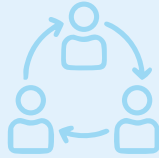
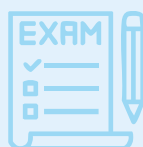




FRANCIS HOLLAND  
SLOANE SQUARE



# KS3 Study Skills Booklet





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Your Form Tutors will guide you through each section during form time at the appropriate points throughout the year.

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# ORGANISATION AND PLANNING



## The Power of Being Prepared

- Planning helps you feel in control and reduces stress.
- You'll know what needs doing, when it's due, and how to prioritise.
- It's more efficient - less time spent worrying, more time spent working.

## Why Planning Works

- You won't forget assignments.
- You'll allow enough time for everything.
- You can focus on trickier subjects earlier.
- You'll feel less overwhelmed.

## What Happens Without a Plan

- You'll waste time deciding what to do next.
- You might run out of time or forget something important.
- Stress levels can rise when things feel chaotic.





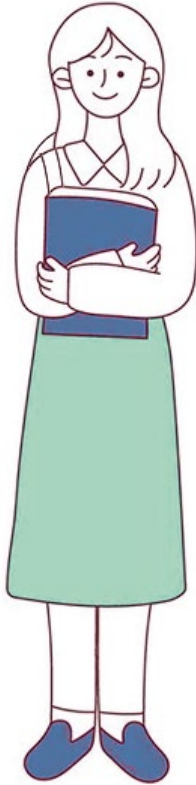
## Organisation Top Tips

- 1. Keep your notes and books sorted by subject** so you can easily find what you need.
- 2. Write a to-do list and prioritise tasks** - start with what's urgent or tricky. Use your planner or digital tools like Outlook's To Do list.
- 3. Make sure you have all the stationery you need** - pens, paper, calculator, etc. Being prepared means less faffing and more focus.
- 4. Aim to arrive at school by 8:10am.** It gives you time to settle in and prepare for the day without feeling rushed.
- 5. Use your planner every day.** Write down prep during lessons and tick it off once it's done.
- 6. Wear a watch** - it helps you stay on time for lessons and activities.
- 7. If you're absent, be proactive.** Ask teachers what you missed and catch up quickly. Your tutor can help.
- 8. Keep a copy of your timetable in your bag, locker, and at home.** You could even save it to your desktop or make it your screen saver.
- 9. Use a timer when doing prep** to stick to the recommended time and avoid spending too long on one task.
- 10. Try to complete prep on the night it's set** - it's fresher in your mind and avoids a last-minute rush.
- 11. File your work** and stick in sheets before the end of the lesson to keep everything neat and organised.
- 12. Balance prep and clubs** - take advantage of opportunities, but don't overload yourself.
- 13. If you're struggling with a topic, ask for help.** Go to subject clinics or speak to your teacher for extra support.
- 14. Don't be afraid to ask questions** - in lessons, after class, via email, or by popping into the staff room or office.
- 15. Check your emails and Teams notifications daily.** Make it a habit - for example, right before starting your prep.
- 16. Set a regular routine for homework and revision.** Having a consistent time each day helps build good habits and reduces procrastination.
- 17. Declutter your bag weekly.** Remove old papers, organise your folders, and check you have everything you need for the week ahead.
- 18. Use folders or dividers for each subject.** This makes it easier to keep track of handouts, notes, and prep.
- 19. Review your planner at the end of each day.** Check what's coming up tomorrow and make sure you're prepared.
- 20. Reflect weekly on what's working.** What helped you stay organised this week? What could you improve next week?



# BAG PACKING

Packing your bag the night before helps you feel prepared and reduces stress in the morning. Use your timetable, planner and weekly study schedule to make sure you've got everything you need.



## Evening Prep Routine

- Lay out your uniform and pack your bag before bed.
- Check your planner and timetable to make sure you've packed everything for the next day.
- Include anything needed for co-curriculars like sports, music, or clubs.
- Check the weather forecast - pack an umbrella or extra layer if needed.
- Charge your device overnight so it's ready for the day ahead.



## Bag Packing Checklist

- Pencil case
- School planner
- Device and charger
- Pad of paper
- Water bottle
- Reading book
- Snacks
- Travel card
- A small amount of money
- Mobile phone (if you take one to school)
- Yondr pouch (if needed)
- Prep due (check your planner)
- Books (check your timetable)
- PE kit (check the changing policy)
- Items for co-curriculars (e.g. musical instruments, ballet shoes - check your study schedule)
- Small emergency kit (e.g. tissues, hand sanitiser, sanitary products)

## In-School Packing Routine

**Before Registration:** Pack for all lessons up to break.

**At Break Time:** Pack for lessons until lunch.

**At Lunchtime:** Pack for lessons until the end of the day.

**End Of The Day:** Pack for home. Include anything needed for prep, practice, or evening activities. Don't forget to take your PE kit home if it needs washing!

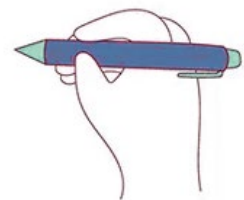


### Smart Packing Tips

- **Avoid over-packing** - protect your back by removing unnecessary items.
- **Keep a spare pencil case at home.**
- **Use a wallet or folder** for prep sheets so you don't need to carry full books or files.
- Use **compartments or pouches** to group similar items (e.g. stationery, snacks, tech).
- Do a **weekly bag clean-out** to remove clutter and stay organised.
- Keep a spare charger or **essentials at home** in case you forget something.

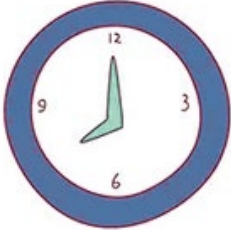
## PENCIL CASE EQUIPMENT LIST

- Black pens
- Green pen
- Purple pen (if eligible for extra time)
- Highlighters
- HB pencils
- Scientific calculator
- Protractor
- Compass
- Ruler
- Rubber
- Sharpener
- Whiteboard pen
- Glue stick
- Colouring pencils



# PREP

Prep is designed to help you build independence, reinforce learning, and develop good study habits - without overwhelming your evenings.



## Prep Expectations by Year Group

**Year 7** Up to 3× 20 minute prep tasks per week night

**Year 8** Up to 3× 25 minute prep tasks per week night

**Year 9** Up to 3× 30 minute prep tasks per week night

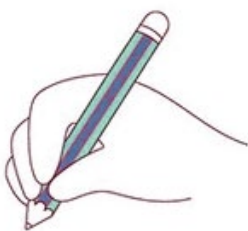
Check your prep timetable so you know which subjects to expect each day.



## How to Manage Your Prep

Prep will be explained in lessons - write down the instructions clearly in your planner and ask if you have any questions.

- **Always note the due date** so you can plan ahead and avoid last-minute stress.
- **Use a timer or watch** to help you stick to the recommended time for each task.
- **If you finish early, use the extra time to:**
  - *Make extra notes*
  - *Read around the topic*
  - *Complete enrichment or extension tasks*
  - *Review feedback from previous work to improve future prep*



## Staying Motivated

- Consider attending **Prep Club** after school - it's a quiet, supervised space where others will also be working. You'll stay focused and can then fully relax once you get home.
- Create a calm, distraction-free space if completing your prep at home - avoid working in bed or near your phone.
- Build a routine by starting prep at the same time each evening.



## If You're Struggling

- If a deadline feels unmanageable, speak to your teacher **early** to discuss a possible extension.
- If you're stuck on a task, ask for help - in class, after school, at clinic or via email.

# EMAILS

Managing your school emails well helps you stay organised, meet deadlines, and communicate professionally.

## Staying Organised

- **Create folders by subject** to keep your inbox tidy and make emails easier to find.
- **Pin important emails** so they stay at the top of your inbox or folder.
- **Flag emails that need action** - and unflag them once completed. You can filter your inbox to show only flagged emails.
- **Use the search bar** to quickly find emails from specific teachers or platforms (e.g. search “Sparx” or a teacher’s name).
- **Delete emails you don’t need** to avoid clutter and confusion.
- **Check your inbox daily** - make it part of your routine, such as reviewing emails before starting prep or once you get home from school.

## Writing Emails

- **Be polite and professional** - use a greeting, full sentences, and a clear sign-off.
- **Use the subject line wisely** - make it clear what your email is about.
- **CC anyone who needs to see the message** - for example, your tutor or another teacher.
- **Proofread before sending** - check for spelling, tone, and clarity.



