



SKEGNESS ACADEMY



**Let's Get Set
for the
Examinations**

Most of us worry about examinations. However, with a little planning and some support you can be well-prepared and take them in your stride.

Remember: friends, family and staff are all on your side. We want to help you to prepare. Read through this booklet, ideally with your parents/carers, and take control of the situation. If you want to talk through how to get started speak to your tutor, your Head of Year/Deputy Head of Year or any other member of staff.

Myths:

No matter what I do, I will not improve my grades

False – research shows that people who work harder achieve more

I'll be fine if I just revise the night before the exam

No – if you just read the night before you forget 80% of it

If I revise now I'll forget it all by June

Actually you won't 'unlearn' it – it will just need refreshing later

No-one else is revising

Want a bet?

What should I do?

Having the right attitude to revision will make a massive difference to how successful you will be.

Expect the best of yourself

Resolve to give yourself the best opportunity you can to reach your target grades by making revision your number one priority.

In particular:

- Attend** school regularly and use every lesson as a chance to learn
- Take up every offer of **extra help** – the teachers are a resource for you
- Revise** effectively at home
- Make sure you can revise **'on the go'**



You are going to be tested in **examinations** so ensure you know:

The **subject title** and **awarding body** (examination board) for each course
How many examinations you will sit and how long they last
What each examination will assess and how

Check you know your **target grade** and your **current grade**
Get a list of all the ideas you need to understand for the examination (in a form which makes sense to you)

You can use this to log onto the awarding body websites and find lots of past papers and answers. This should be a key part of your revision. The awarding bodies are:

AQA www.aqa.org.uk Edexcel www.edexcel.com OCR www.ocr.org.uk WJEC www.wjec.co.uk

Get Planning

Get the Conditions Right

Find a good place to work – ideally it should be **quiet** and **uncluttered** even if it means working in the local library or camping out at your gran's house a few nights a week.

Get rid of **distractions** – phone, ipad, TV, ipod, and laptop (you won't need it all the time). Do not let Facebook, Twitter or anything else derail you.

Talk to family and friends about how they can **help** – by leaving you in peace? By testing you? Ask them to **encourage** you (and to nag you if necessary). Perhaps they can help by reducing your chores or paying for some revision materials.

Just by showing an interest they can help enormously.

Put up notices around the house - **'I will revise today'**.

Your Revision Plan

This is extremely **important** and should be one of the first things you do.

Write down all the subjects you have to revise. Plan to spend most time on those subjects which need to be improved – either because you need a better grade or because you find them tough.

In the evening you might fit in **2 or 3** subjects.

If it isn't a school day you might make time for perhaps **3 or 4** subjects - remember for holidays and weekends that most people find their mind is freshest in the morning.

Remember:

- to include extra time for homework
- **never** work for **more than 45 minutes** without a short break
- to give yourself a **small reward** for meeting your targets
- you will need to **change/update** your timetable from week to week as your situation changes and as you approach each examination
- build in some **flexibility** with sessions you can allocate to any priority
- include **leisure/activity** time to take exercise and clear your mind
- use **colours**

An example of a simple revision plan for one school week:

w/b 4 Feb	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
4.00pm	Homework	Homework	Homework	Homework	Activity
5.00pm	Mathematics	English	French	Science	History
6.00pm	Eat/Leisure	Eat/Leisure	Eat/Leisure	Eat/Leisure	Eat/Leisure
7.00pm	Science	History	Mathematics	English	Geography
8.00pm	Activity	Geography	Activity	French	Activity

Note:

Each hour block assumes you take a **break** for the last **15 minutes**. You will need to add plans for the **weekend**.

Also make an **examination timetable** and write down beside each subject the date and time of the examination.

Why not ask your friends, parents, tutor and/or Head of Year to review your revision timetable?

Finally:

Display your timetable prominently – on the fridge?

Tick off each session you actually complete

There are a number of **websites** which offer advice on revision – check with your teacher to see what they recommend.

So you have planned your time, what do you do?

For any idea, you must revise consider the following:

Gather

Gather your information together – this might be your own books/notes, revision guides, text books and particular websites.



Read

Read through your notes carefully **highlighting/underlining** key phrases and ideas. If you don't understand anything speak to your teacher – don't take 'no' for an answer.

Summarise

Convert your **highlighted** key phrases and ideas into brief notes. Ideally this might include simple diagrams, mind maps or concept maps. Write down any crucial questions you can anticipate and draft model answers.

Display

Pin these short notes up around your home in places where you'll see them. Displays of mind maps can be particularly helpful.

