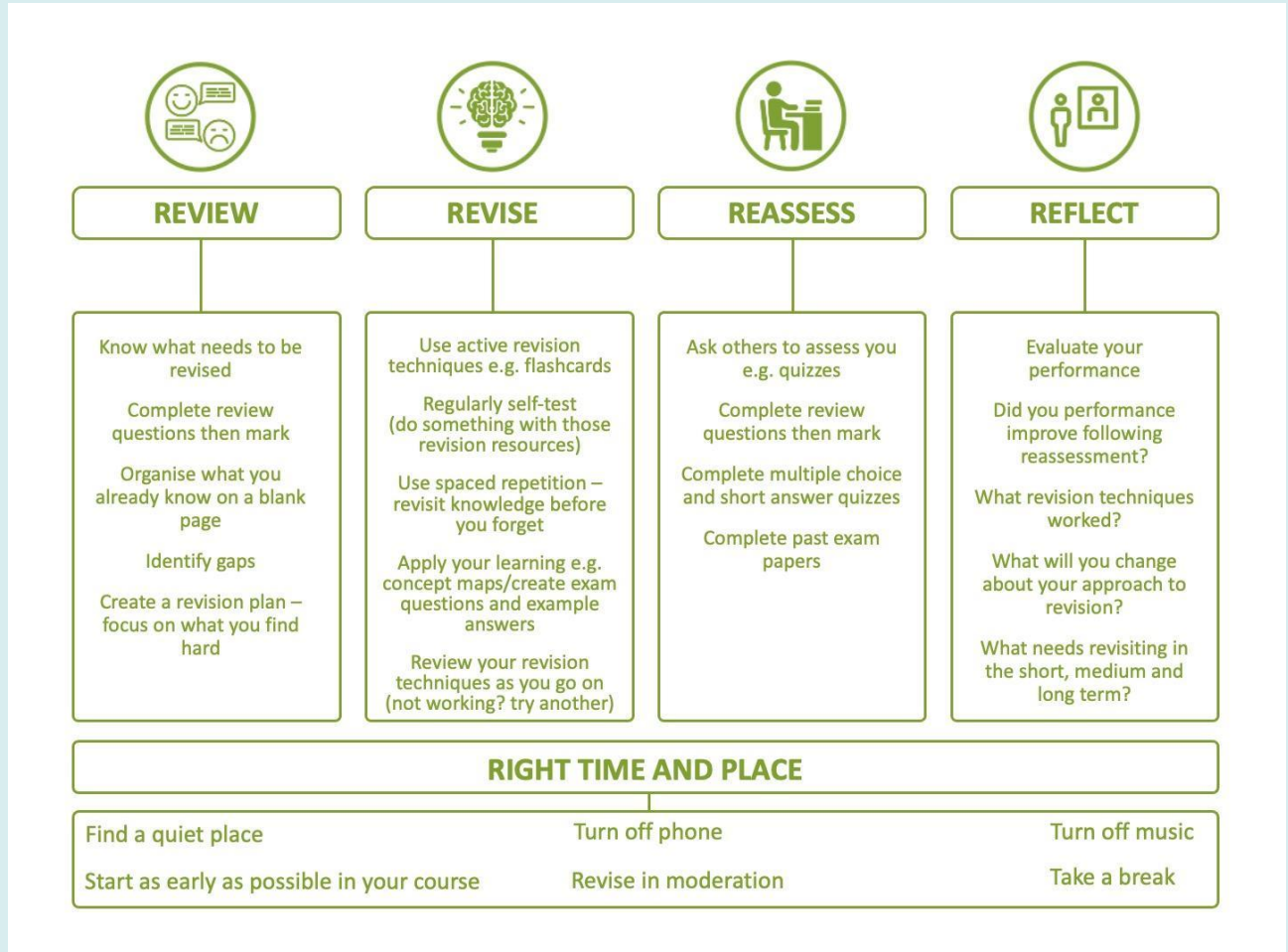
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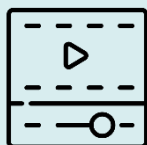
Tip 3: Be disciplined - stick to your plan! You can change/move it, but make sure you stick to it!

What are the 4 Rs of Revision and Personal Study?

The 4 Rs of revision/personal study outline the best steps to maximise your revision time so that you can make progress and improve. The next section of the booklet will be focusing on various personal study strategies that can be used.



To find out more about the 4 Rs of Revision, follow the link on the QR code below.