### Extra Tips

- **Reply promptly to emails that need a response** - don’t leave them sitting unread.
- **Keep your email signature simple** and appropriate if you use one.
- **Don’t use emojis or slang** in formal emails to teachers or staff.
- **If you’re unsure how to phrase something**, ask a parent, tutor, or teacher for help.



### Email Etiquette Example:

Dear Miss James,

I hope this email finds you well.

Unfortunately, I missed your lesson yesterday as I was unwell.

I have copied the notes off a friend, but I was a little confused how to factorise expressions when there are letters as well as numbers.

I was wondering whether there was anything you could suggest that might help.

With many thanks for your time and best wishes,

Cora

# TIME MANAGEMENT

## CREATING A STUDY SCHEDULE

We all lead busy lives, and it's easy to procrastinate - especially when there's always something more fun to do than prep! One of the best ways to stay on top of your studies is to create a **realistic study schedule** that works for you.

Your Form Tutors will help you create one at the start of each academic year, so you'll have a solid foundation to build on.

### Study Schedule Tips



#### 1. Start with the Fun Stuff

Don't begin by filling your schedule with study blocks - that's a common mistake. Instead, list the activities you enjoy and don't want to compromise on (e.g. sports, hobbies, social time, TV, reading). Estimate when you usually do these things and block them into your schedule first. This helps you build a routine that feels balanced and achievable.

#### 2. Fit Study into the Gaps

Once your leisure and co-curricular activities are in place, look at the remaining gaps in your week. These are your study slots. You don't need to assign specific tasks to each slot - you could just mark them as "study time." If there aren't any gaps left, consider whether you need to reduce or reschedule some activities.

#### 3. Use Your Schedule as a Guide, Not a Rulebook

Your study schedule should support you, not stress you out. Aim to stick to it around 60% of the time - that's a win! If you're tired or need a break, that's okay. Equally, if you feel ready to study outside your scheduled time, go for it. Flexibility is key.

#### 4. Focus on Tasks, Not Time

Instead of saying "I'll study for 30 minutes," try "I'll complete this worksheet" or "I'll revise this topic." Task-based goals help you stay focused and give you a clear sense of achievement.



### Extra Tips for Success!

- Use a **schedule** to map out your week visually - **colour-code** activities to make them easy to follow.
- **Review your schedule each Sunday** to adjust for the week ahead.
- **Build in short breaks** during longer study sessions to stay fresh.

Here is an example weekly study schedule:

ANNA'S WEEKLY PLANNER								
🕒	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	
7-8		Commute		Commute				
	Commute	Netball	Commute	Ballet	Commute			
8-9	<b>SCHOOL DAY</b>							
9-10						Art Club	Extra Maths	
10-11							Catch-up Work	
11-12								
12-1								
1-2							Lunch	Lunch
2-3							Hang out with friends	Family Time
3-4								
4-5	Commute					Hang out with friends	Family Time	
	Relax & Snack	Relax & Snack	Swimming	Relax & Snack	Drama Club			
5-6	Emails & Organising	Emails & Organising		Relax & Snack	Emails & Organising	Relax & Snack		
	Maths Prep	History Prep	Geography Prep					
6-7	Biology Prep	TP Prep	English Prep	Physics Prep	Maths Prep			
	Music Prep	Chemistry Prep	Latin Prep	Art Prep	French Prep		Prepare Week Ahead	
7-8	Supper	Supper	Supper	Supper	Supper	Supper	Supper	
	Music Practice	Music Practice	French Prep	Music Practice	English Prep	Netflix		
8-9								
	9-10							

# STUDY ENVIRONMENT

A tidy, well-prepared study space helps you stay focused, work more efficiently, and feel more motivated. Whether you're at home, in the library, or somewhere else - use this checklist to make sure your study space sets you up for success.

## Study Space Checklist

### 1. Phone Off and Away

Not just on silent or "Do Not Disturb" - turn it off completely and put it out of sight. Even quick glances at your phone can break your focus and reduce memory retention.

### 2. Quiet Space

Choose a quiet area where you won't be distracted. Turn off the TV, music, and any unnecessary devices. If you need background noise, try white noise or instrumental music without any lyrics.

### 3. Minimise Interruptions

Let your family know you're studying so they don't interrupt. If possible, close the door or use a physical "Do Not Disturb" sign.

### 4. Sit at a Tidy Desk

Avoid studying on your bed or sofa - your brain associates those spaces with rest. Sit upright at a clean desk with enough room to spread out your materials.

### 5. Good Lighting

Make sure your space is well-lit to avoid eye strain. Natural light is ideal, but a desk lamp works well too.

### 6. Ready-to-Go Stationery

Keep pens, pencils, calculator, ruler, and other essentials nearby and organised.

### 7. Active State of Learning

Get your brain ready to focus. Try a quick walk, some stretches, or a few star jumps to boost energy and concentration before you start.

### 8. Comfortable but Focused Setup

Use a supportive chair and sit with good posture. Make sure your workspace is comfortable but not so cosy that you feel sleepy.

### 9. Keep Water Nearby

Staying hydrated helps with concentration and energy levels - keep a water bottle on your desk.

### 10. Have a Clock or Timer Visible

This helps you manage your time and stick to study blocks or prep limits.



# LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF

It's completely normal to feel nervous or stressed about school work from time to time - you are not alone. A little stress can help you stay focused, but too much can affect your health and make studying harder. **The key is learning how to manage it.**

## Recognising Stress



Look out for signs that stress might be building up:

- **Loss of appetite**
- **Sudden weight changes**
- **Feeling anxious or overwhelmed**
- **Difficulty concentrating**
- **Feeling emotional**
- **Trouble sleeping**

If you notice these signs, it's important to take action early.

## Mental Health Matters



Here are some ways to protect your wellbeing while studying:

- **Set realistic goals** - break tasks into small, manageable chunks.
- **Celebrate small wins** - write down one thing each day you're proud of.
- **Take regular breaks** - short pauses help your brain reset.
- **Leave time to relax in the evening** - avoid working too late.
- **Use distractions as rewards** - e.g. watch TV after finishing prep.
- **Don't compare yourself to others** - focus on your own progress.
- **Adjust your schedule if needed** - it should work for you, not against you.
- **Use focus Apps** - block social media to avoid distractions and reduce stress.
- **Remember:** it's okay not to stick to your schedule 100% of the time.



## Take A Break from Technology

Too much screen time can affect your sleep, mood, and concentration. Try these tips:

- **Turn off screens during breaks** - avoid scrolling or watching TV.
- **Eat meals away from your study space and devices.**
- **Get outside daily for fresh air and a change of scenery.**
- **Stretch regularly to avoid sore muscles from sitting too long.**



## Exercise Helps Reduce Stress

Exercise boosts your mood, energy, and focus. It also helps break up your day and gives structure to your routine.

- **It lowers stress hormones and increases feel-good chemicals (endorphins).**
- **It can take your mind off worries and help you feel more positive.**
- **It's a great way to socialise** - go for a walk or play a sport with a friend.
- **Choose something you enjoy so you'll stick with it.**



## Exercise Ideas

- **Go outside** - walk, run, or cycle in your local area.
- **Do an indoor workout** - try dance, HIIT, or follow a YouTube routine.
- **Try Yoga or Pilates** - great for stretching, relaxing, and improving focus.
- **Pick what suits you** - exercise should feel good, not stressful.



## Mindfulness: Stay Present

- **Mindfulness helps you feel calm, focused, and in control.**
- **Focus on the present** - notice small things like sounds or smells.
- **Try breathing exercises** - deep breaths help clear your mind.
- **Use mindfulness apps or videos** - even 5 minutes can make a difference.



## Other Ways to Relax

- **Listen to music or a podcast unrelated to school.**
- **Spend time on hobbies** - reading, drawing, baking, or playing an instrument.
- **Try something new** - learning a skill can boost confidence.
- **Write a diary** - it's a great way to reflect and unwind.



## Talk to Someone

- **If you're feeling overwhelmed, talking helps. You are not alone.**
- **Visit Cornerstone** - Speak to someone you trust - a parent, teacher, tutor, or GP.
- **Call or message a friend** - they might be feeling the same.
- **If you'd rather talk to someone confidentially, try:**

**ContemPlace** – [counselling@fhs-sw1.org.uk](mailto:counselling@fhs-sw1.org.uk)

**Childline** – Call 0800 1111

**Mind** – Call 0300 123 3393

**Shout** – Text 'SHOUT' to 85258

- **Bottling up stress doesn't help** - *sharing how you feel is a strength.*



## Sleep and Diet Matter

- **Getting enough rest and eating well helps your brain work at its best.**
- **Don't skip sleep to study** - sleep helps you process what you've learned.
- **Do something relaxing before bed** - avoid screens, caffeine, and intense exercise.
- **Keep your phone away from your bed** - it can disrupt your sleep.
- **Eat plenty of fruit and veg** - yes, even broccoli!
- **Don't skip meals** - it's harder to concentrate when you're hungry..
- **Drink lots of water** - keep a bottle on your desk.
- **Grab a healthy snack when needed** - it helps keep your energy up.