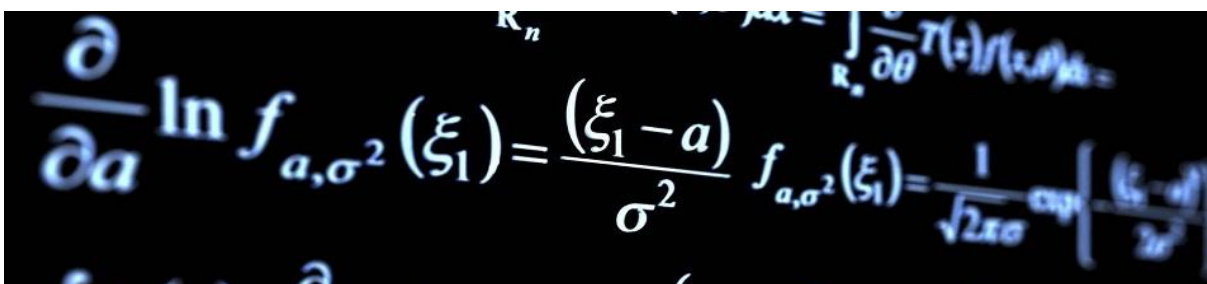
Learn

Prepare small flash cards which have titles/questions on one side and your notes on the other. Carry them with you and test yourself when you get a few spare moments – in the lunch queue, at the bus stop. Get friends to test you and then you test them.

Some websites allow you to generate flash cards electronically and use as an app on your phone.

Consider recording yourself reading out notes for important ideas and then listen to them whenever you can. Try to talk about the idea then play the clip to see if you were right.

Mnemonics/memory techniques can help you learn some ideas.



Test yourself

Testing yourself helps to identify areas where you need to work more. We will provide you with past papers. Get together with your friends and test each other on the key facts which you need to know – *eg French vocabulary, history names & dates, biology terms; mathematics formulae etc.*

- ❖ Check your understanding using the question section of revision guides.
- ❖ Use any subject specific websites to test yourself.
- ❖ Use as many past papers as possible – make sure your answers are checked.
- ❖ Once an idea is sorted leave it – you can refresh it occasionally in the future.

Revision guides can be useful but it is advisable stick to one - preferably the one your subject teacher recommends. You can use revision guides to test yourself and provide a focus for your revision but remember they are unlikely to cover everything you may need to know.

There are lots of good **websites** offering subject specific content. Talk to your teacher about which ones they recommend.

Finally:



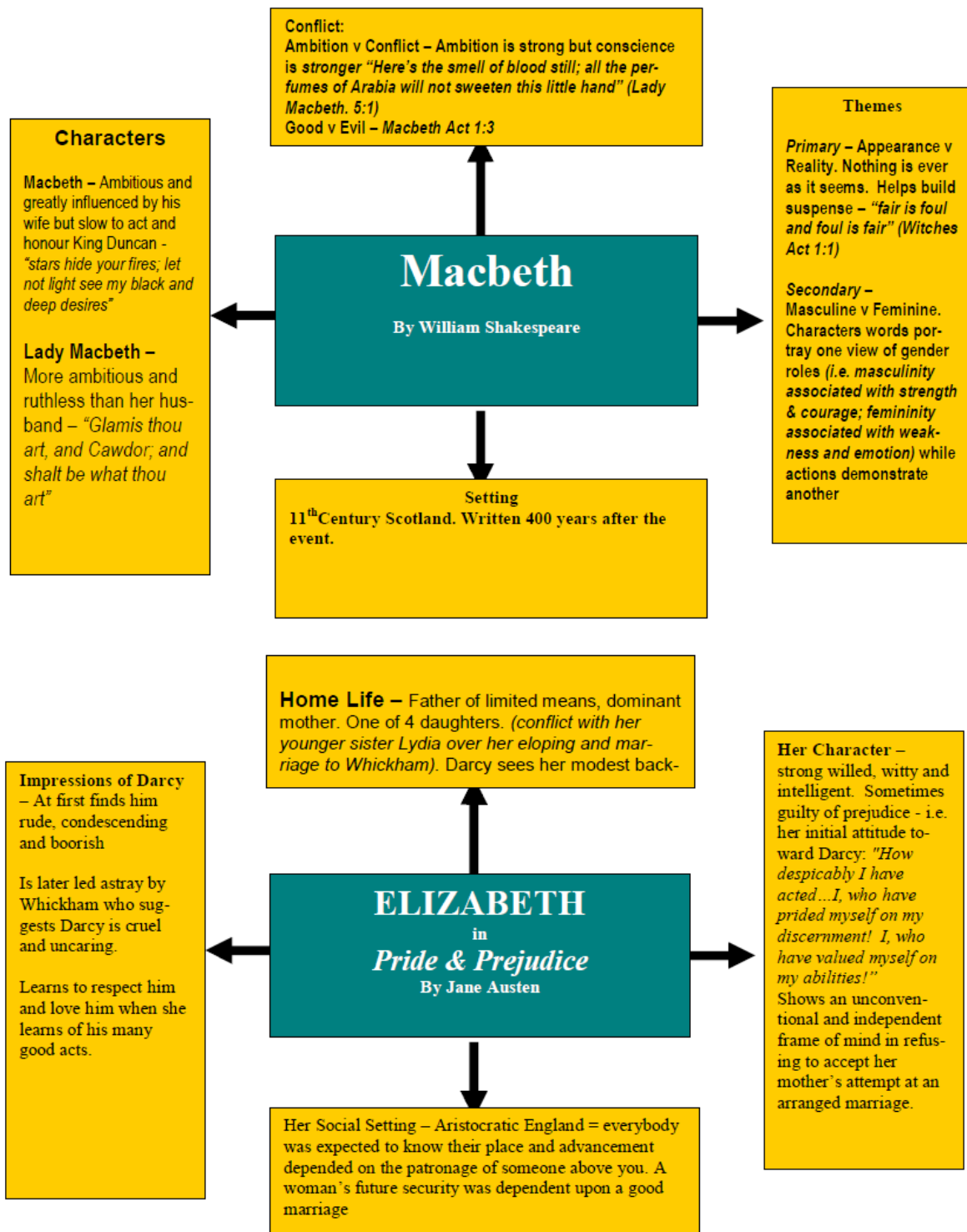
Click on the graphic above for a short video on how to revise from the Times Education Supplement.

