

QEGS – How We Learn and Useful Revision Strategies

Parent and student information session



Aims of the session



To identify
common errors
with revision/study
approaches

To look at how we
learn and apply
this to revision
strategies.

What can I do as a parent to support my child?

- ☐ **Make sure your child eats well...** balanced diet is important to supporting your child during revision/exam season.
- ☐ Help your child get **enough sleep** – most teenagers need 8-10 hours
- ☐ Be flexible around exam time. When your child is revising all day, do not worry about household jobs left undone or untidy bedrooms. **Staying calm yourself can help.**
- ☐ Help them study - **Make sure your child has somewhere comfortable to study.** Ask them how you can support them with their revision.
- ☐ **Talk about exam nerves** - Remind your child that it's normal to feel anxious. Nervousness is a natural reaction to exams. The key is to put these nerves to positive use.
- ☐ Make time for treats - With your child, **think about rewards for doing revision** and getting through each exam. **Rewards do not need to be big or expensive.**



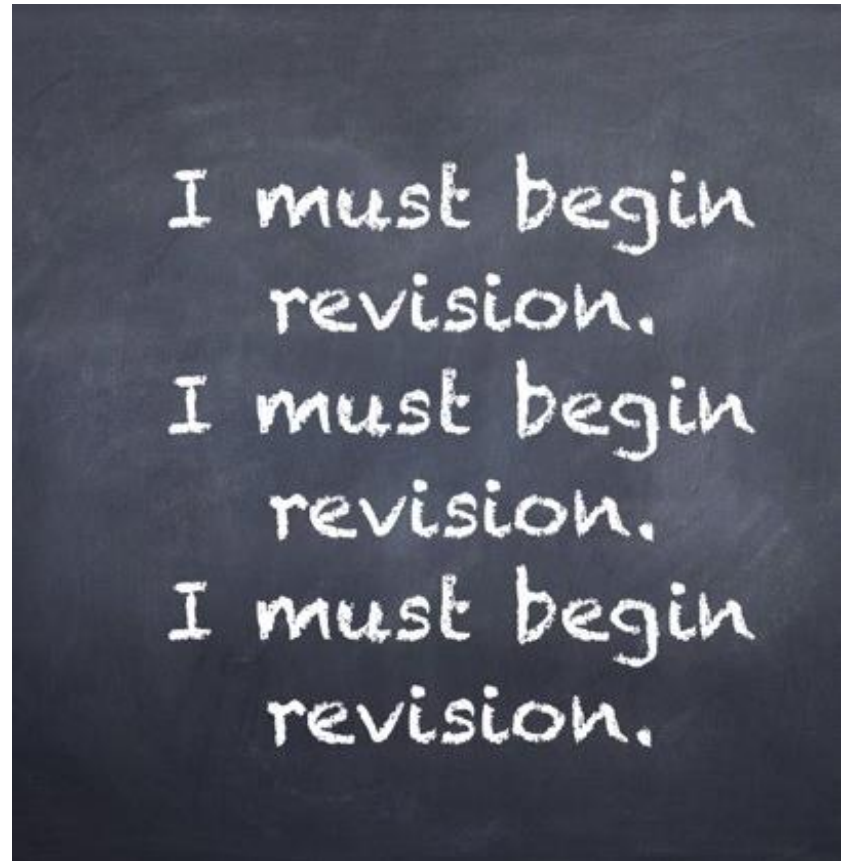
After School Library Sessions

- The library is open to Year 11s after school
- There are resources to help with revision e.g. past papers
- Subject staff will drop in to support
- Can give a productive environment for students