# MOTIVATION AND PROCRASTINATION

## Staying Motivated

- Think about how your school work connects to your future - whether it's getting into university, landing your dream job, or proving to yourself (and others) that you can do it.
- Try to stay positive, even when the work feels tough. Every bit helps build your understanding.
- Focus on your own goals. Everyone's path is different, so avoid comparing yourself to others.
- Progress matters more than perfection - learning is about improving step by step.
- Use positive self-talk. Swap "I can't do this" for "I'll give it a go" or "I'm still learning."
- Link your learning to real life — maths in sports stats, science in cooking, or English in your favourite films.



## Motivation Boosters

- Set small goals and reward yourself - a snack, a walk, playing with your dog, or watching a bit of TV.
- Keep your long-term goals visible. A photo, quote, or reminder in your planner can help.
- Plan something fun for after big assignments or assessments - it gives you something to look forward to.
- Use a planner or checklist to track your progress. Seeing what you've achieved can be a great motivator.
- Mix things up - change your study location or method to keep things fresh and engaging.

## Beating Procrastination

- Procrastination is when you delay tasks that need doing - and it eats up valuable time.
- Cut out distractions: turn off your phone, TV, or anything that pulls your focus.
- Take regular breaks to stay fresh and focused.
- Break big tasks into smaller chunks so they feel more manageable.
- Start with something simple to ease yourself into working mode.
- Try the "5-minute rule" - tell yourself you'll work for just five minutes. Often, that's enough to get going.
- Use a timer technique like Pomodoro (25 minutes work, 5 minutes break) to stay focused.
- Make a "done" list - seeing what you've completed can be just as motivating as a to-do list.

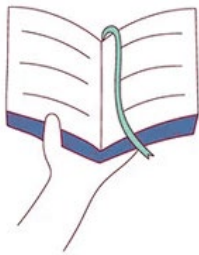
## SMART Targets

Setting SMART targets can help you stay focused and track your progress. They break big goals into clear, manageable steps - making it easier to stay on track and feel a sense of achievement.

What does SMART stand for?



- S Specific:** Be clear about what you want to achieve. Vague goals like “do better in maths” are hard to follow. Try “complete all my maths homework on time this week” instead.
- M Measurable:** You should be able to tell when you’ve achieved your goal.  
Ask yourself: *How will I know I’ve done it?*
- A Attainable:** Make sure your goal is realistic. Aiming too high can be discouraging - set yourself up for success!
- R Relevant:** Your goal should matter to you and help you move forward in your learning or personal growth.
- T Time-related:** Set a deadline. Having a time frame helps you stay focused and motivated.



Example SMART Target:

*“I will spend an extra 20 minutes per week on Sparx maths completing the XP Boost questions to reinforce my understanding.”*

# DYNAMIC READING

Dynamic Reading helps you focus on the most important parts of a text. It's about reading with a purpose and finding key information quickly. Instead of reading every word slowly, you learn to identify what matters most.

## Dynamic Reading...

- Saves you time when studying.
- Helps you understand the main ideas faster.
- Improves your ability to remember key facts.



## Steps:

**Define your purpose** – Ask yourself: *Why am I reading this? What do I need to find out?*

**Scan the article** – Look at the title, headings, subheadings, and any diagrams or images. These give clues about the main ideas.

**Find the evidence** – Focus on the first sentence of each paragraph and look for facts, examples, or statistics that support the key points.



## Tips:

- Don't get stuck on every word. Look for meaning.
- Highlight or underline key phrases.
- Ask questions as you read to stay engaged.

# NOTE TAKING

## Cornell Note Making Method

The *Cornell Note Making Method* is used around the world to help students summarise information clearly and revise more effectively. It's simple, structured, and helps you focus on what matters most.

### How to Set Up Your Page:

<b>TITLE</b> (write subject and topic here)	
Date:	Teacher:
<b>Revision Questions</b> What questions are answered in this topic?  What might be asked in an exam?	<b>Notes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Keep it simpler - no full sentences.</li><li>• Use key terms and abbreviations.</li><li>• Leave out pronouns [he/she/it] and use symbols, (e.g. → for 'led to', &amp; for 'and')</li><li>• Include visuals like diagrams and charts.</li><li>• Add any questions you still need to answer - you can come back to these later.</li></ul>
<b>Summary</b> Write a short summary of the key ideas in your own words. This helps reinforce your understanding and makes revision easier.	

### Other Note-Taking Tips

- **Colour-code your notes**

Use different colours for **keywords**, **quotes**, **explanations**, and **actions**.

- **Use abbreviations to save time:**

- **First few letters:** imp for "important"

- **Initials:** LG for "local government"

- **Remove vowels:** cn y rd ths?

- **Common abbreviations:** e.g. (for example), i.e. (in other words), v. (very), C (century)

- **Text-style:** B4 (before), AKA (also known as), BC (because), GR8 (great), IMO (in my opinion), POV (point of view)

# NOTE TAKING

## Note Taking Makes Revision Active

It is far more effective than just re-reading. Plus, you're more likely to remember your own words than someone else's. As an example, here are the notes that Lara in Year 11 made on 'The Life Cycle of Stars':

