



Churchill Academy

To set no limits on what we can achieve

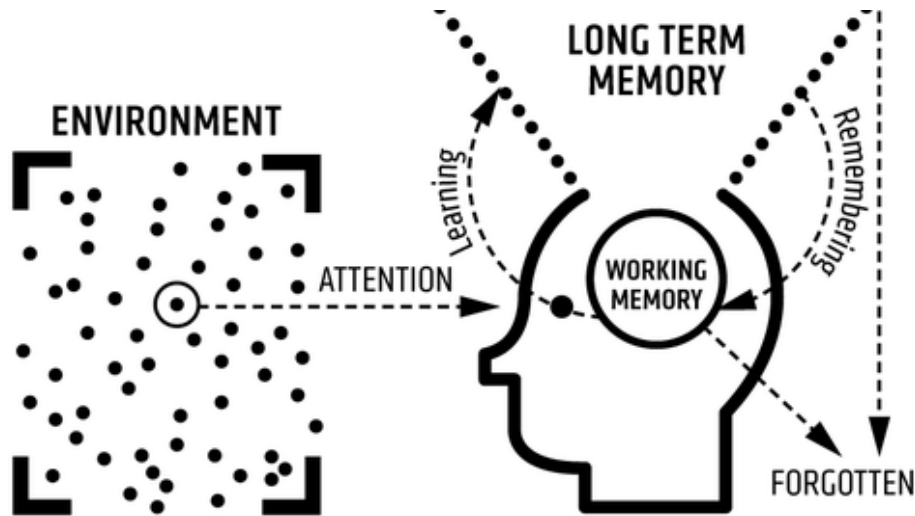
Supporting with exam preparation: a guide for families

KINDNESS

CURIOSITY

DETERMINATION

How do we learn?



Our brains are faced with a great deal of information all around us, in our **environment**. Only the information that we pay **attention** to makes its way into our **working memory**.

Working memory has a very limited capacity – it can only hold a small amount of information for a short amount of time. This is why we may repeat a phone number over and over again if we need to remember it but have nowhere to write it down.

To be able to remember information in the future we need to move it to our **long term memory**. We do this by **learning** it. To make those memories stronger, and avoid forgetting them, it helps to practise **remembering** them – bringing them back from our long term memory into our working memory.

Trial #	Letters in set	Letters	Score
1	2		
2	4		
3	6		
4	8		
5	10		
6	12		

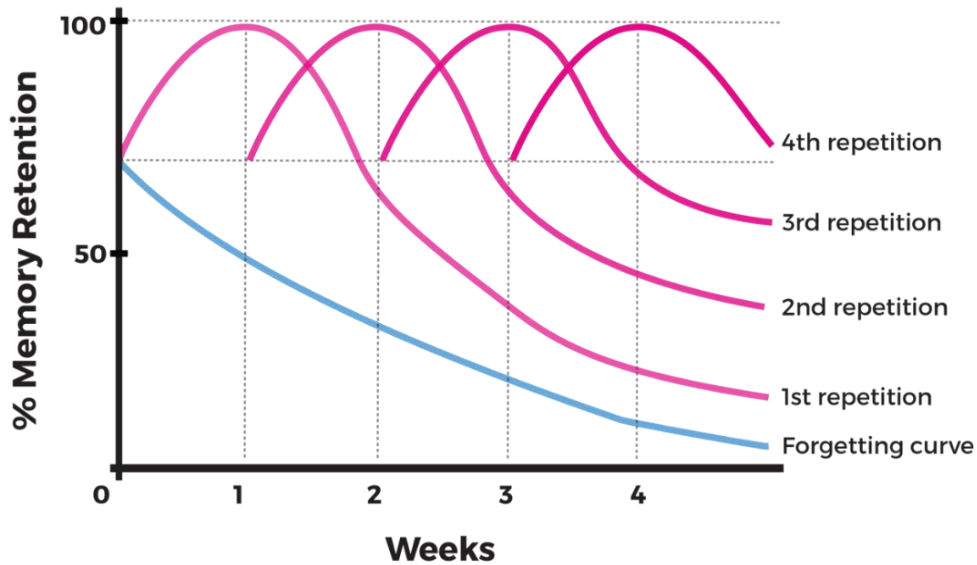
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Curve of Forgetting

For newly learned information



The first time we learn something, it can be **forgotten** very quickly. Each time we revisit or recap a piece of information, the rate at which it gets forgotten is reduced. Regularly going back over information will mean that **you remember more of it, for longer**.