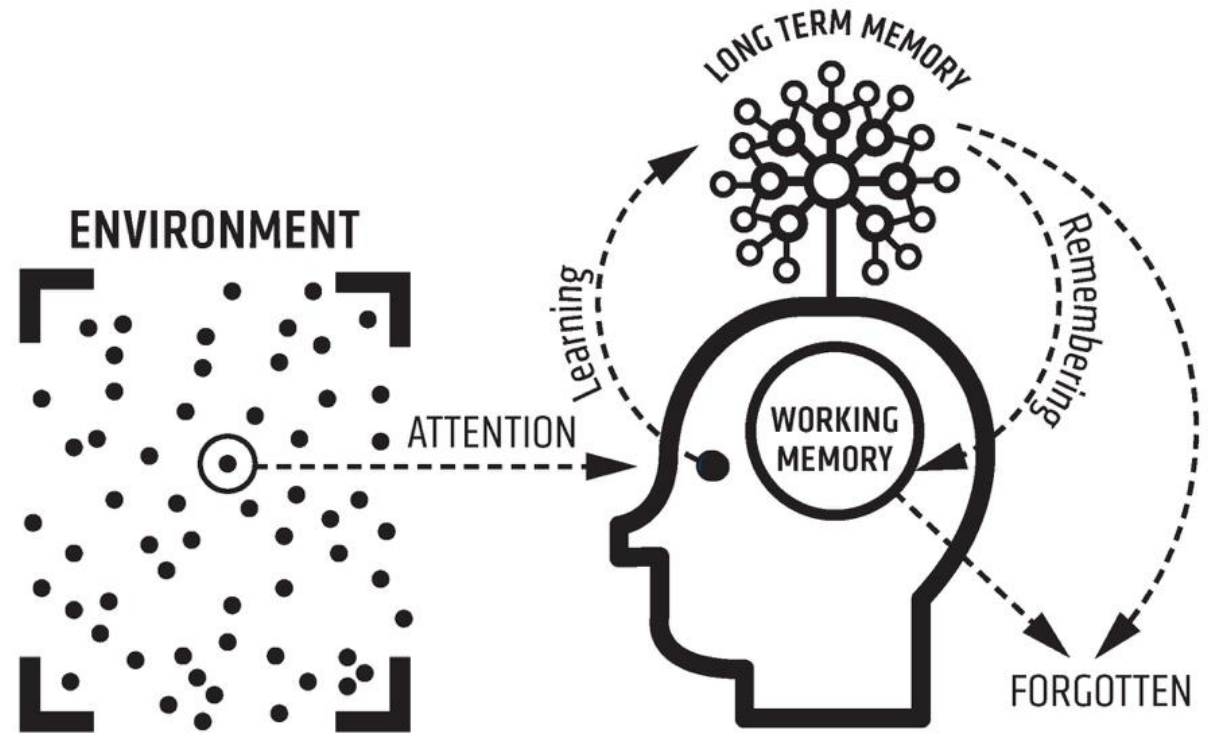
Common revision mistakes...

- Reading over notes
- Highlighting/underlining
- Not enough silent work or attention given to a task
- Writing out notes/copying from a textbook
- Lack of practice – e.g. not using practice papers



So how do we learn? How can we revise effectively?

In recent years, there has been lots of research around the science of learning and how we learn and retain information.



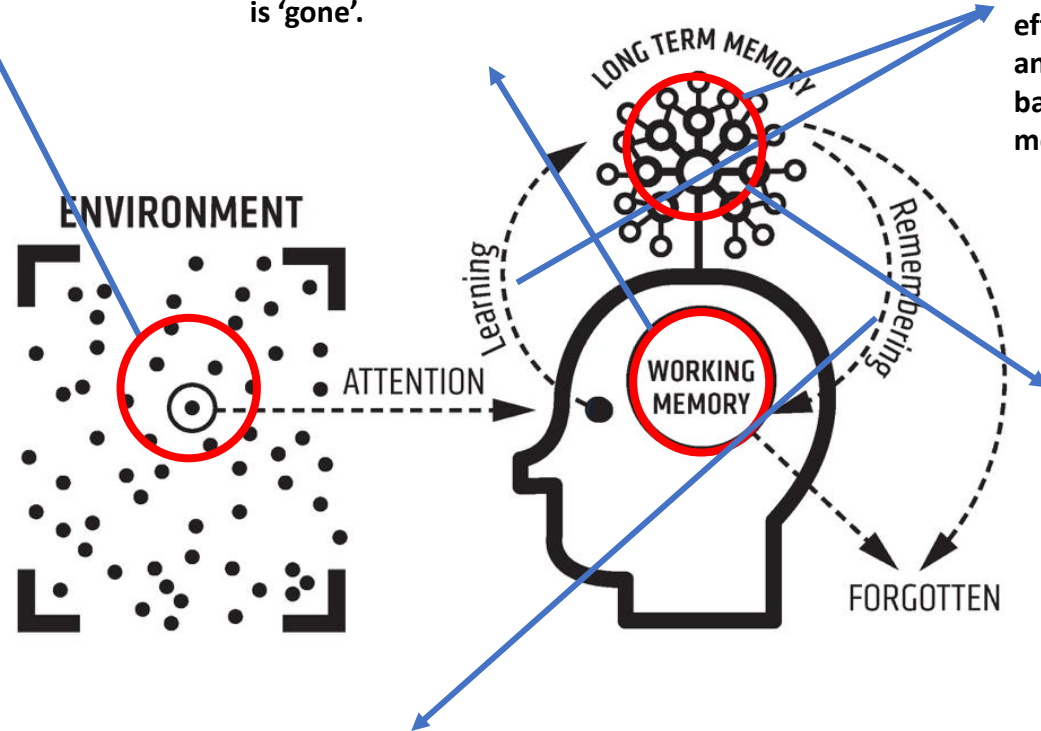
Attention means we acknowledge new information and it's transferred into our working memory.