07/11/25

Life cycle of a star  
(physics → Astrophysics)  
Mr Clements

- Explain the life cycle of stars
- How is a star born?
- What is the difference between a neutron star and a black hole.

```

graph TD
    Nebula["Nebula  
• DUST + GAS CLOUD"] -- "• GRAVITY  
• GETS HOTTER" --> Protostar["protostar"]
    Protostar -- "• NUCLEAR FUSION:  
HYDROGEN → HELIUM" --> MS["main sequence star"]
    MS -- "• STABLE  
• DENSE + HOT → EXPANDS  
• OUTWARD PRESSURE = GRAVITY" --> RG["Red Giant"]
    MS -- "• SURFACE COOLS → RED" --> RS["Red Supergiant"]
    RG --> WD["White dwarf  
• SMALLISH  
→ UNSTABLE"]
    RS --> SN["supernova  
• BIG BANG!  
• EXPLODE!"]
    SN --> NS["neutron stars  
• V DENSE CORE"]
    SN --> BH["black hole  
• BIGGEST  
• NO LIGHT CAN ESCAPE"]
    
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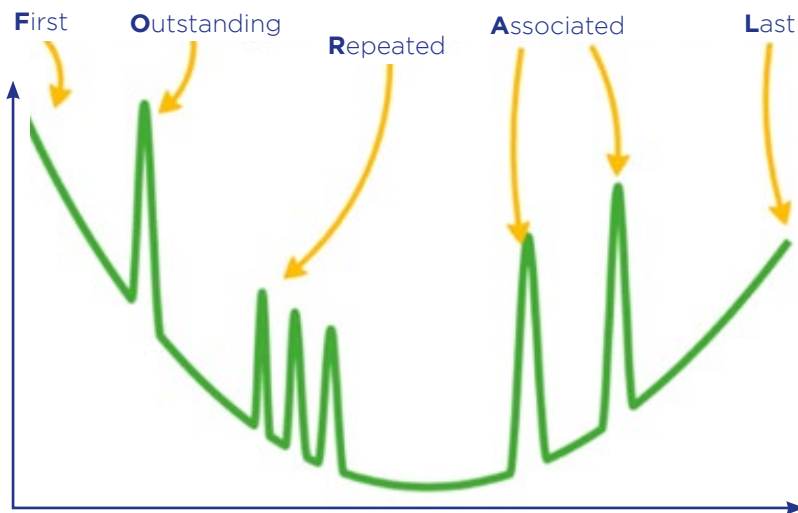
  

Summary: stars start as clouds of gas and dust called nebulas. Gravity pulls the material together to form a protostar, which heats up and starts nuclear fusion, becoming a main sequence star. Big stars then expand into red supergiants, which eventually explode in a supernova. What's left is either a neutron star or black hole.

# SPACED LEARNING

Here's the theory behind our revision tips-feel free to take a look if you're interested!

## FLORA and the Recall Curve



**FLORA** is a memory technique that helps you remember information by creating mental “hooks.” It’s based on how your brain naturally remembers things- especially what stands out, what’s repeated, and what’s placed at the beginning or end.

## What You're Likely to Remember

If asked to remember a list of random words, e.g. *juniper, music, diamond, pigeon, turnip, netball, pencil, match, wee-wee, eagle, pen, so, necklace, eye, carrot, cup, sparrow, leaf, turnip, cat*, you're more likely to recall:

- The **first and last** items
- Words that are **linked** (e.g. netball and match)
- Words that are **repeated** (e.g. turnip)
- Words that are **unusual or funny** (e.g. wee-wee)

This is how FLORA works - it helps you use these patterns to make your revision **more memorable**.

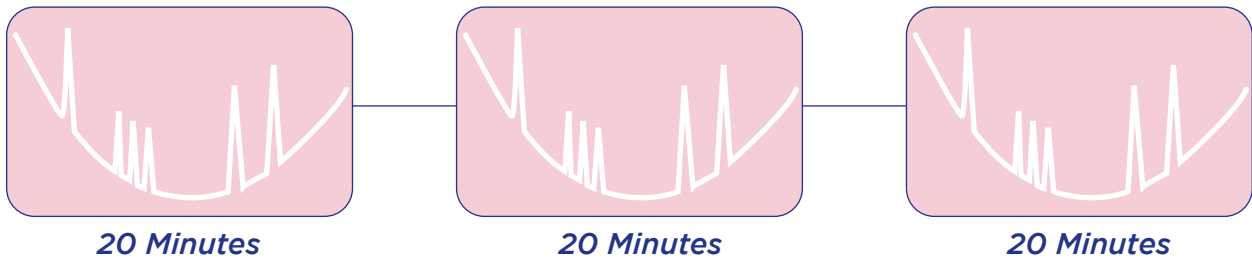
## Using FLORA to Revise

- **F**irst and **L**ast → Put the most important information at the beginning and end of your notes or flashcards.
- **O**utstanding → Make key facts stand out using colour, images, mnemonics, or placing them in unusual places (e.g. post-it notes on your mirror).
- **R**epeat → Go over important facts multiple times to strengthen memory.
- **A**ssociation → Link ideas together so one fact leads you to the next.

## Spacing Your Learning

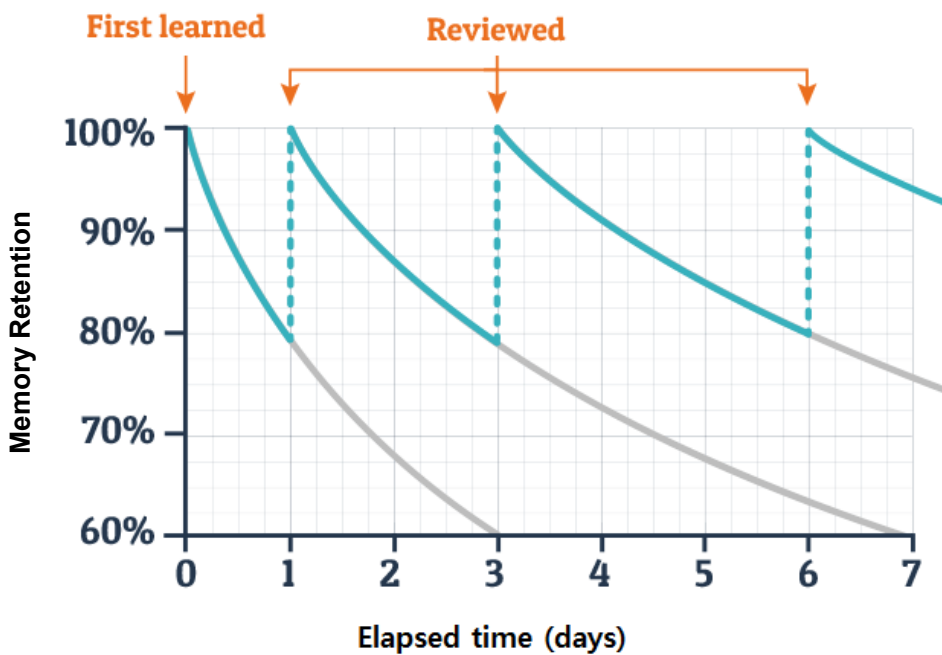
### During a 1 Hour revision session

Spacing out your revision helps you remember more over time. Three short sessions (e.g. 3 × 20 minutes) are **more effective** than one long hour of cramming.



## The Ebbinghaus Forgetting Curve

### Typical Forgetting Curve for Newly Learned Information



This curve shows how quickly we forget information if we don't review it!

- Reviewing material **3–4 times over a week** can boost recall to **85% or more**.
- Cramming might help short-term memory, but spaced learning helps long-term retention - especially useful for end-of-year or public exams.

# ASSESSMENTS



In senior school, we don't expect you to score close to 100% - and that's a good thing! If you were, it would mean we're not challenging you enough.

Assessments are designed to help you learn, grow, and develop, not to define your ability. Mistakes aren't failures - they're valuable clues that show us where to focus next.

What matters most is how you respond to feedback and the steps you take afterwards. Your score is just one part of the picture; your effort, reflection, and progress are what truly count.

## Remember:

- Learning is a journey, not a race.
- Improvement over time is more important than perfection.
- Asking for help is a strength, not a weakness.

And if you're ever unsure about what to do next, your teachers are here to guide and support you ***every step of the way.***

# REVISION TOP TIPS



## The 3-Step Revision Technique

This method can improve recall by **up to 300%**:

### 1. Review

Do a quick read-through of the topic.

Time: 20 minutes

### 2. Transform

Turn the information into a mind map, diagram, summary notes, or essay.

Time: 20 minutes