Scan the QR code to find out more about **the 4 Rs** and why it is useful.



Internet
Geography –
the 4Rs of
Revision

How can I stay motivated?

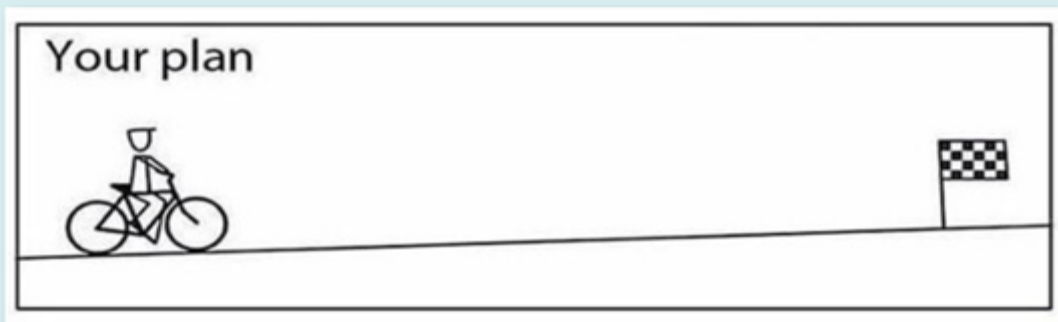
Understanding motivation

When you start on a new hobby, sport or activity your motivation to do go out and do the work for that activity will be quite high. However, as time goes on your motivation will begin to wear off as the realisation of the work you need to do, or something else, sets you back. This will mean your progress will begin to slow down and eventually stop.

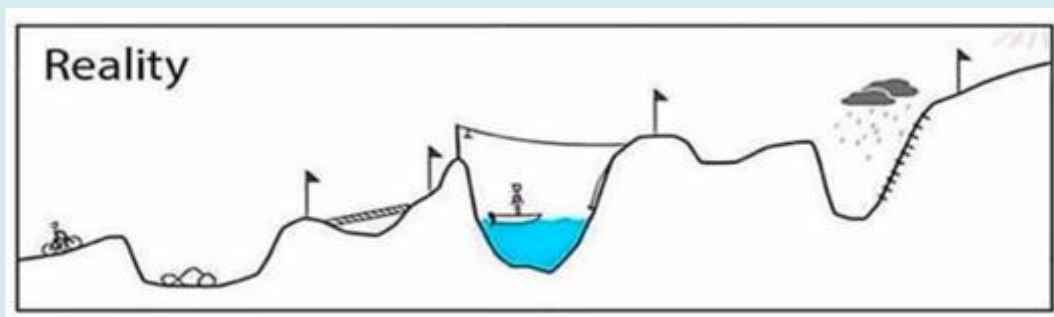
It is important to remember a number of things to help you to stay motivated.

1. Studying and learning is not an 'easy path' – it is a very bumpy road.

At the beginning, you may feel like your plan is nice and straightforward, much like the image below:



However, the reality is that for everybody, their journey towards their goals or success in school, a hobby, sport or other activity is going to look more like this:



Everybody will face dips in motivation, setbacks, obstacles and many other things that may get in their way when trying to study or work towards a goal.

When it comes to being motivated, there tends to be two basic (and overlapping) categories of motivation: Extrinsic (External) Motivation and Intrinsic (Internal) Motivation.

Extrinsic (External) Motivation

This type of motivation often:

- Comes from a desire to do something to earn a reward or avoid punishment
- Works when the task has a clear set of rules and a conclusion that has a relatively immediate outcome
- Can provide a useful short-term burst of motivation

This type of motivator can be very useful in driving action in the short-term, but will often only work for short-term goals.

Intrinsic (Internal) Motivation

This type of motivation often:

- Comes from genuine interest in something or ambition
- Assumes there is no reward (you just enjoy the process!)
- Comes from a deep motivation linked to independence

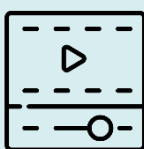
This type of motivator will generally see you progress further for longer as it will help you to overcome challenges and stay positive.

When it comes to motivation, it is important to find a way of getting work done that you enjoy by falling in love with the **process** instead of the **outcome**.

“It is the person who loves to run who will run further than the person who just wants to win”

James Smith, 2020

A useful activity to help keep you on track, keep you positive and help you achieve your goals is to make a list of your main motivators. Try to put them into a list of ‘Intrinsic’ motivators and ‘Extrinsic’ motivators. Stick them on your desk, wall or wherever your personal study environment is and look back on them whenever you find yourself drifting off task – or as a motivator to get started on a task!