Science shows that **repetition and revision of information** works best when ...



... you fully understand the information and can explain and describe it



... you can give examples



... you switch between topics



... you space your revision out over time

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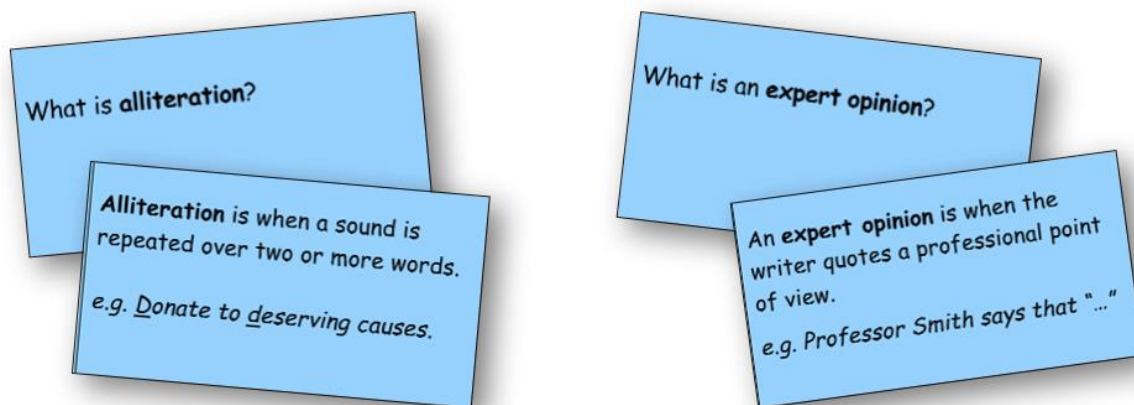
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Flashcards and self-quizzing

Effective flashcards will have:

- A small amount of information on each card
- Use a prompt such as a question, key term, date or quote on one side and the answer on the other side



Making flashcards is a useful thing to do but **making them is not the same as learning**. Students need to use their flashcards for **self-quizzing** on a very regular basis. Find times within each day when they can spend 10 minutes self-quizzing on different topics. This could be on the bus, at lunchtime or by setting aside a longer period of time in the evening.

Self-Quizzing

Students can also use self-quizzing using other resources such as a revision guide, revision notes, knowledge organisers or mind maps.

Use the **look - cover - write - check - correct method** to recap information and improve your accuracy each time.



Look



Cover



Write



Check



Correct

Look – read and reread the section a few times to make sure that you understand it. You could also read it aloud.