### 3. Test

Quiz yourself or answer exam-style questions.

Time: 20 minutes

## Revise Smart

How you revise matters just as much as how long you revise. Here's a rough guide to how much you might retain using different techniques:

**10%** of what you **read**

**20%** of what you **hear**

**30%** of what you **see**

**50%** of what you **see and hear**

**70%** of what you **say and write**

**90%** of what you **do or teach**

## Make Your Revision Active

- Don't just read - **highlight, annotate, and summarise** in your own words.
- Teach someone else - explaining a topic boosts recall and helps you spot gaps in your understanding.
- Use flashcards, quizzes, and diagrams to make learning interactive.



# Revision Tips Based on How the Brain Works



## 1. Stay Motivated

- Build in small rewards at the end of each revision session.
- Add a visual reminder of your goal - a car, an A-grade certificate, or a beach photo - to your planner, locker, or bedroom wall.

## 2. Revise in Three Stages (20 Minutes Each)

- Review the topic.
- Transform it into a mind map, diagram, or concise notes.
- Test yourself on what you've learned.

## 3. Use Mind Maps

- Mind maps can double your recall, especially when you use colour and images.
- Pin them up on your walls - every glance reinforces memory.

## 4. Beat the Forgetting Curve

- Without review, up to 60% of what you revise may be lost after just two days.
- Review briefly after one day, one week, and one month to keep knowledge fresh.

## 5. Choose the Right Revision Space

- Avoid revising in your bedroom - your brain associates it with sleep.
- Aim for a quiet, distraction-free space that mimics exam conditions.

## 6. Know What You Need to Know

- Print out your exam specifications or schemes of work.
- Tick off topics as you revise them.

## **7. Create a Weekly Revision Timetable**

- Start by blocking out times you can't revise, then fill in the rest.
  - Be realistic and flexible.
- 

## **8. Break Information into Chunks**

- Avoid revising from long paragraphs.
  - Use bullet points, diagrams, and headings to make content manageable.
- 

## **9. Keep Your Phone Away**

- Even one glance can distract your brain for up to 10 minutes.
  - Put it in another room or use focus apps if needed.
- 

## **10. Take Regular Short Breaks**

- Short, frequent breaks help your brain reset and absorb information better.
- 

## **11. Avoid Music While Revising**

- Especially music with lyrics - it competes for your brain's attention.
  - If needed, opt for instrumental or white noise.
- 

## **12. Use Past Papers and Mark Schemes**

- Practise applying your knowledge in exam-style questions.
  - Use mark schemes to understand how answers are scored.
- 

## **13. Test Yourself Under Exam Conditions**

- Time yourself and work without notes.
  - Focus on how to structure answers the way examiners expect.
- 

## **14. Use Acronyms and Mnemonics**

- Create memory aids like BIDMAS or Richard Of York Gave Battle In Vain.
  - Make them quirky - the more unusual, the more memorable.
- 

## **15. Start with Your Weakest Topics**

- Tackle the hardest areas first to give yourself more time to improve.
- 

## **16. Teach What You've Learned**

- Explaining topics to others (even pets!) boosts recall to around 80%.

## 17. Rest and Reward

- Celebrate milestones with small treats - it keeps motivation high.
- 

## 18. Revise with a Friend

- Test each other using flash cards or quick quizzes.
  - Speak for one minute on a topic, then ask each other questions.
  - Create funny stories or pictures to help facts stick.
- 

## 19. Say It Out Loud

- Speaking out loud helps you engage with the material and avoid skimming over details.
  - Record yourself reading key points and listen back.
  - Rewrite song lyrics to include revision content - and challenge your friends to do the same!
- 

## 20. Exercise Your Mind and Body

- Physical activity boosts brain function.
  - Try bouncing a ball while reciting facts or playing catch while reviewing topics.
- 

## 21. Identify Strengths and Weaknesses

- Focus on areas where you've lost marks or received feedback.
  - Ask teachers for insight.
  - Allocate more time to weaker topics in your timetable.
- 

## 22. Use Apps and Online Tools Wisely

- Try quiz apps, flash card tools, time trackers, and break reminders.
- But if they distract you more than help, ditch them.