Scan the QR code to find out more about **how we motivate our children**.



Tedx Talks –
The secret to
motivating your
child – Jennifer
Nacif

What is the Zeigarnik Effect and how it can it help me?

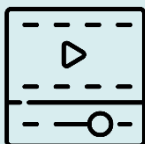
The Zeigarnik (zi-gar-nik) Effect isn't exactly a name you may have come across before, however you have probably experienced it at some point in your life! Have you ever noticed how a waiter/waitress in a restaurant can remember your entire order exactly right, even if there is a large number of you? This is down to the Zeigarnik effect!

The Zeigarnik effect is a theory in psychology which says that the brain will find it easier to recall interrupted tasks than it will recall a completed task. The idea is that an unfinished task creates more tension in our minds.

This can be used as a great tool when you want to remember things. For example, if you are studying a history topic, the Zeigarnik Effect says that if you interrupt this study after a period of approximately 20 minutes to perform an unrelated task (either studying a different subject or making a cup of tea), you will remember the material better than a student who finishes studying without taking a break! Once you have spent the same amount of time on the other subject, or finished making your cup of tea, you can go back to the original task to complete it.

This is one of the reasons why **interleaving** (see earlier pages) works so well! You can use short bursts of studying different subjects or with lots of breaks in to your advantage!

Note: You must make sure that you go back to what you were originally studying after a short period, otherwise your mind will be fixed on the unfinished work and make any new tasks less productive!



Scan the QR code to find out more about **the Zeigarnik Effect**.



Zeigarnik Effect and how to use it

Personal Study Strategies

Whilst it is important to plan **when** you are going to do personal study, it is just as important to know **how** you are going to study as well.

There are a wide range of strategies that can be used for personal study. The ones we have selected below are proven to be the most effective and most time-efficient for learning.

The most effective strategies that we have selected are:

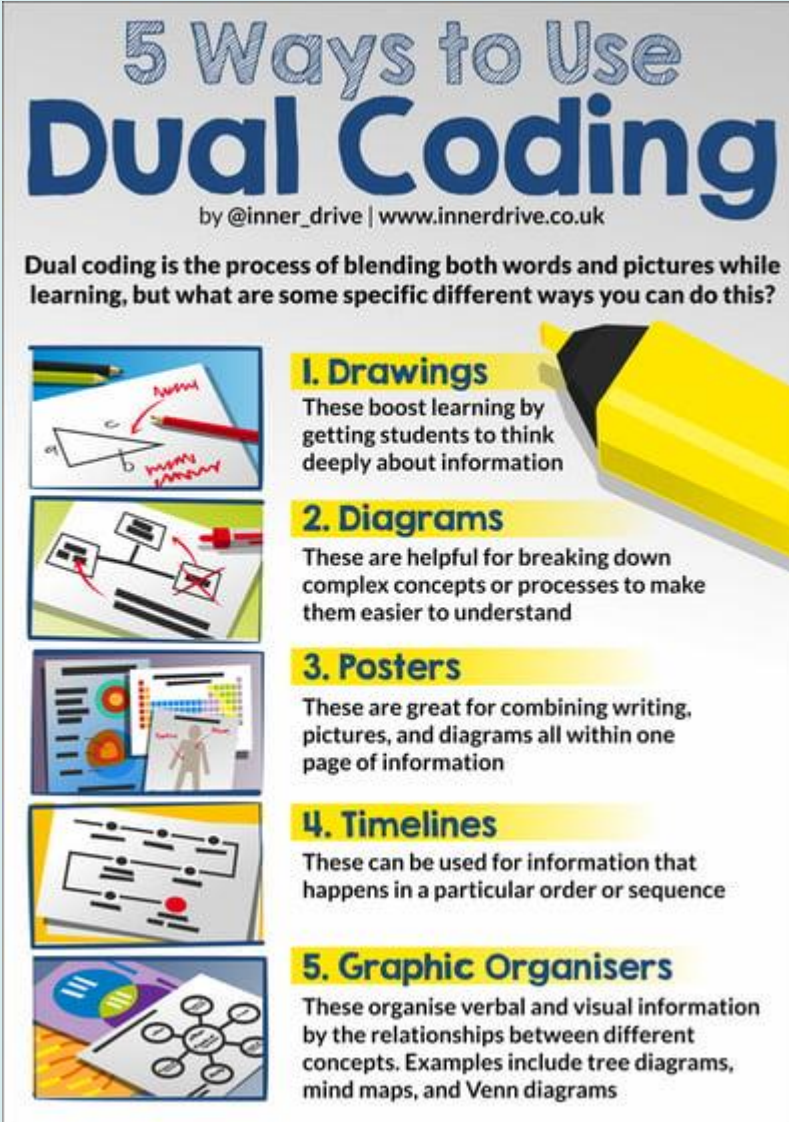
- Dual Coding
- Flash Cards and the Leitner System
- Mind Maps
- Self-Quizzing
- Brain/Knowledge Dumps