Finite. We can only absorb a limited amount of information here – up to 30 seconds before it is 'gone'.

Information is processed into our long-term memory through learning. This is effectively unlimited, and we can retrieve it back in our working memory as needed.

Information in our long-term memory is organised into schema (links and connections with prior knowledge).

If we undertake enough retrieval practice, generating the information in our long-term memory, it increases a level of fluency.



Key principles of revision that works!

1. Retrieval Practice
2. Spacing and Interleaving
3. Deliberate Practice
4. Dual Coding
5. Habits and Routines



Retrieval Practice

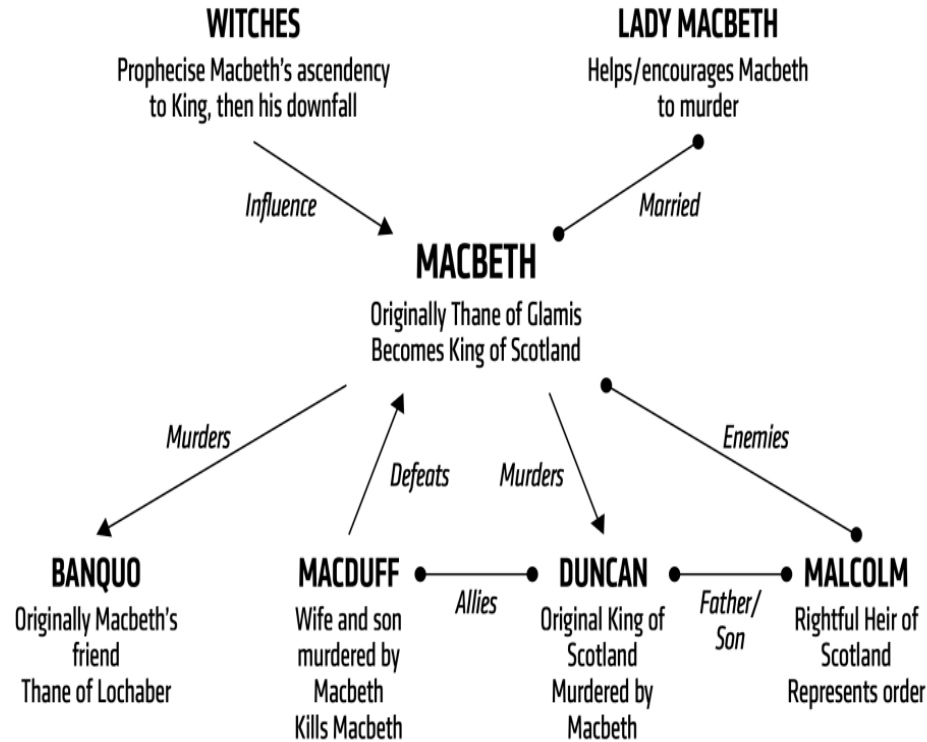
It is the action of actively retrieving knowledge that boosts learning and strengthens memory. **It means trying to remember previously learned information as opposed to simply re-reading it.**