Over the next few pages we will show you some ideas to help structure your revision.

1. Revision Cards

These can be a very good way to organise the key points you need to remember for particular topics. Go through your notes highlighting key matters and then arrange them in a clear manner – don't use too much text. Carry sets of cards around with you and test yourself or get friends to test you in the lunch queue, at the bus stop etc.

Examples of Revision Cards:



2. Flow Charts

You can turn your subject lesson notes into a Flow Chart by writing the topic at the top and list the main ideas underneath as in this example from Religious Studies.

TOPIC – CHRISTIAN ATTITUDES TO PREJUDICE AND DISCRIMINATION

Prejudice is the act of **prejudging** someone or something, usually thinking of them as being inferior though having no or little actual knowledge of them.

Discrimination is when people are treated badly by others because of prejudice.

Discrimination and Human Rights

Prejudice can be about many different things religion, race, colour, gender, sexuality, language, disability, age etc. All prejudice and discrimination goes against the first two Articles of the UN Declaration of Human Rights:

Article 1 - *“All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. ...”*;

Article 2 - *“Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.”*

Christian Attitudes towards Prejudice

Christianity teaches that everyone is **equal** in the eyes of God and so it would be wrong to make anyone feel inferior or suffer because of any difference between them: *“love your neighbour as yourself.”* (**Matthew 22:39**)

Jesus based his teachings about other people on love: *“love one another... as I have loved you”* (**John 13:34**).

There are also 2 important teachings in the writings of Paul about this: *“From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth...”* (**Acts 17:26**). *There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*(**Galatians 3:28**).

There have been cases where Christians do appear to be guilty of prejudice and discrimination – e.g. In **South Africa** the **Dutch Reformed Church** supported **Apartheid**, a system which meant that black people were separated from white people and treated as inferior. Europeans also colonised other countries around the world through forced slavery. Some accuse Christianity of being **sexist** for not treating men and women equally“.

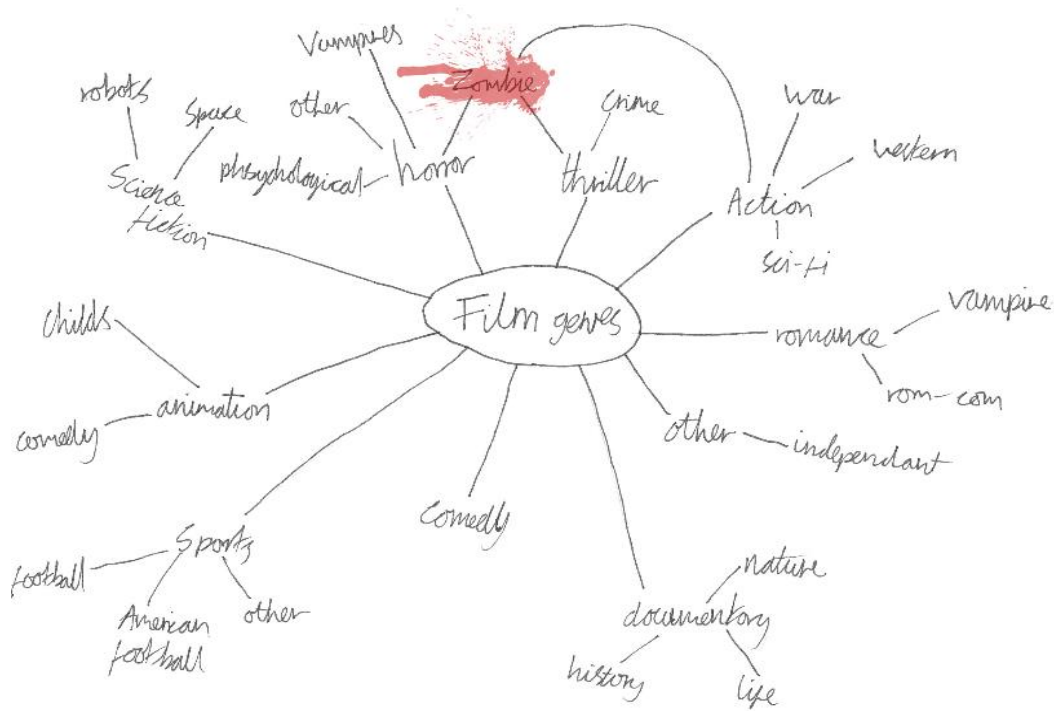
Women should remain silent in the churches. They are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission...” (**1 Corinthians 14:34-35**).