Cover – cover up this part of the knowledge organiser

Write – write (from memory!) everything you can remember

Check – check what you have written using the knowledge organiser

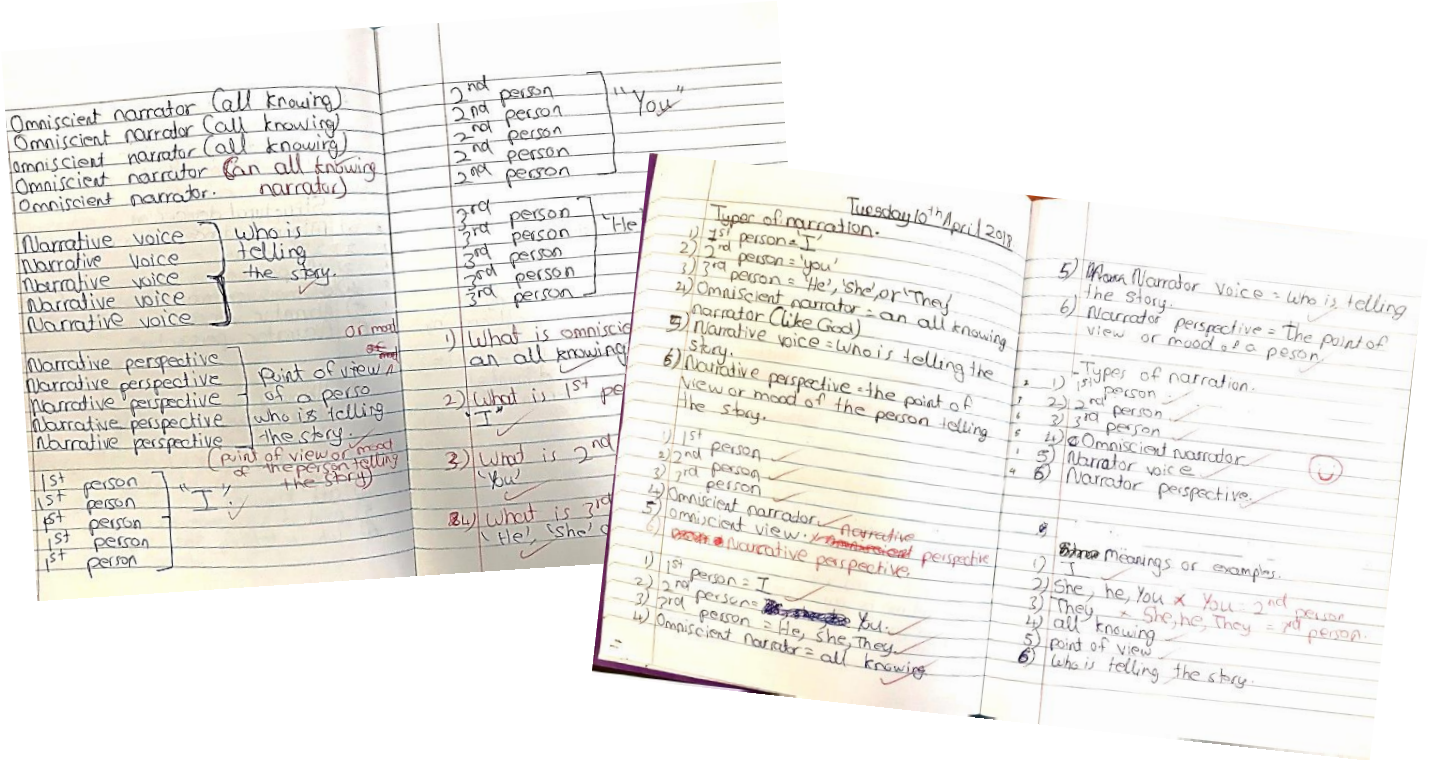
Correct – correct any mistakes, spelling errors or bits missing (using a different coloured pen)

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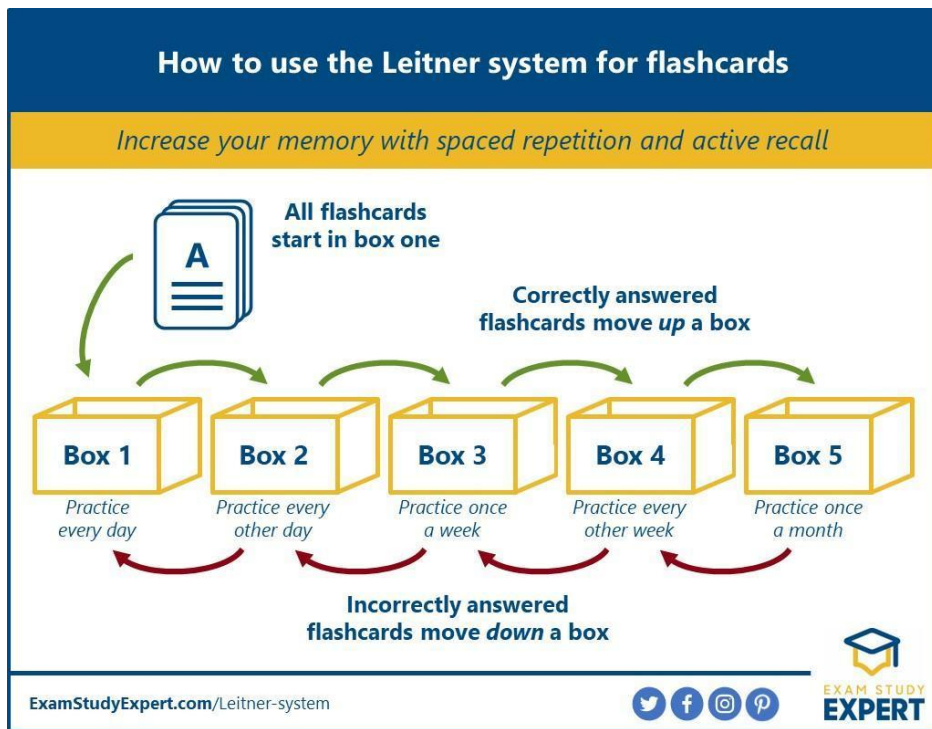
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These are examples of **self-quizzing books** which students have developed