Examples

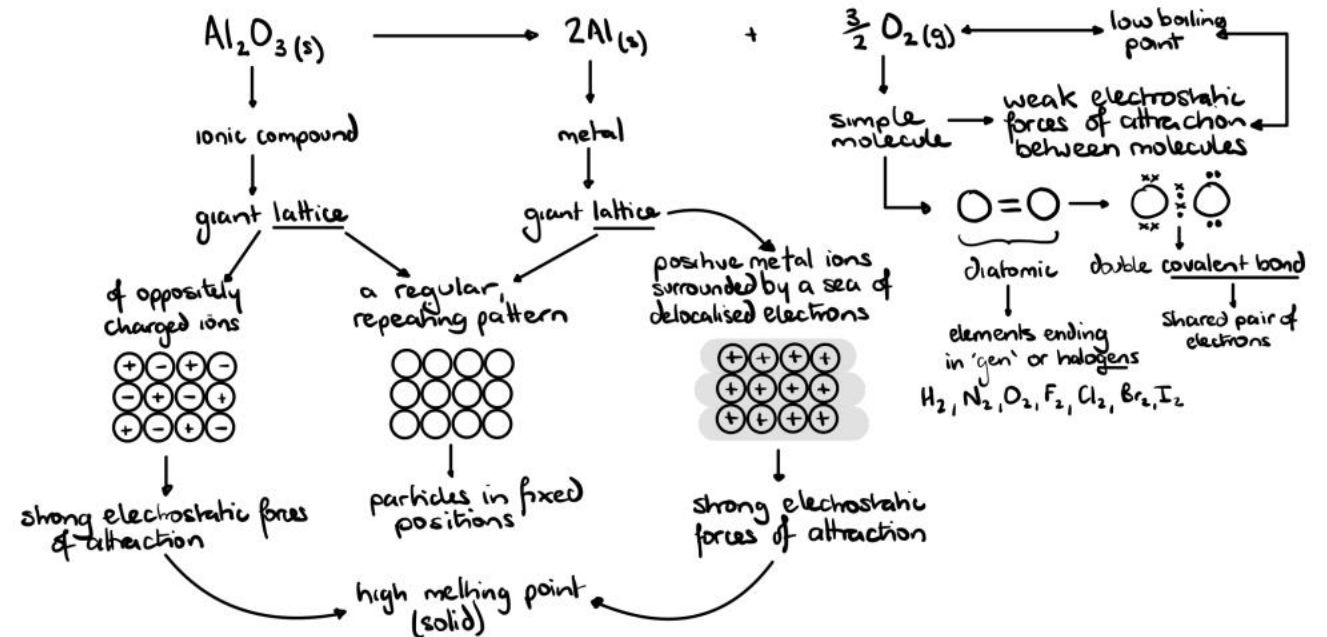
- Knowledge quizzing and low stakes testing.
- Listing/brain dumping your knowledge
- Multiple choice tests.
- Knowledge/mind-maps – create from memory
- Completing past paper questions or practice answers.
- Answering verbal questions asked by teacher/peers/parents.
- Creating flashcards or revision materials where you can ‘test’ yourself.



Example Knowledge/Mind maps



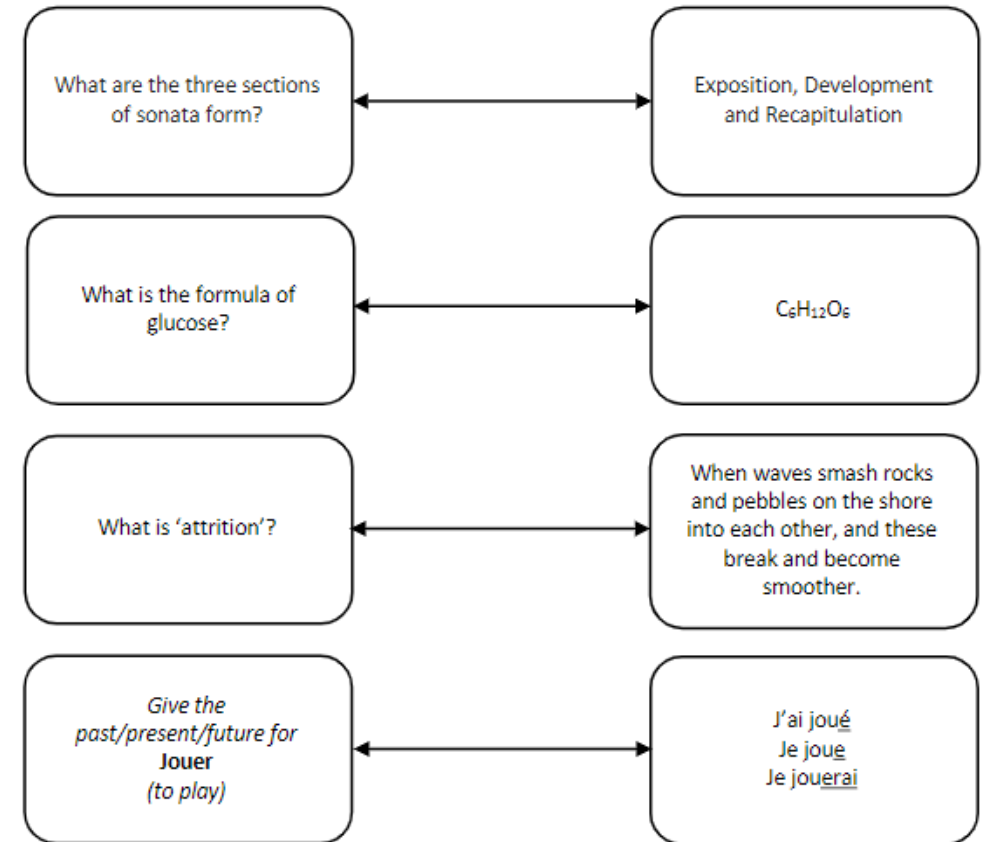
(Taken from Sweller's Cognitive Load Theory in Action by Oliver Lovel)