“Now I want you to realise that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God” (**1 Corinthians 11:37**).

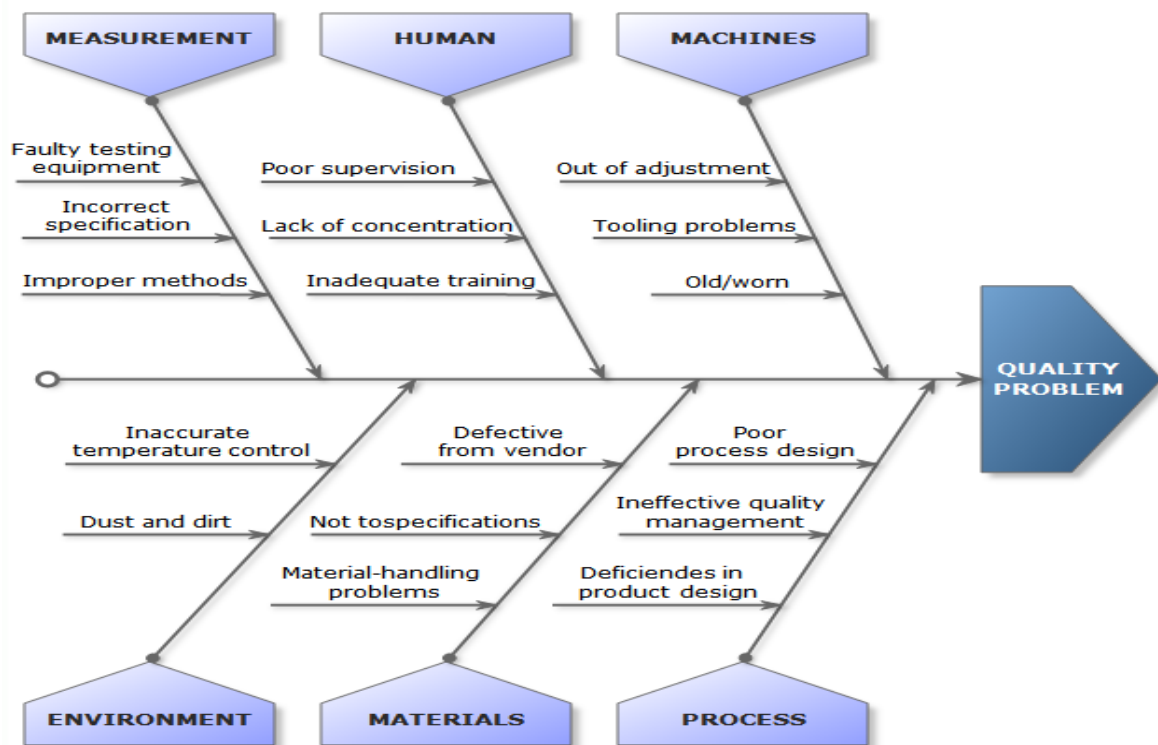
Recently some churches have allowed women to become ministers or priests (e.g. **Methodists; United Reformed Church; Church of England**, etc) but others, such as the **Roman Catholic Church** and many **Evangelicals**, will still not allow this.