It is important to know that not all of these strategies will work for all subjects, so it is vital that you try out different strategies (or ask your teachers!) to find out which one works best for you and your subjects.

For example, Flash Cards do not work as well for Maths as practising questions!

1. What is Dual Coding?

Dual coding is the process of using both words and pictures while learning. Viewing the two formats gives us two representations of the same piece of information. This is because words and images are processed differently and when viewed at the same time, can help boost learning. Below are some ways to use dual coding in your learning.

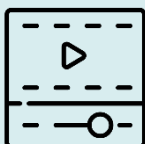


5 Ways to Use Dual Coding

by @inner_drive | www.innerdrive.co.uk

Dual coding is the process of blending both words and pictures while learning, but what are some specific different ways you can do this?

- 1. Drawings**
These boost learning by getting students to think deeply about information
- 2. Diagrams**
These are helpful for breaking down complex concepts or processes to make them easier to understand
- 3. Posters**
These are great for combining writing, pictures, and diagrams all within one page of information
- 4. Timelines**
These can be used for information that happens in a particular order or sequence
- 5. Graphic Organisers**
These organise verbal and visual information by the relationships between different concepts. Examples include tree diagrams, mind maps, and Venn diagrams



Scan the QR code to find out more about **dual coding**.

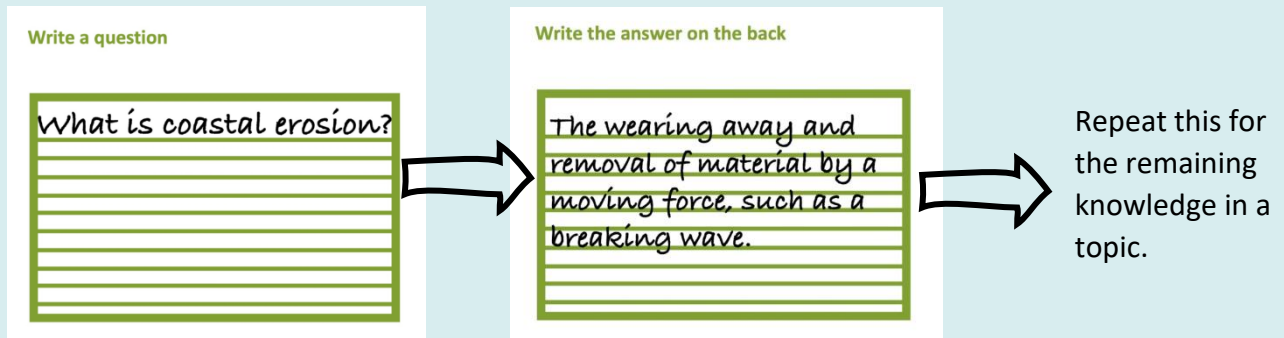


5 easy ways to use **Dual Coding** for studying

2. What are Flash Cards and the Leitner System?

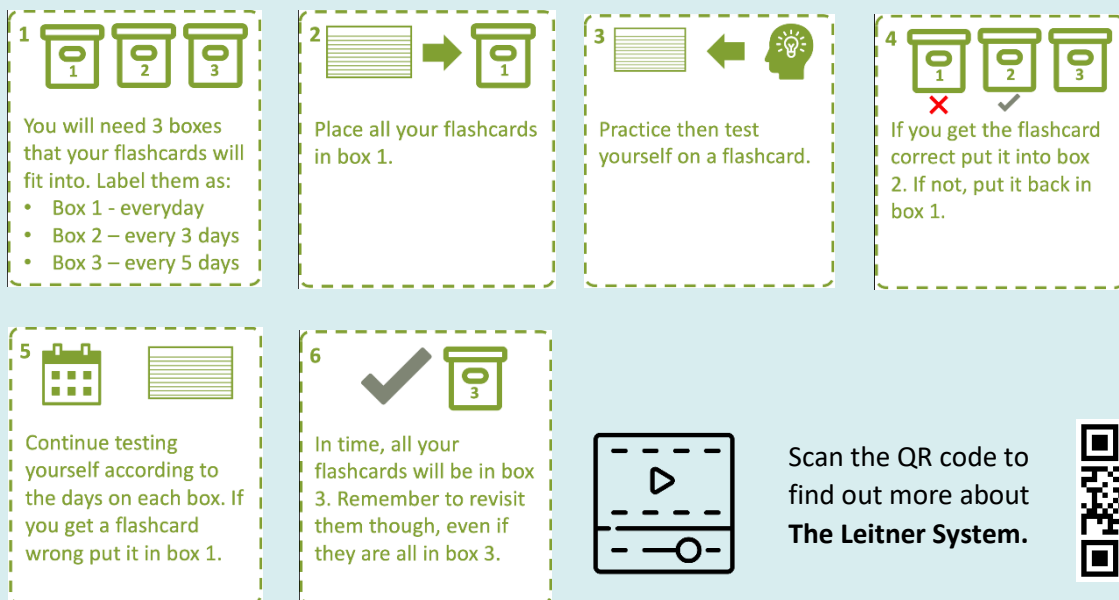
Flash cards are a common method for revision. A flash card is a piece of card which contains either a keyword, question, or statement on one side, with the definition, answer or argument on the other.