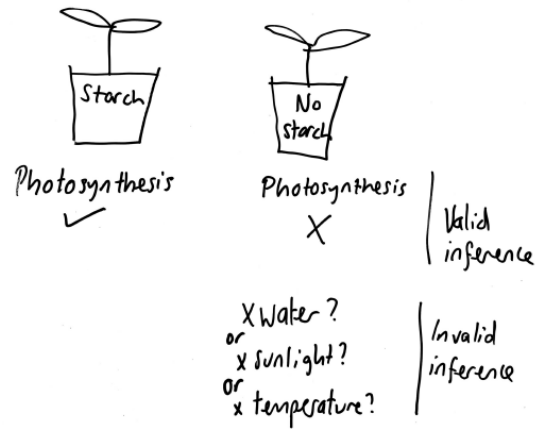
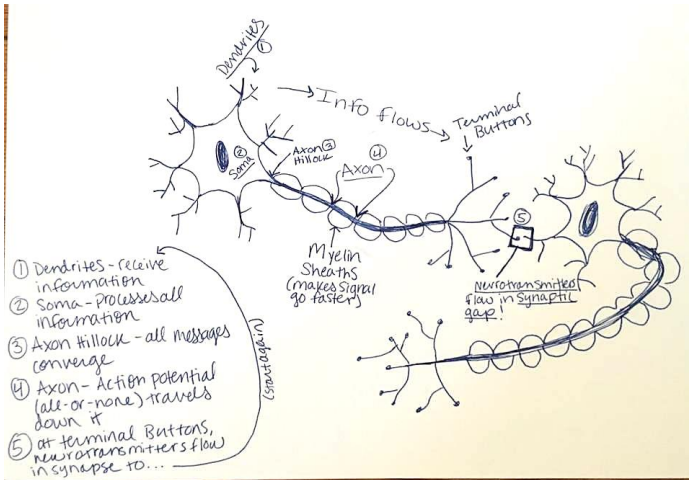
If students have already made many flashcards and want to take your self-quizzing to the next level, why not try using the **Leitner System**?



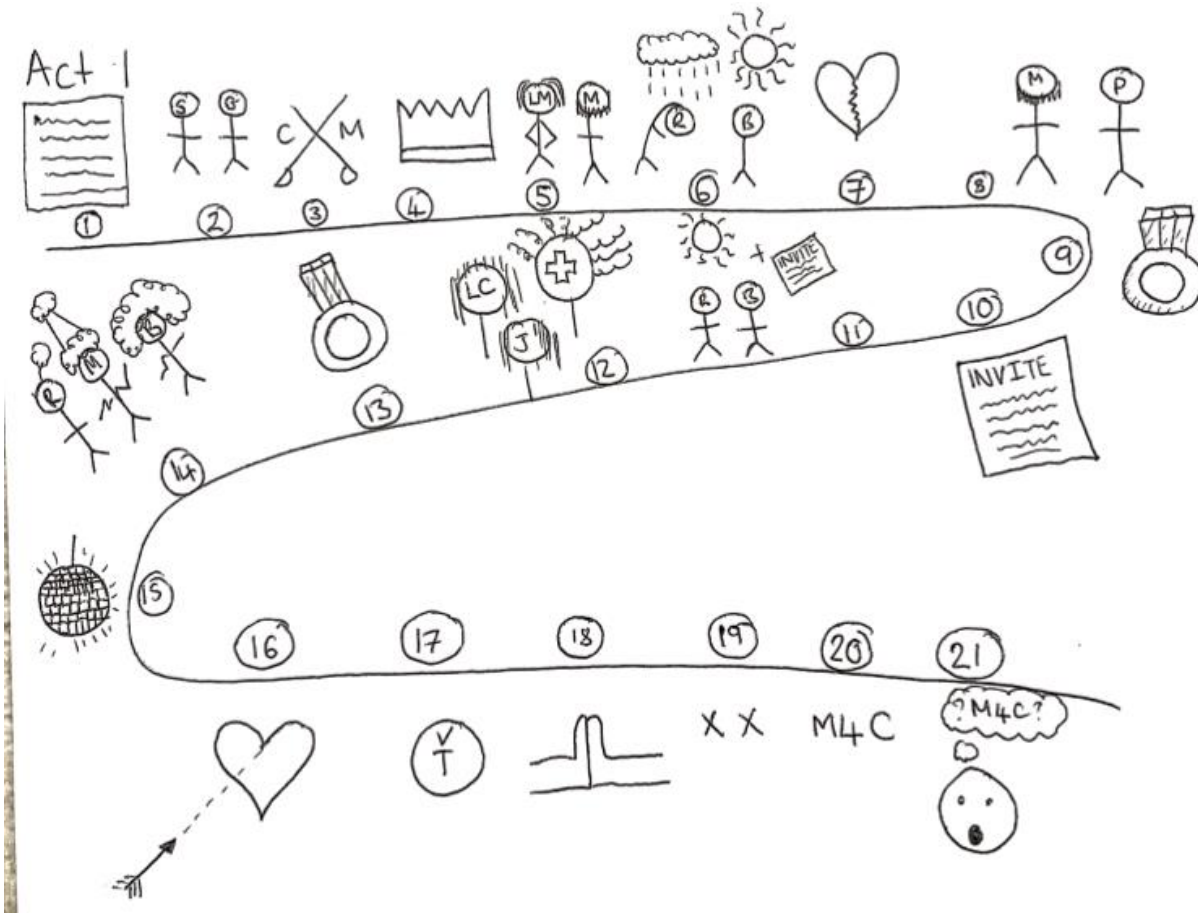
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Dual Coding