Graphic Organisers

3. Spider Diagrams – understanding the links between things

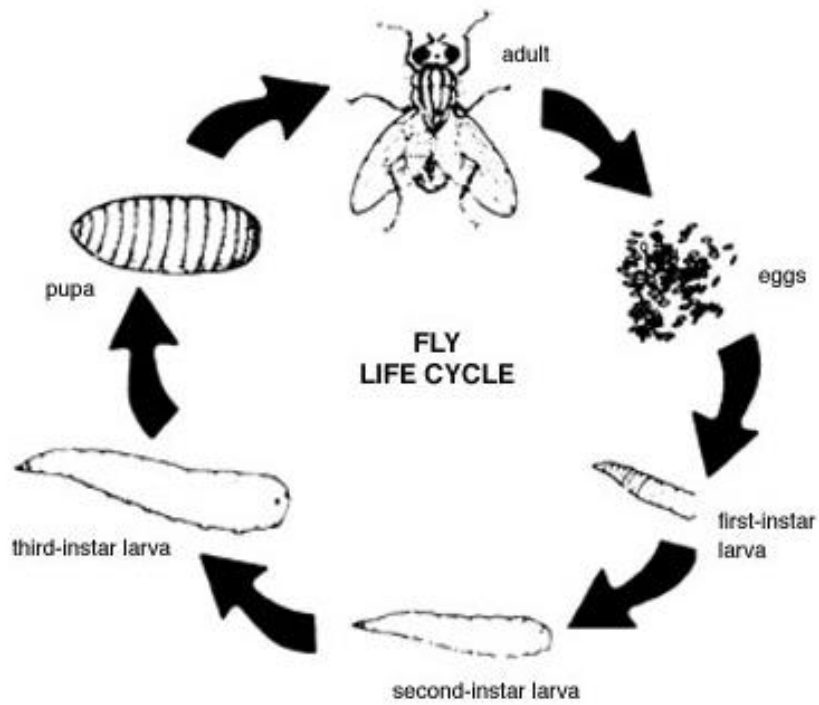


4. Fishbone Diagrams - how different things contribute to a particular outcome.

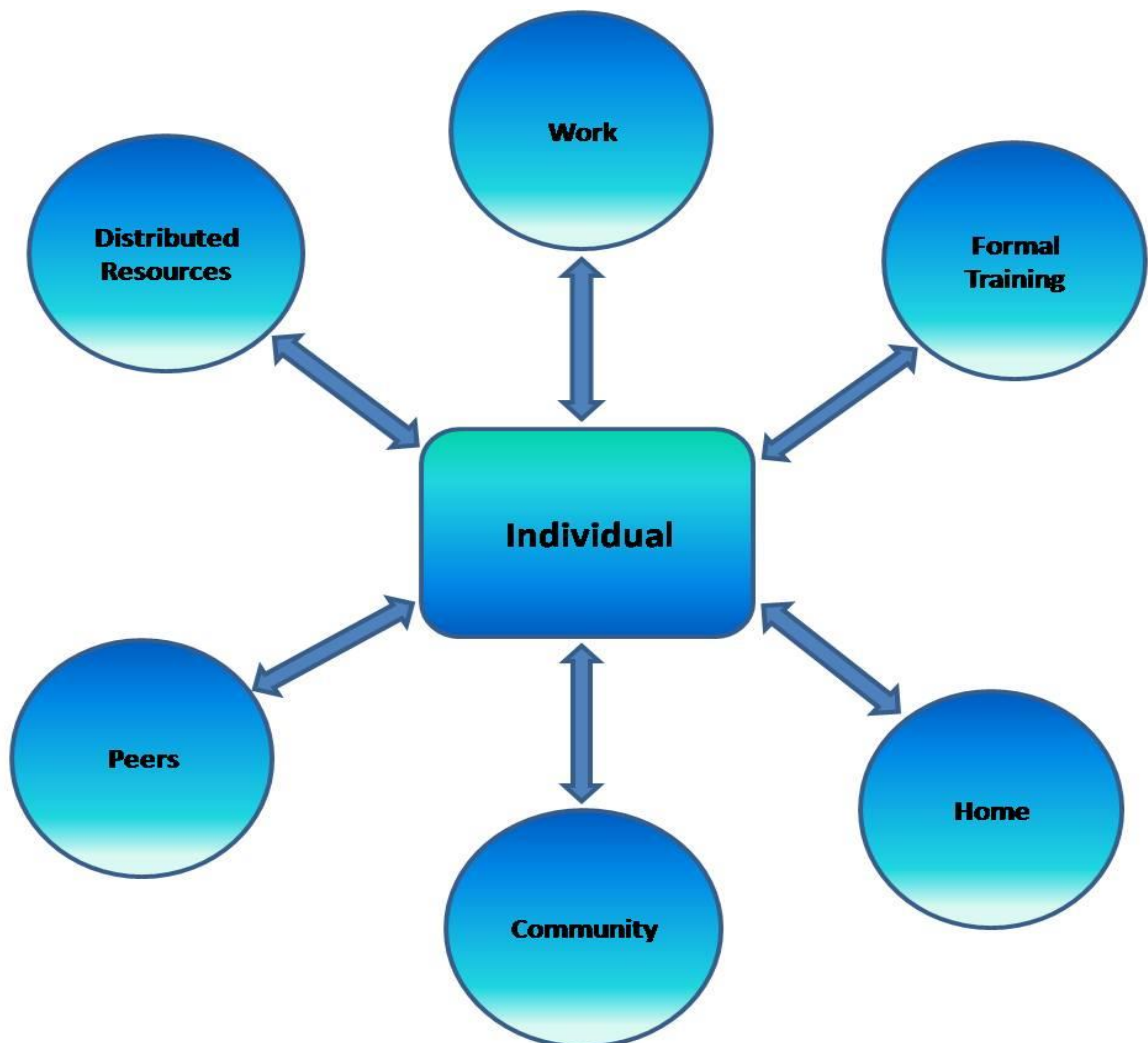


These can have any number of lines depending on the situation.