For some subjects, you may be able to purchase flash cards for Key Stage 3 or Key Stage 4 or you can create your own. To do this, follow the steps below:



The Leitner System

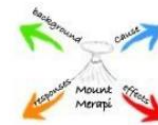
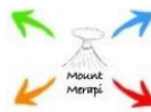
The Leitner System is a method of using Flash Cards more efficiently. Follow the steps below or use the QR code video to find out more about how to use this system to your advantage.



3. How do I use Mind Maps?

Mind maps are a useful tool for visualizing and organizing knowledge and information. They are also useful for consolidating (bringing everything together) knowledge across a topic or unit of work.

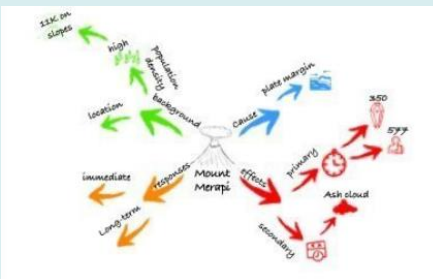
There is no wrong way to complete a mind map, however, below are some guidelines you may want to follow:



Step 1: Identify your topic using text and/or images.

Step 2: Draw thick branches from the central image.

Step 3: Write key words along the branches.

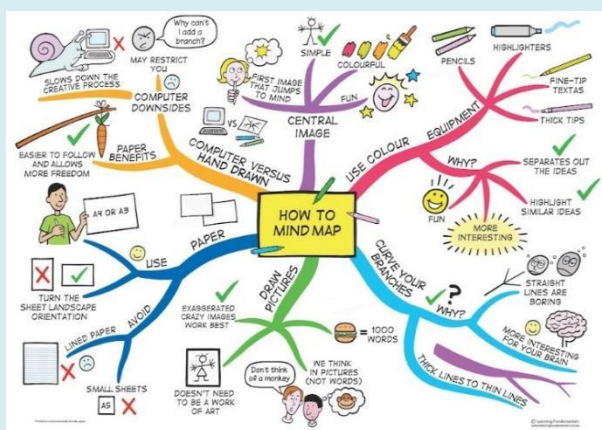


Step 4: Draw additional branches. These branches are sub-topics of the main key words.

Step 5: Keep expanding outwards with additional sub-topics, keywords or branches.

Features of effective mind mapping:

- Include images & text.
- Not too much information.
- Colourful.
- Revisit the topic often.
- Test yourself by retrieving information regularly.

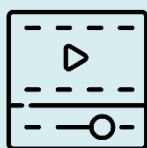


You can also use mind maps alongside **Knowledge Organisers/Checkers**.

You do this by starting your mind map with the topic name in the middle, then writing down everything you know **from memory** about that topic.

You then use the Knowledge Organiser/checker to check whether you missed any key knowledge.

Anything missed should be your focus for revision.



Scan the QR code to find out more about **Mind Maps**.



How to produce a **Mind Map**.