Scientists have found that connecting **pictures** and **words** can help you remember information more effectively than just using one or the other.



Which play has this student used dual coding to revise?



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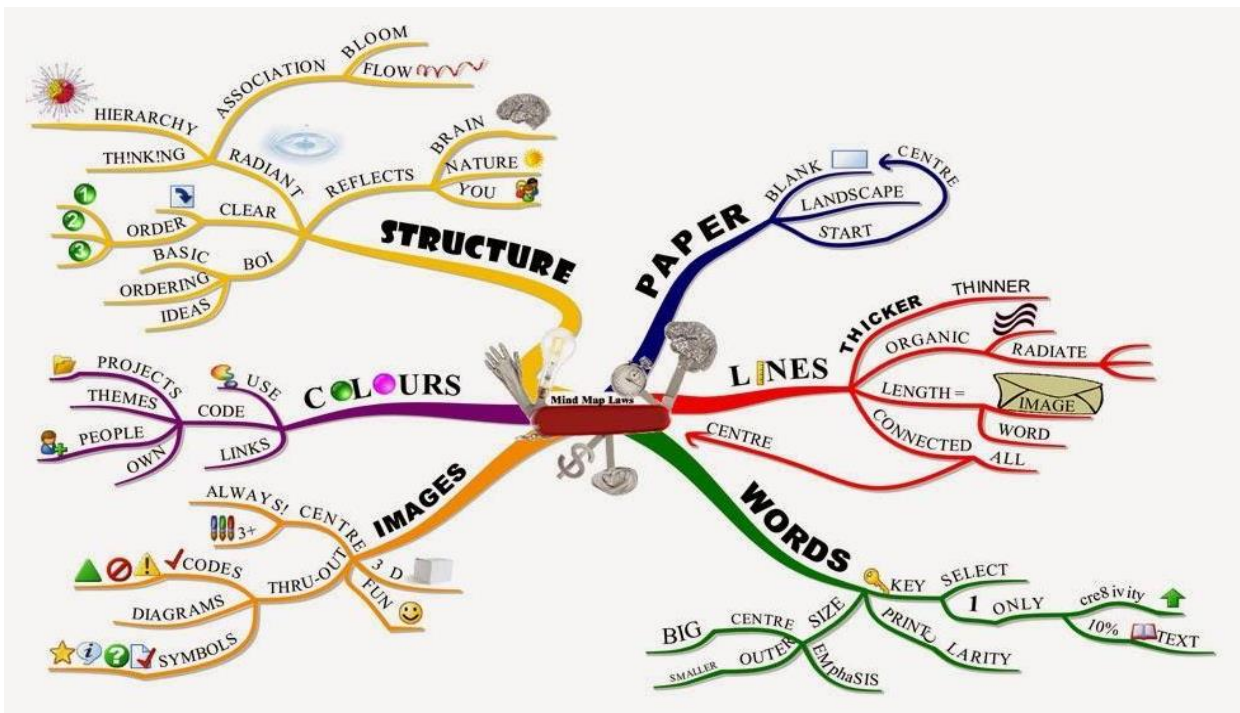
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Mind Maps