### Final Tip:

**Try each technique at least once to discover what works best for you. Revision is personal - the key is to find strategies that help *your* brain learn most effectively.**

# MIND MAPPING



## What Is a Mind Map?

- A mind map is a **diagram** that shows how ideas link together.
- Each mind map focuses on **one topic** - written in the centre of the page.
- **Sub-topics and details** branch out from the centre.
- Use **short phrases or keywords** - not full sentences.
- Add **boxes, bubbles, or highlights** to make key points stand out.
- Use **colour and images** to make your mind map more engaging and easier to remember.

Mind maps are a powerful way to organise information visually. They help you understand topics more clearly, spot connections between ideas, and make revision more memorable.

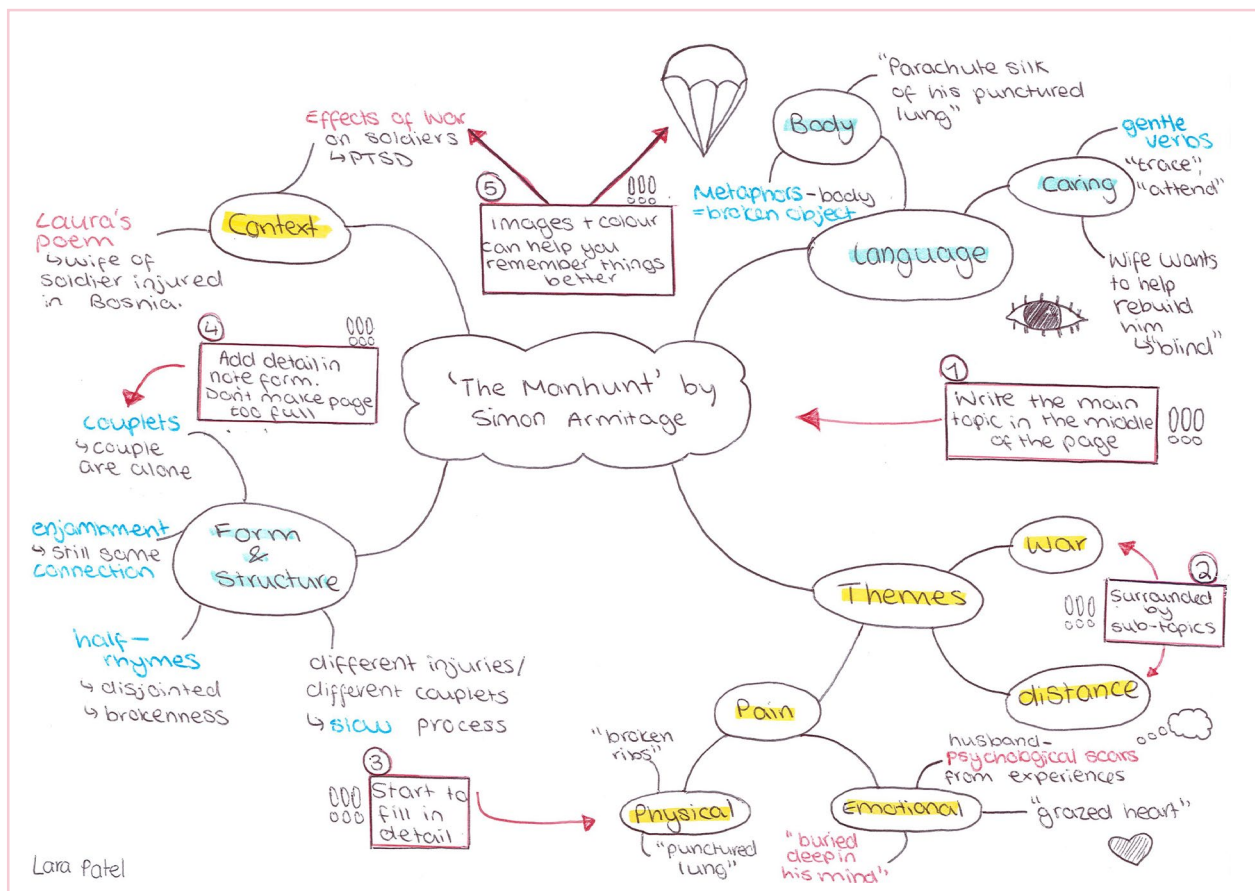
## Why Mind Maps Work for Revision

- They help you **visualise** information, which boosts memory and recall.
- Colour and images make facts **stick in your mind**.
- They help you **see links** between ideas, which is great for subjects like History, English, or Science.
- Mind maps encourage **active learning** - better than just reading notes.

## When to Use Mind Maps

- At **the start of revision** - summarise a topic using your notes and resources.
- **During revision** - pin them up in your study space so you see them often.
- To **test yourself** - draw a mind map from memory, then check and fill in gaps using a different colour.

Here is an example of a mind map for the poem 'The Manhunt' by Simon Armitage, created by Lara in Year 11. It isn't complete, but it gives you an idea of where to start.



## 💡 Mind Mapping Tips for Success

- Use **trigger words** - short, memorable phrases instead of full sentences.
- Include **images or symbols** - they're easier to remember than words.
- Use **colour coding** - e.g. one colour for definitions, another for examples.
- Keep it **clear and uncluttered** - too much detail can be overwhelming.
- Try digital tools like **MindMeister, Coggle, or Canva** if you prefer working online.

# FLOW CHARTS



## What Is a Flow Chart?

- A flow chart is a **diagram** that shows a process from beginning to end.
- It uses **boxes, arrows, and symbols** to show how each step leads to the next.
- You can include **words and images** to explain each stage clearly.
- Flow charts don't need to be fancy - they just need to be **clear and easy to follow**.

Flow charts are a great way to break down complex topics into clear, step-by-step processes. They help you visualise how things happen in order and are especially useful for subjects that involve sequences or systems.

## How to Create a Flow Chart

- **Start at the beginning** - write the first step at the top or centre and work downwards or outwards.
- Use **arrows** to show the direction of the process.
- Keep each step **short and concise** - just enough to jog your memory.
- Add **key points** or reminders next to each step if needed.
- Use **colour or shapes** to highlight important stages or decisions.

## When to Use Flow Charts

- Flow charts are perfect for subjects that involve processes, timelines, or cause-and-effect relationships. Here are some examples:

### *Business Studies*

Stages in a supply chain or decision-making process

### *History*

Events leading to a major event (e.g. the Great Depression)

### *Chemistry*

Steps in a practical experiment or chemical reaction

### *Geography*

Stages of erosion or the water cycle

### *Biology*

How food moves through the digestive system

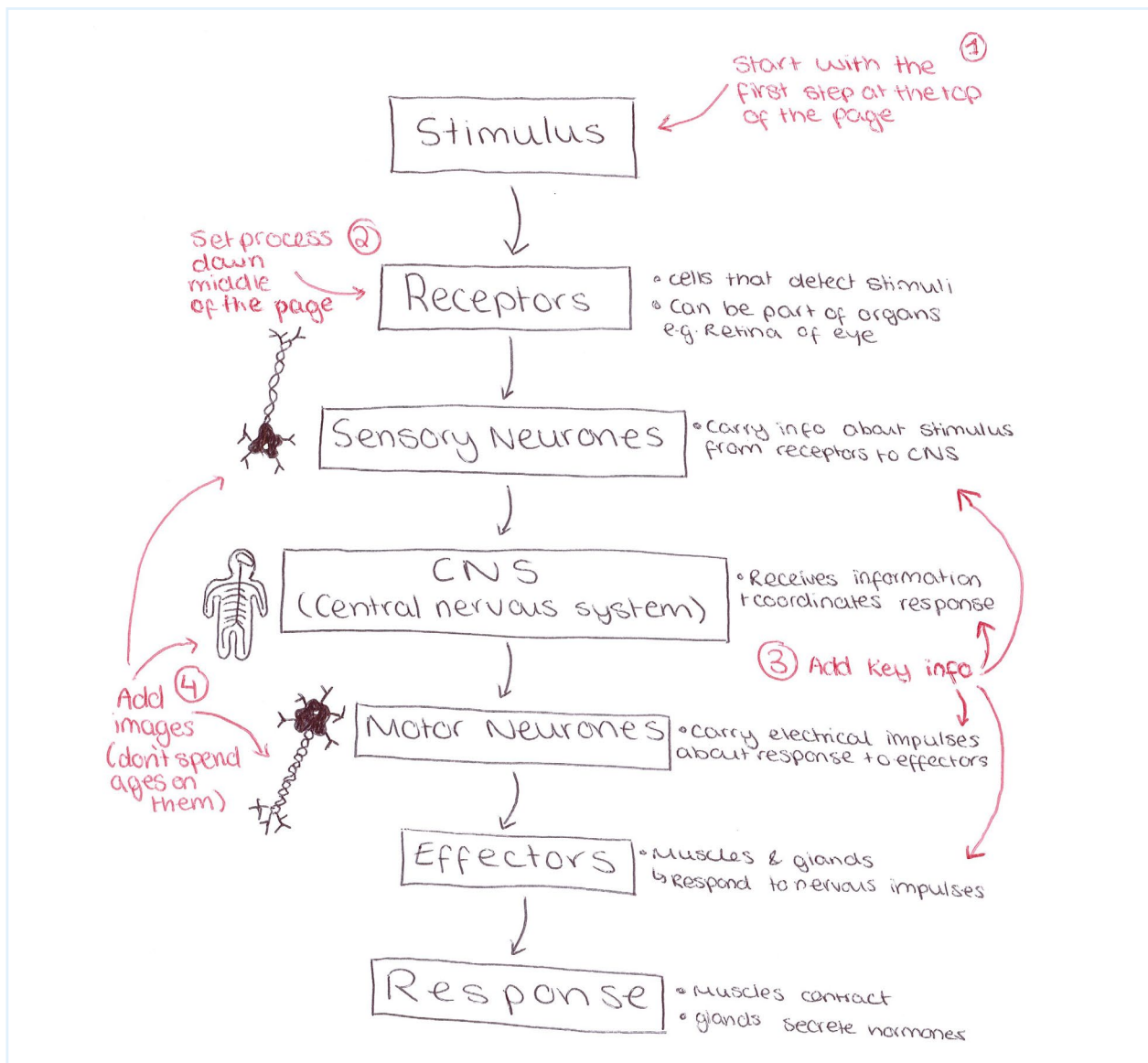
### *Computer Science*

Algorithms or coding logic

### *PSHE or Citizenship*

Decision-making or problem-solving models

This is an example of a flow chart for Biology, illustrating how the Central Nervous System responds to stimuli. It was created by Lara in Year 11. While it doesn't cover the entire topic, it provides a helpful starting point.



## Flow Chart Tips for Success

- Use **symbols consistently** - e.g. rectangles for steps, diamonds for decisions.
- Keep your layout **logical and easy to follow** - avoid clutter.
- Use **colour coding** to group related steps or highlight key ideas.
- Try **creating flow charts from memory** to test your understanding.
- Pin them up in your study space - regular exposure **helps reinforce** learning.