Flashcards!

An effective flashcard may include the following (*in each subject they will be used in a different way*):

- ❑ A key term/key word with definition on the back.
- ❑ A key date with the event on the back.
- ❑ A key equation with its use in practice on the back.
- ❑ A past paper question and a model answer



Leitner System

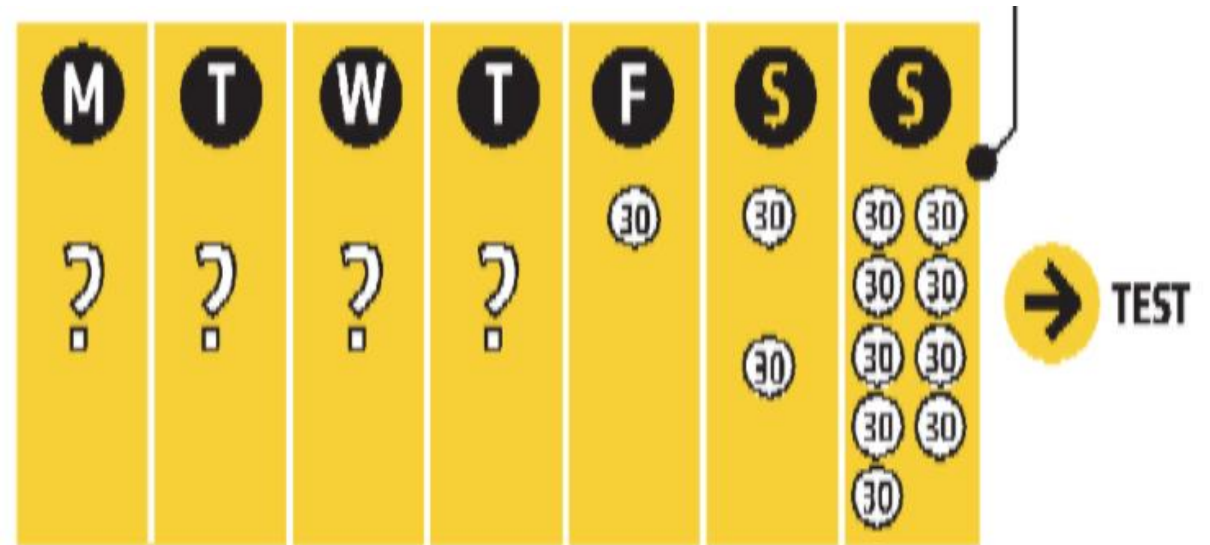
- Test yourself on the flashcards in the Box 1 pile. **If you get the answer correct on the flashcard, move it to the Box 2 pile. If you get it incorrect, it stays in Box 1.**
- **Twice a week, test yourself on the flashcards in Box 2.** If you get the answer correct on the flashcard, move it to the Box 3 pile.
- If you get it incorrect, it stays in Box 2. The aim is to get all of the flashcards to Box 3.