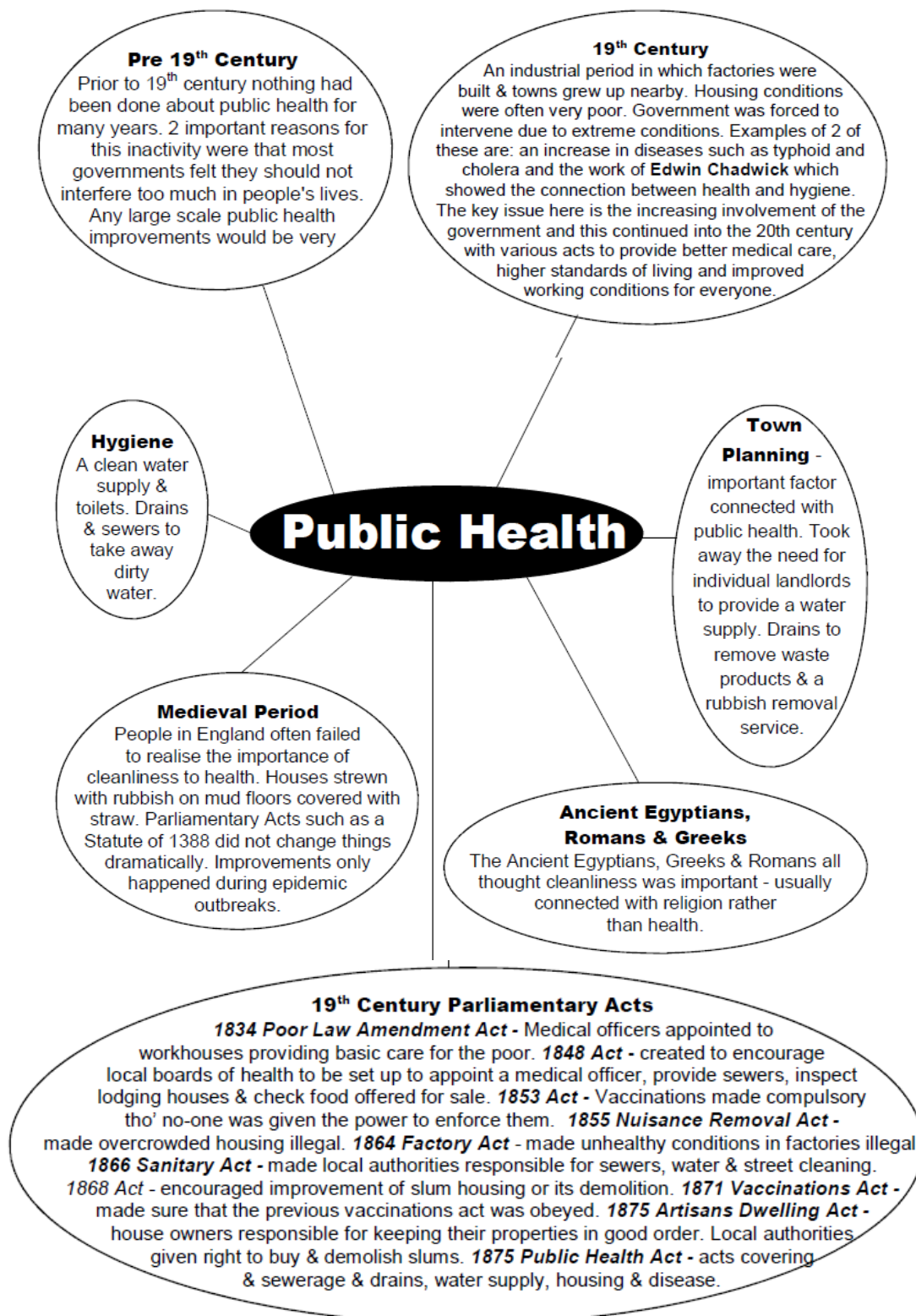
5. **Cycle Diagram** - ideal for showing a simple process.



6. **Star Diagram** - useful for organising the characteristics of a single topic.