4. What is self-quizzing?

When revising, it is important to **challenge your memory**. This can be done through self-quizzing. Using flash cards (see strategy 2) is one method of self-quizzing, however this can be done in other ways.

An effective quiz should contain the following:

- between 10 and 20 questions
- a range of question types (short-answer, multiple choice, true/false)

To create an effective revision quiz, follow the steps below:

Step 1:

Choose a topic that you are studying or have recently studied in class - it should be specific enough to focus on but not too broad so that it becomes overwhelming.

Textbooks, revision guides and knowledge organisers/checkers can help with this as they often divide work into topics or units.

Step 2:

Gather information from reliable sources (i.e. textbook, revision guide, knowledge organiser/checkers)

Step 3:

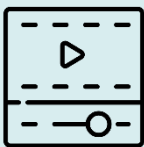
Organise information into categories/themes to make the quizzes more manageable

Step 4:

Create the quiz – you can do this using the back of your exercise book for a particular subject or platforms such as Microsoft Word/Forms or Quizlet.

Step 5:

Review and edit the quiz – ask a friend or teacher to review the quiz to get a fresh perspective.



Scan the QR codes to find out more about **Self Quizzing**.



Self-Quizzing
with Flash
Cards



Self-Quizzing
with
Knowledge
Organisers /
Checkers

5. What is a knowledge dump activity?

The Brain or Knowledge Dump activity is a method that can be done with a blank piece of paper and a topic from one of your subjects.

The aim of a Brain Dump is to write down as much as you can **remember** about a particular topic in your subject. This can be done as a list, mind map or any format – all you need is a topic to focus on.

Note: Try to focus on a specific topic or topic area, rather than an entire subject – otherwise your brain dump could be very overwhelming!

Once you have done this, you can check what you remembered against a knowledge organiser, revision guide or your own notes.

The parts of the topics you were missing are the areas of the topic you should go away and re-visit using some of the other techniques mentioned earlier in this booklet or you could seek out additional help with from a peer, the internet (via the St. Hilda's Curriculum website) or your teachers.



Scan the QR codes to find out more about **Brain Dumps**.



What is a Brain Dump?
Explained in 2 minutes.

Target Setting

How can I set SMART targets to achieve my goals?

When you are trying to make progress in just about anything in life, you often need a target to work towards to keep you inspired and motivated.

SMART is an acronym which stands for the below:

Specific – What? When? Why?

Measurable – How will you know if you reach your goal or not? (think numbers!)

Achievable – Break down the goal into smaller goals – what do you need to do in the time scale to meet the goal?

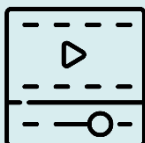
Relevant – Does this goal fit well with your life right now? Does it keep you on track?

Time-specific/bound – Deadline that allows you to work backwards and set smaller steps.

Deadlines also help to make sure you keep a consistent progress throughout working towards your goal.

With goal or target setting it is important to write your goals down and check in on them regularly. Use the table below to practise setting your own goal/target.

Overall Target/Goal:		
Specific		
Measurable		
Achievable	1.	2.
	3.	4.
Relevant		
Time-bound		



Scan the QR codes to find out more about **SMART Target/Goal setting**.



How to set **SMART** goals – for students

Our aims as a school is to encourage you all to become the best you can be. If we teach you how to be self-motivated, driven and passionate about learning now, we know we're sending you off into the world, whether it's in year 11 or 13, with the skills to progress towards whatever goals you set yourself.

Further guidance and support with Personal Study and your learning at St. Hilda's will be available via the new curriculum website, which can be accessed via the QR code below.



A final note:

Doing the Thing

Preparing to do the thing isn't doing the thing.

Scheduling time to do the thing isn't doing the thing.

Making a to-do list for the thing isn't doing the thing.

Telling people you're going to do the thing isn't doing the thing.

Messaging friends who may or may not be doing the thing isn't doing the thing.

Writing a banger tweet about how you're going to do the thing isn't doing the thing.

Hating on yourself for not doing the thing isn't doing the thing. Hating on other people who have done the thing isn't doing the thing. Hating on the obstacles in the way of doing the thing isn't doing the thing.

Fantatising about all of the adoration you'll receive once you do the thing isn't doing the thing.

Reading about how to do the thing isn't doing the thing. Reading about how other people did the thing isn't doing the thing. Reading this essay isn't doing the thing.

The only thing that is doing the thing is **doing the thing**.