BOX 1:	BOX 2:	BOX 3:
Every day	Twice a week	Once a week

Spacing and Interleaving

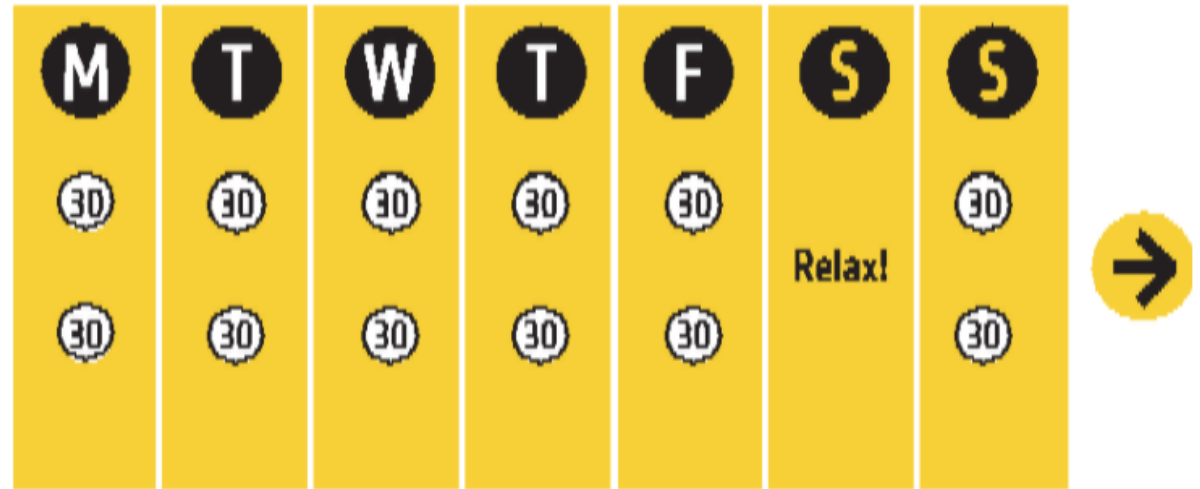
Spacing out your revision into smaller chunks over a period of time helps you to remember the material better and ensures you are less stressed with your revision.

Imagine you have a test one week and you have 5 hours to prepare for it broken down into 30min chunks... very often that process looks like the below diagram.



A better strategy...

Instead of cramming all your revision into one or two sessions, a better strategy is to space out your revision.



Interleaving

Interleaving involves switching between ideas and topics during a study session. This ensures that you are not studying one idea or topic for too long. Mixing up your revision and chunking it supports learning and strengthens your memory.