Creating mind maps for topics can be a useful way to organise knowledge. There are some useful rules to remember when creating mind maps:

- Organise your information into **categories** – each of these categories forms a branch of a mind map
- Start with a large, blank piece of paper, in landscape
- **Use colour** e.g. one colour for each branch of the mind map to help you remember information visually
- The **lines** should radiate from the centre, going from thicker to thinner
- Select the smallest amount of **text** possible – pick key words or phrases and write clearly
- Use small **images** such as codes, symbols or small diagrams throughout
- Use the colour and categories to help you organise the knowledge into categories, orders or themes



Creating a mind map is only the beginning of the revision process ... make sure students don't spend all of their time creating mind maps without leaving enough time to do the learning part!



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Muhammad Ali: Mind Map

Muhammad Ali, arguably the greatest boxer in the history of the sport. He was born in 1942 in Louisville, Kentucky in the US. He was named after his father, Cassius Clay Sr, who was named after the 19th century abolitionist politician Cassius Clay. He changed his name to Muhammad Ali in 1964. He became a boxers at the age of 12. As an amateur boxer he won many titles culminating in the Light Heavyweight gold medal in the 1960 Olympics in Rome. When Ali returned home he was so proud he wore his medal wherever he went. After a week he went to a café to order a drink. The waiter said, "I'm sorry we don't serve coloured people". Ali was so cross by this he threw his medal into a river. He turned professional at the age of 18. Ali's record was 100 wins, 5 losses; an impressive record.

Ali became World Champion at the age of 22. Ali was famous for his unorthodox fighting style. Ali brought strategy and tactics into the boxing ring. With his fast moving, he was adept at dodging punches and with his fancy footwork which was knows as the "Ali Shuffle". He also used mind gamed and often out psyched his opponents before a match. He once famously said he would "float like a butterfly and sting like a bee".

In 1967, Ali refused on religious grounds to be drafted into the army to fight in the Vietnamese war. He was stripped of his title and banned from boxing. He went to the courts and was successful in overturn this judgement. Ali is the only boxer to win the title on three separate occasions. Ali retired from boxing in 1981 at the age of 39. Throughout his career he earned \$50million. Ali converted to Islam when he was 22 and joined the Nation of Islam inspired by Malcolm X. Ali was married 4 times and had nine children in total. Ali was awarded the Greatest Sportsman of the Century in 1999.



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Revision Timetables

Students will not need to spend an equal amount of time on all subjects. They need to think about which subjects and topics they need to prioritise.

- Think about the **time** they will be revising
 - What is realistic for them to do each day?
 - What other activities or plans do they have?
 - Know when they will revise and then stick to it!
- The plan won't be the same for every **week** – make a different plan for each week running up to exams, including the Easter Holidays!
- Plan the **topics** to revise not just the subjects
- Use **colour coding** to make the plan easier to follow
- Include page references or **revision links** when planning topics
- Remember, revision must be **generative** ... they you should be doing something not just reading or highlighting

This is an example of a revision timetable which you shows how a student has planned their revision across a week.

WEEK 1

WEEK	English Language	Maths	Biology	Physics	French	Geography	TOTAL
Monday	Writing (1 hour)				Sport (1 hour)		2 hours
Tuesday		Fractions (1 hour)	Enzymes (1 hour)			Trade/Aid (1 hour)	3 hours
Wednesday				Energy (1 hour)	Transport (1 hour)		2 hours
Thursday		Vectors (1 hour)				Settlements (1 hour)	2 hours
Friday			Evolution (1 hour)				1 hour
Saturday			Nerves and hormones (1 hour)			Volcanoes (1 hour)	2 hours
Sunday		Triangles (1 hour)		Waves (1 hour)			2 hours
TOTAL	1 hour	3 hours	3 hours	2 hours	2 hours	3 hours	14 hours

Top tips!

- ✓ Encourage students to include extra-curricular activities, family activities and downtime into their revision timetables.
- ✓ Little and often beats “cramming” ... short, regular revision sessions are more effective and motivating.
- ✓ Find a dedicated revision space where students can focus. Remove distractions (including mobile devices!)
- ✓ Maintain a self-care routine – healthy eating, staying hydrated and regular exercise are important for a healthy mind and body.

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Revision Timetable for the week beginning:											
	English	Maths	Biology	Chemistry	Physics						Total hours
Monday											
Tuesday											
Wednesday											
Thursday											
Friday											
Saturday											
Sunday											

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Notes

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing notes.

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