# FLASH CARDS



## What Are Flash Cards?

- Flash cards are **small cards** with a question or prompt on one side, and the answer or explanation on the other.
- You can use them to **test yourself, summarise topics, or condense key information**. They're especially useful for:
  - Important dates in History
  - Language vocabulary
  - Key terms and definitions
  - Formulae and rules
  - Labelled diagrams
- Flash cards are **less useful for complex processes** or extended explanations - use flow charts or mind maps for those.

Flash cards are one of the simplest - and most effective - revision tools. They help you test your knowledge, identify gaps, and reinforce key facts in a quick and portable way.

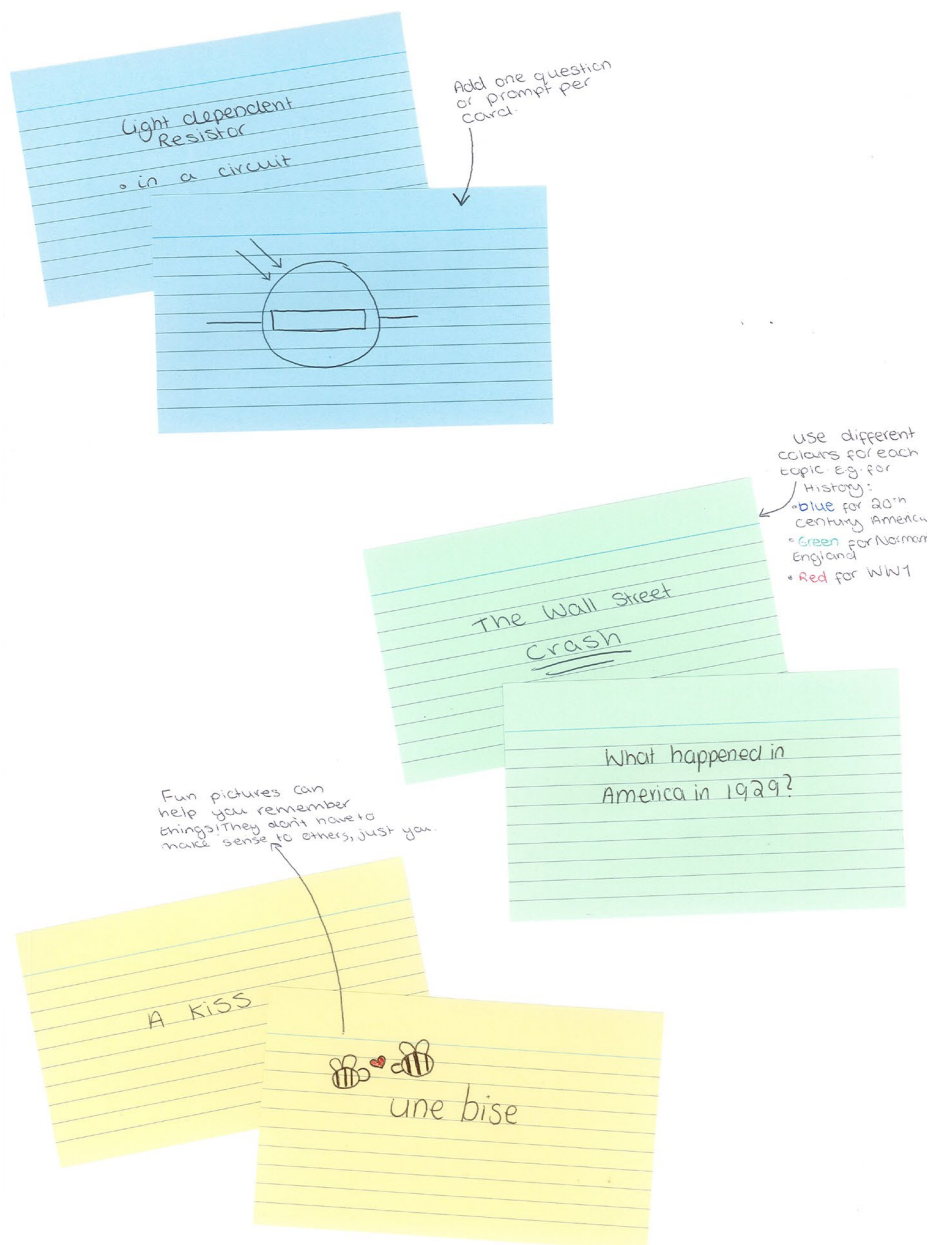
## Why Make Your Own?

- Creating your own flash cards helps you **actively engage** with the material.
- Picking out key information from your notes is part of the revision process.
- You can personalise them with **colour, images, or mnemonics** to make them more memorable.

## Smart Ways to Use Flash Cards

- **Say your answers out loud** - this helps reinforce memory and ensures you're not just skimming.
- **Test both directions** - e.g. English to French and French to English.
- **Group cards by confidence level** - test yourself more often on the ones you struggle with.
- **Use the *Leitner Method*** - move cards to different boxes based on how well you know them. Review harder ones more frequently. (Full details of this are on p32.)
- **Ask someone else to test you** - it removes the temptation to peek at the answer.
- **Use example questions** - write a question on one side and the answer on the other to simulate exam-style practice.

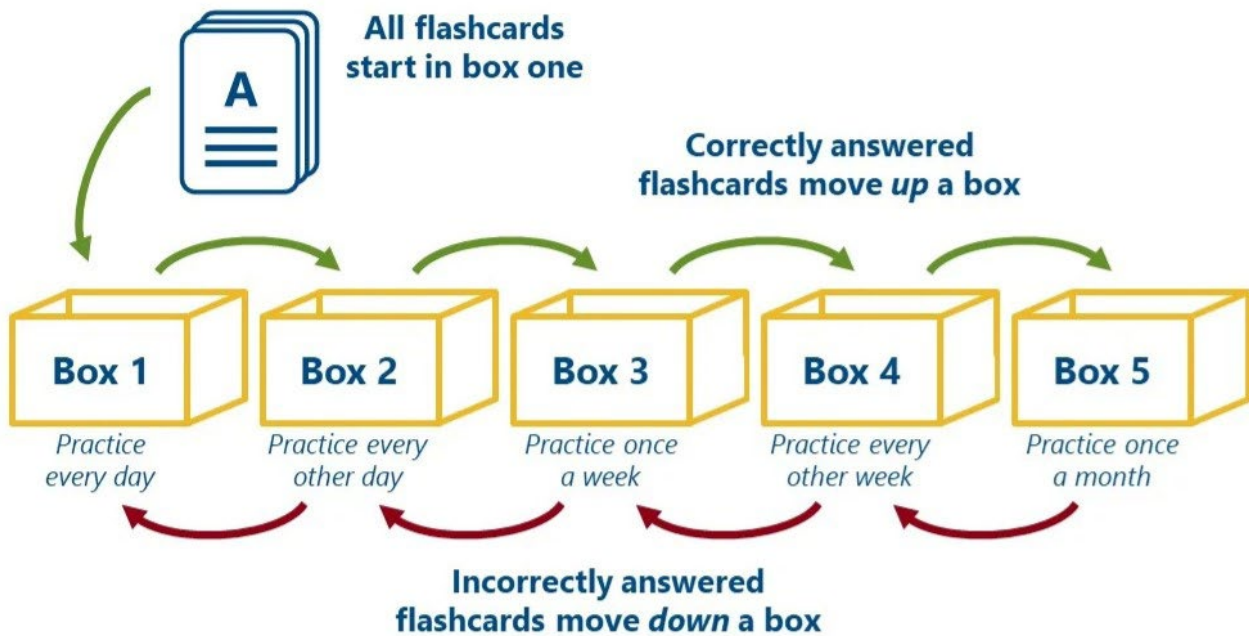
Here are a few examples of flashcards created by Lara in Year 11 (showing both front and back). They are designed to be clear and easy to read.



## Extra Tips for Success

- Keep your flash cards **short and focused** - one idea per card.
- Use **trigger words, symbols, or abbreviations** to save space.
- Add **visuals** where possible - diagrams and icons help with recall.
- Carry them with you - **revise on the bus, in a queue, or during short breaks.**
- Try digital flash card apps like **Quizlet, Anki, or Brainscape** if you prefer studying on your device.

# FLASH CARDS: THE LEITNER METHOD



## How It Works

- Sort your flash cards into **different boxes or piles** based on how well you know each one.
- Cards you answer correctly move to the next box (reviewed less often).
- Cards you struggle with stay in the first box (reviewed more frequently).
- This system uses **spaced learning**, which is proven to be more effective than cramming.

## Why It Works

- You spend more time on the **tricky stuff** and less time on what you've already mastered.
- It helps you **track your progress** and build confidence.
- It encourages **active recall** - testing your memory rather than just re-reading.
- It's a great way to **prepare for assessments** over time, not just the night before.

## Using the Leitner Method Effectively

Start early - you're usually given at least a week's notice before an assessment, so use that time wisely.

### Set up three boxes or piles:

BOX 1: Cards you **don't know** well - review daily

BOX 2: Cards you're **improving** on - review every 2–3 days

BOX 3: Cards you **know well** - review once a week

- Move cards between boxes based on how well you answer them.
- Keep your flash cards **short and focused** - one idea per card.
- Use **colour coding** or symbols to help you remember key points.
- Combine this method with other techniques like **mind maps, quizzes, or teaching someone else.**



### Extra Tips for Success

- **Say your answers out loud**  
- it helps reinforce memory.
- **Test both directions**  
- e.g. question to answer and answer to question.
- **Use a timer**  
- short, focused sessions are more effective than long ones.
- **Review regularly**  
- spaced repetition helps move information into long-term memory.
- **Track your progress**  
- seeing improvement boosts motivation.

# MEMORY TECHNIQUES

## Memory Techniques

Everyone learns differently - the key is to find memory techniques that work for you. Active learning strategies are far more effective than passive ones. They help move information from your short-term memory into your long-term memory, so it's there when you need it most - like in an exam.