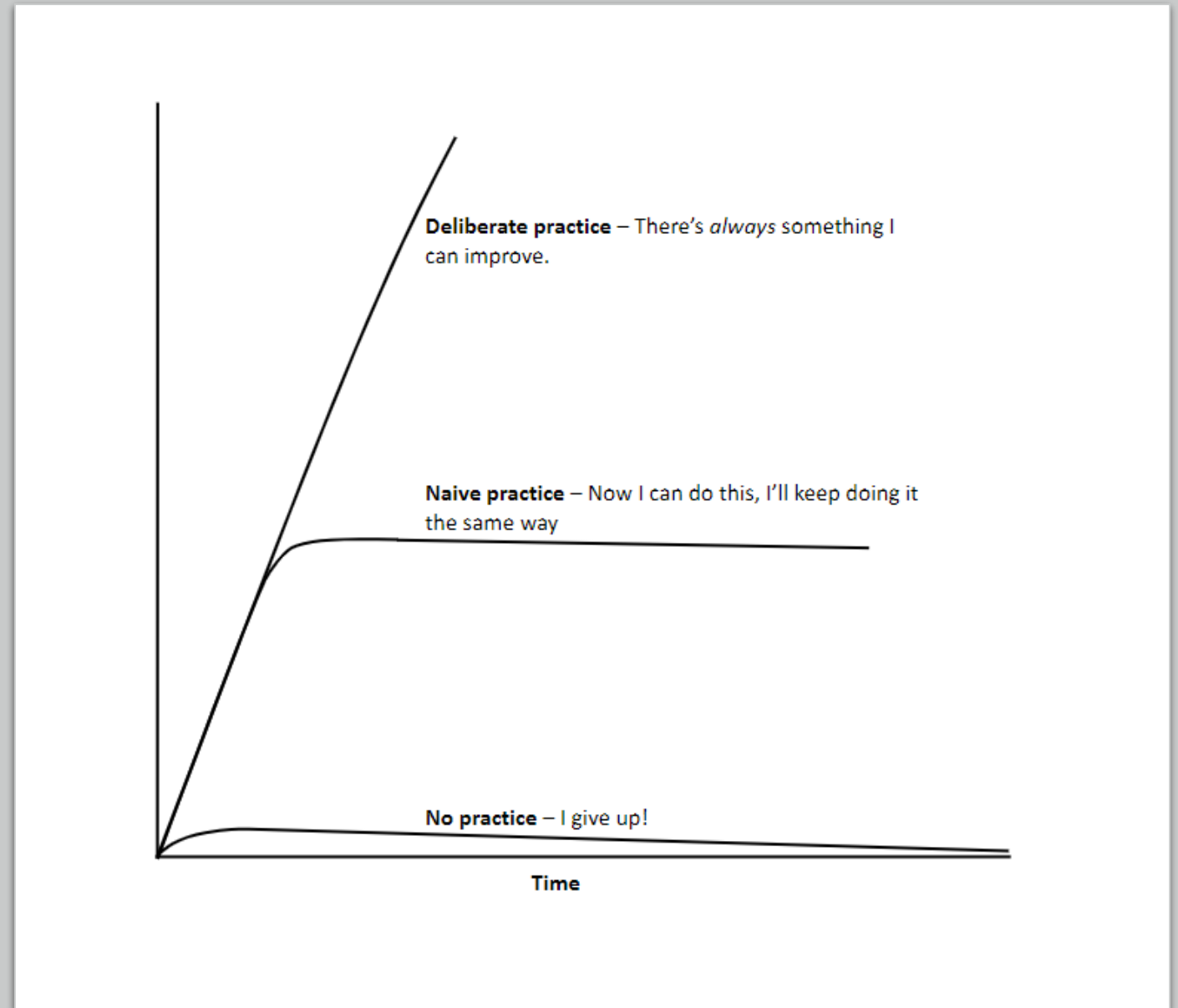
M	T	W	T	F
MACBETH	AN INSPECTOR CALLS	CREATIVE WRITING	UNSEEN POETRY	JEKYLL AND HYDE
MACBETH	AN INSPECTOR CALLS	CREATIVE WRITING	UNSEEN POETRY	JEKYLL AND HYDE
MACBETH	AN INSPECTOR CALLS	CREATIVE WRITING	UNSEEN POETRY	JEKYLL AND HYDE

M	T	W	T	F
MACBETH	UNSEEN POETRY	AN INSPECTOR CALLS	JEKYLL AND HYDE	CREATIVE WRITING
AN INSPECTOR CALLS	JEKYLL AND HYDE	CREATIVE WRITING	MACBETH	UNSEEN POETRY
CREATIVE WRITING	MACBETH	UNSEEN POETRY	AN INSPECTOR CALLS	JEKYLL AND HYDE

Deliberate Practice

Practice **requires effort** if it's to have an impact.

Revision shouldn't keep you in your comfort zone, you need to be thinking hard and identifying your own areas for development. **Avoid simply revising topics you enjoy.**



What kind of things can I do?

- ☐ Past paper questions – know your exam board!
- ☐ Summarising
- ☐ Self-testing/parental testing of flash cards
- ☐ Create spider diagrams of key information
- ☐ Teach someone else – e.g. friend/parent



Pomodoro Technique



Pick a task..



Set the timer (25 mins)..



Get to work..



Stop when time up..



Record progress..



Take a 5 minute break..



Get back to work..