## Active Learning Beats Passive Learning

Passive techniques (e.g. re-reading notes) don't help much with recall. Active techniques - like flash cards, blurting, and chunking - force your brain to retrieve information, which strengthens memory.

## Try These Memory Techniques:

### 1. Blurting

Blurting helps you see what you do and don't know.

- Read a text or watch a video on a topic.
- Write down everything you remember using one colour.
- Check your notes and add missing info in a different colour.
- This shows you what to revise and helps track progress.



### 2. Chunking

Chunking breaks large amounts of information into smaller, manageable groups.

- Group related items (e.g. characters by family, vocab by topic).
- Look for patterns in numbers or dates to reduce what you need to remember.

Examples:

#### THE FIRST WORLD WAR

- > Prince Franz Ferdinand is assassinated and war is declared – 1914
- > The Battle of the Somme – 1916
- > The signing of the Armistice – 1918

Number patterns here could help reduce the number of digits you need to remember from 12 to just 5.

$$1914 + 2 = 1916$$

$$1916 + 2 = 1918$$

#### THE SECOND WORLD WAR

- > 1939-1945

$$1939 = 3^0 3^2 3^1 3^2$$

The end of the war was in the same century.

$$1939-1945 \quad 1 + 3 = 4$$

$$1939-1945 \quad 9 - 4 = 5$$

### 3. Mnemonics

Mnemonics use the first letters of words to help you remember sequences.

#### Light Waves:

Radio, Microwaves, Infrared, Visible, Ultraviolet, X-rays, Gamma

e.g. → *Raccoons May Injure Very Unfortunate EX-Golfers*

#### Taxonomy of Living Things:

Domain, Kingdom, Phylum, Class, Order, Family, Genus, Species

e.g. → *Do Keep Ponds Clean Or Frogs Get Sick*

#### Roman Numerals:

I, V, X, L, C, D, M

e.g. → *I Value Xylophones Like Cows Dig Milk*



### 4. Storytelling

Turn facts into quirky stories to make them stick.

Example:

Oceanic and continental plates meet at destructive margins. The denser oceanic plate is forced into the mantle.

e.g. → *'Oceanic and Continental were wrestling brothers. One day, Continental shoved Oceanic into the mantle piece!'*

The more unusual the story, the more memorable it becomes!



### Top Tips for Memory Success

- **Repeat techniques regularly** - memory improves with practice.
- **Use colour, visuals, and movement** to engage your brain.
- **Teach someone else** - explaining boosts recall.
- **Mix techniques** - use flash cards, blurring, and mnemonics together.
- **Make it fun!** - the more you enjoy it, the more likely it is to stick.



# Learning to Learn Curriculum Routemap Years 7-9

## SKILLS

Our **Learning to Learn Curriculum** has been developed in conjunction with the World Economic Forum's *Top Skills of the Future* to equip students with techniques and strategies that will help them to learn most effectively. They can then draw from these tools as independent learners ready to handle the challenges of GCSEs, A levels and beyond.

Students will learn the importance of these skills whilst also understanding what they look like across the subjects they learn throughout their time at Francis Holland.

**Reflection**  
Reflect in relation to your learning, strengths and weaknesses.

**Critical Thinking**  
Analyse and evaluate your thinking to make a judgment on your learning and next steps.

**Creativity**  
Think creatively when tackling a problem. To think outside the box and take a risk.

**Communication**  
Communicate your thinking and learning both verbally and non verbally as well as actively listen to others.

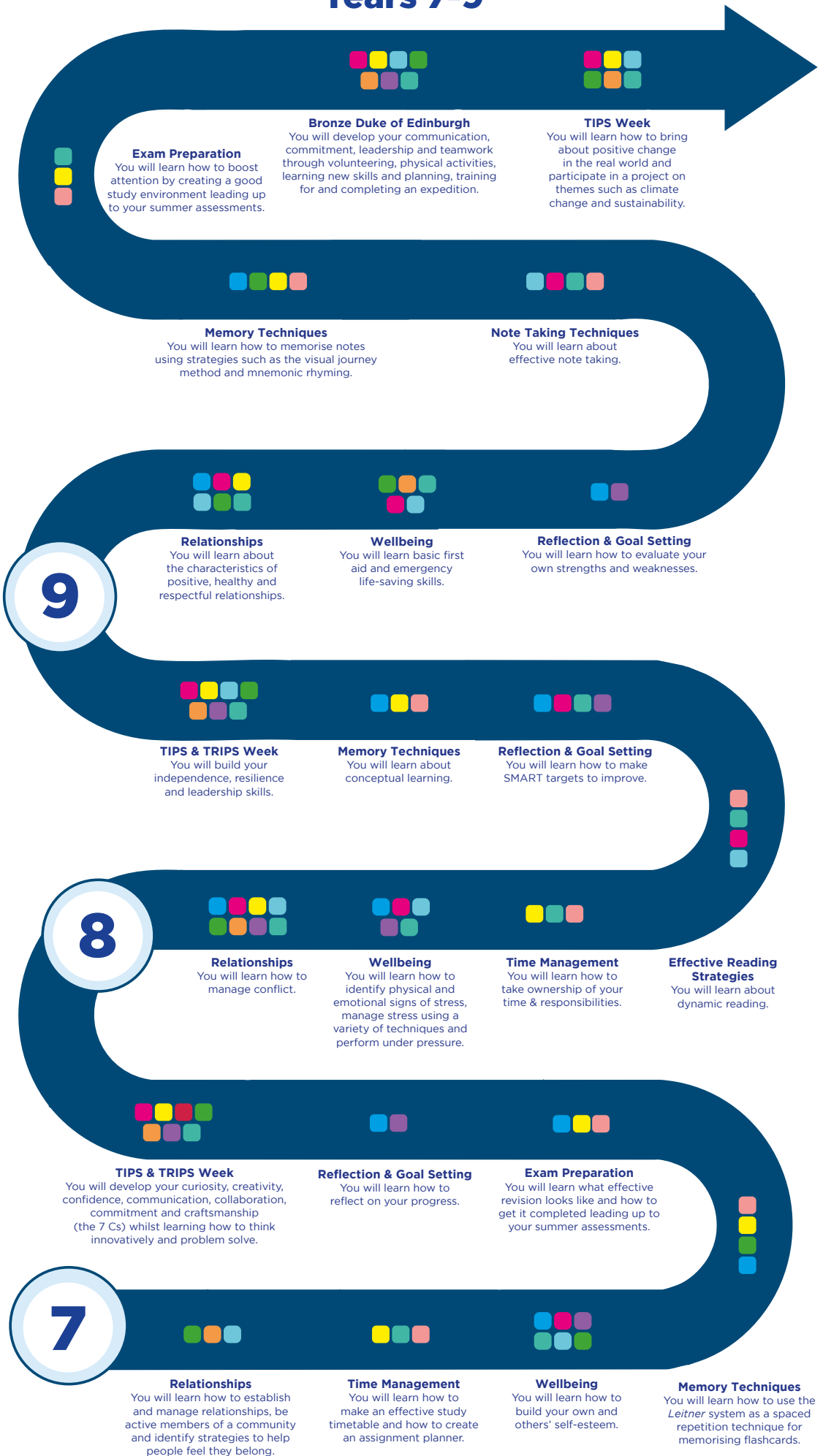
**Collaboration**  
Work effectively with your peers so that all feel valued and can succeed.

**Leadership**  
Demonstrate leadership through supporting others and working in groups.

**Resilience**  
Understand the importance of taking risks and learning from failure.

**Reasoning**  
Think logically about how to tackle a problem and make a balanced decision.

**Study and Learning Skills**  
Develop effective habits to manage time, take notes, read and listen actively, retain information, and approach assessments with confidence.





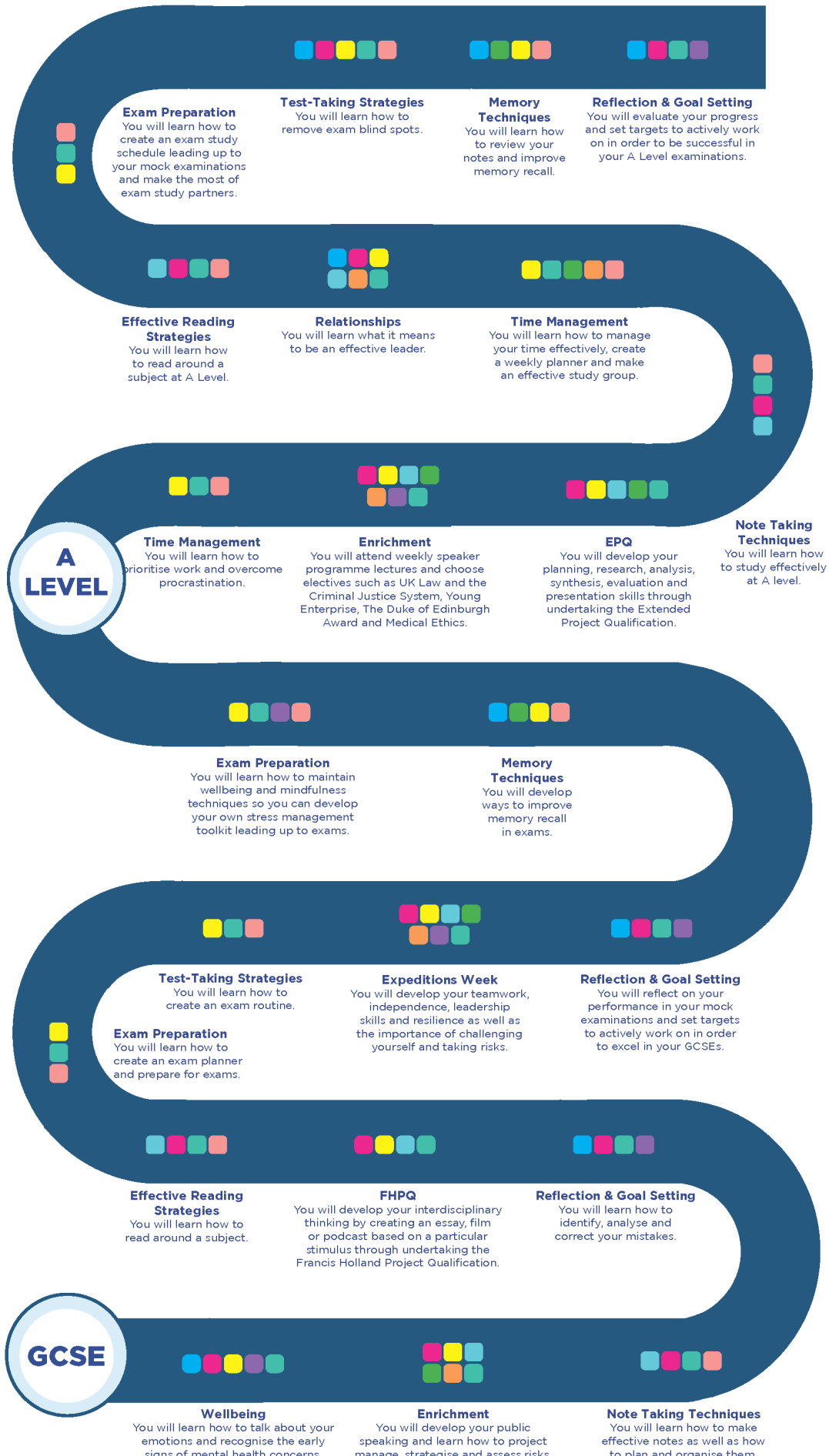
# Learning to Learn Curriculum Routemap GCSE and A-Level

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**FRANCIS HOLLAND**  
SLOANE SQUARE

39 Graham Terrace, London SW1W 8JF  
[www.fhs-sw1.org.uk](http://www.fhs-sw1.org.uk)