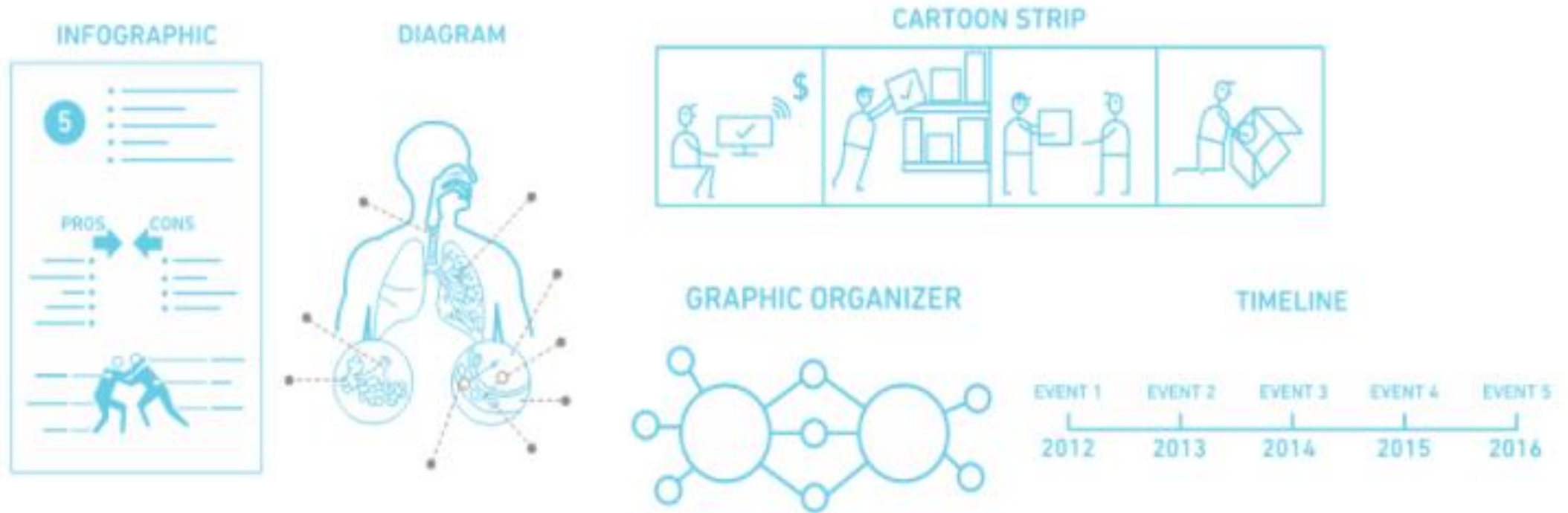
After the 4th pomodoro,
take a longer break..



Continue until calling it
a day..

Dual Coding

When reviewing something you have learnt, **combining words and pictures can be powerful.**





Habits and Routines

1. Ensure you have a **suitable space** for revision – desk, uncluttered, away from distractions.
2. **Start small and build it up** – regular chunks of revision time, better than cramming!
3. Create a **revision timetable** – inform your parents/do it together and stick to it!
4. Use **exam specifications/checklists** teachers have given to ensure your revision is targeted and covers everything.
5. You could ensure that there is a **reward at the end** of your revision time – ‘If I do this then I can do.....’
6. **NO PHONES!!** Or anything else that could distract you e.g. music playing, TV, Computer games...

GCSE Revision Timetable							
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Session 1 (30 mins)	English Lit	Science	No revision	Option 2	English Lit	Science	Option 2
Session 2 (30 mins)	Maths	Option 1	No revision	English Lang	Maths	Option 1	English Language
Session 3 (30 mins)	RE	Language	No revision	Option 3	RE	Language	Option 3
20:30	Free time	Free time	No revision	Free time	Free time	Free time	Free time
21:30	Bed	Bed	Bed	Bed	Bed	Bed	Bed

Well-being during revision and exam period

The exam period can be stressful that is why it's very important that you revise & prepare as this can help to reduce exam anxiety. In addition to revising there are other strategies you can do to look after your **mental & physical health**.



Well-being Tips

Eat. Diet is important so don't neglect it during the exam period. Don't skip meals, stay consistent with a healthy balance of meals & stay hydrated.

Sleep. Staying up late to revise is a bad idea! Sleep deprivation can have a very negative impact on concentration, performance & memory.

Exercise. Take regular breaks from revision with exercise. Take part in a sport you enjoy, go for a walk or any activity that is active & part of your daily routine.

Relax. Relax during the exam period? Yes! It is essential that you do make time to switch off & have a break. Watch Netflix, read or talk to friends.

'Marginal Gains':



*'Making small improvements
that add up to a large
significant improvement
overall'*

'Control the controllables'.

QEGS potential 'Marginal Gains'

- Being on time.
- 'Actively listening'. *Simply* complying isn't enough.
- 'Thinking Hard' in lessons.
- Organising your time in school effectively.
- Eating a proper breakfast and drinking water during the day.
- Getting at least 8 hours of sleep a night.
- Thinking about focus – what could distract you and how do I remove this?



Final Summary

1. Create a schedule/revision timetable and stick to it!
2. Attend revision sessions/the library after school
3. Know your exam boards and have a copy of the exam specifications for each subject
4. Use revision strategies that WORK! Don't just read over notes!
5. Lots of practice!!
6. Ask your teacher(s) if you are stuck!