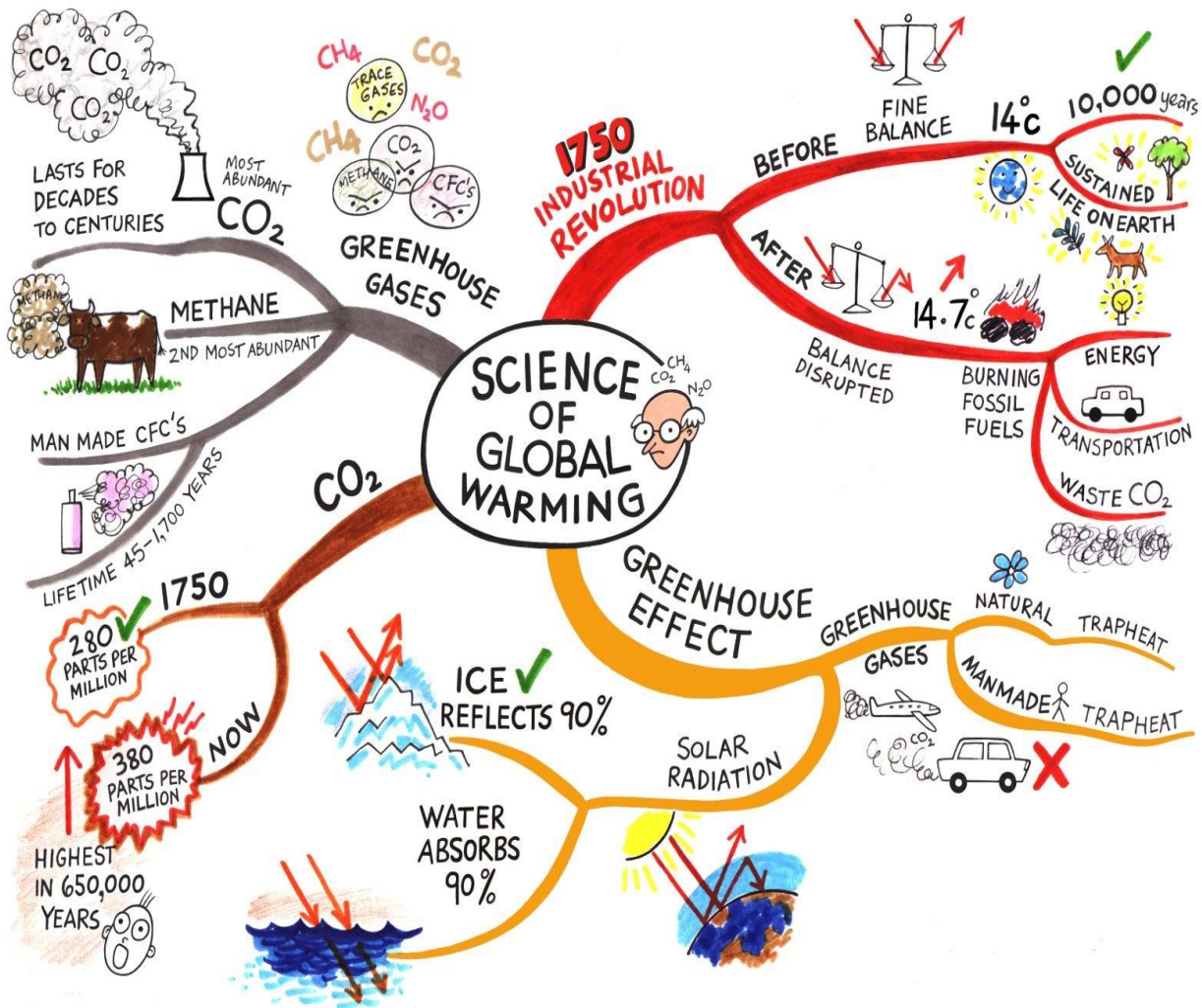
Star Diagram – a more detailed example

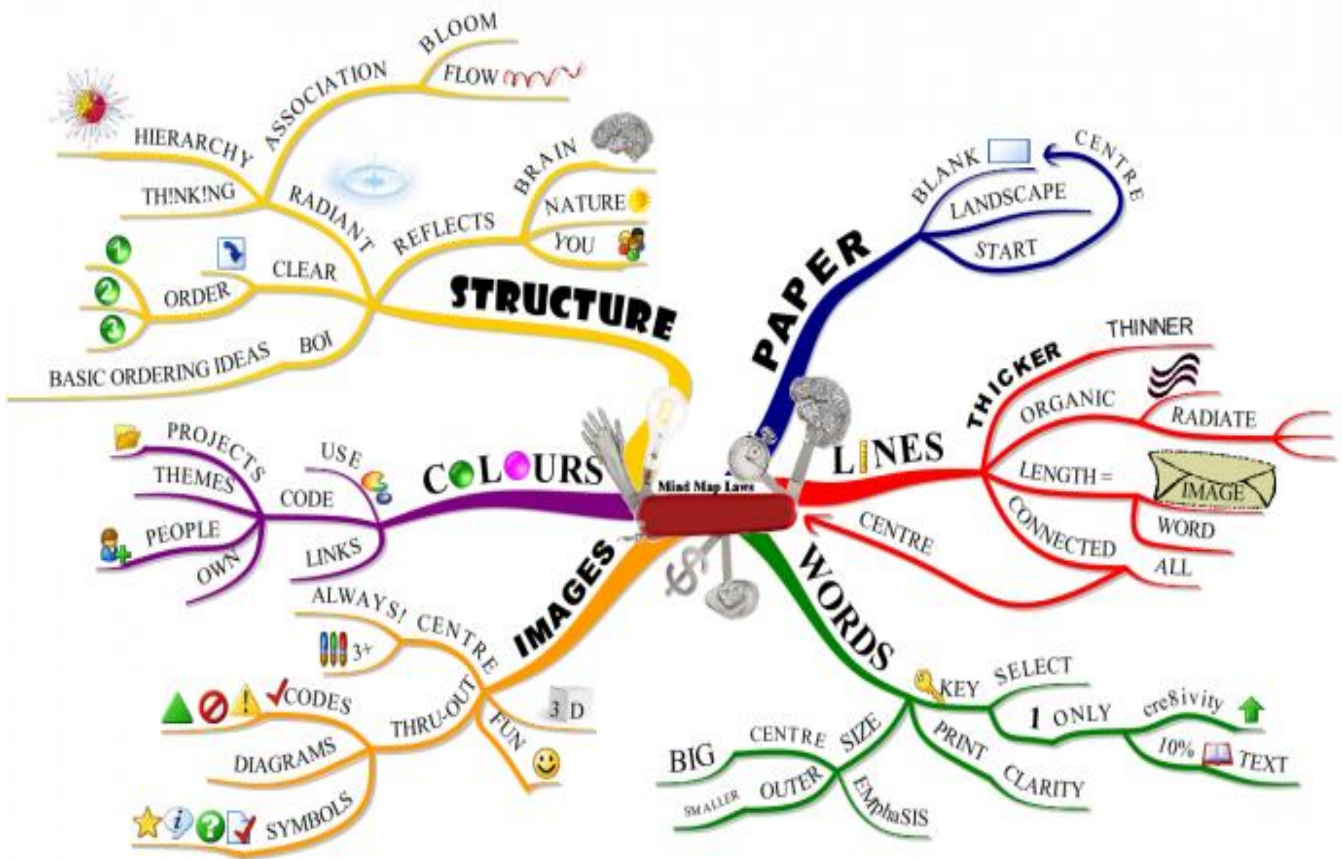


7. Mind Maps

You can turn your subject lesson class notes into a Mind Map by following the instructions below:

1. **Start from the centre** of the page and work out.
 2. Make the centre a clear and **strong visual image** that depicts the general theme of the map.
 3. Use a combination of **key words** and appropriate **images**.
 4. Put ideas down as they occur and wherever they fit.
 5. Put main subject words on main lines and key words for each subject on branch lines.
- ❖ Do not use too many words on your mind map
 - ❖ Use **colour** to depict themes and to make things stand out
 - ❖ Anything that **STANDS OUT** on the page will stand out in your mind
 - ❖ Use arrows, cartoons or other visual images to make the Map more memorable





8. Making Notes

Notes are meant to be short memory joggers! There is no point in simply rewriting your class material.

Keep your notes as brief as possible. One idea is to reduce all your notes into key *words* (a whole topic should fit onto one side of A4 paper).

The brain remembers things best by seeing them or storing them in different ways. For example, if you read about the causes of World War I draw them in a diagram and then discuss them with a friend or teacher. You are more likely to remember what you revise if you are able to articulate what you have learned.

Use highlighting pens to colour code your notes.

Use Mind Maps, flowcharts, spider diagrams and other visual tools to make your notes more distinctive.

9. Using Post-it Notes

Buy yourself some Post-it' notes that can be used to write keywords, concepts, vocabulary, quotes, formula etc. and then stuck around the house in the rooms that you spend a lot of time in. This means that you have a ready source of revision in your line of vision, even when you are not formally revising. Pin things up in the bathroom or where you eat.



10. Mnemonics (pronounced without the **M**—'nemonics')

This word literally means 'memory'. It's about putting something memorable into your mind to help you recall information.

You create a code using rhymes, phrases or acronyms which helps you to recall information that is essential for doing well in your examinations. Mnemonics have been used for centuries in education.

Anyone recognise these?

NEVER EAT SHREDDED WHEAT

It refers to the points of a compass: **N**orth, **E**ast, **S**outh, **W**est.

RICHARD OF YORK GAVE BATTLE IN VAIN

It refers to the colours of the spectrum: **R**ed, **O**range, **Y**ellow, **G**reen, **B**lue, **I**ndigo, **V**iolet.

The point is you have fun making up your own to remember keywords, formula and key facts for any subject you like. Remember that Mnemonics should be short and memorable. The funnier, the better.

Below are some further examples relevant to your subjects for revision. Once you've read these try making up your own, then write them on a Post-it, stick them on a wall or mirror somewhere at home and memorise them!

KINGS PLAY CARDS ON FAT GREEN STOOLS

*The order of taxonomy in biology = **K**ingdom, **P**hylum, **C**lass, **O**rders, **F**amily, **G**enus, **S**pecies.*

DIVORCED, BEHEADED, DIED, DIVORCED, BEHEADED, SURVIVED

*Helps you to remember what happened to **the six wives of Henry VIII***

11. Revising by Listening

You may learn best by listening so why not 'talk'? Do some revision by recording onto your phone or similar then listen to these while lying in bed, or travelling in a car, or walking to the shops. This also takes the 'guilt' out of being out and about instead of in front of the books.

Remember your recording can ask questions: 'What is the mnemonic for...?' and leave time for you to answer/pause before giving the answer.



12. Revising with Friends

Another great way to revise is to talk about what you do know about your subject to your friends who are also studying the same subjects as you. Take it in turns because you will learn insights on your subjects from them that you may not have even considered before and help clarify anything you have not fully understood!

Be careful to be disciplined about using your time for revision and not just chat.

13. Mobile Applications and Websites

Students have access to a host of apps and websites to support their revision techniques and their study specific subjects.

A number of these are free for a basic service but can cost a few pounds to unlock full access.

Some charges are one offs whereas others can be a subscription with future charges. Any web search will reveal long lists. We would recommend you carefully check reviews (and charges which do change) before selecting any sites to use. Also be aware that some sites are not UK specific and may require care to use. Our Academy is not responsible for any of these sites and you use them at your own risk.

Below is a sample of what is available:

Revision



s-cool.co.uk
Free wide-ranging site



www.examtime.com
Some free content



www.revisioncentre.co.uk
Some free content



Simplemapper.org
A mind mapping website



BBC GCSE Bitesize
bitesizerevision.pearson.com
An App spin off from the website



www.gcse.com



Brainscape AP
Free Flashcards



Line Learner
Use prompts to help you learn



Revision App
- **The Ultimate Revision Tool**
A wide-ranging site



Learnerscloud.com
Subscription videos available



app.imindmap.com
A mind-mapping app



www.braineos.com
US Free Flashcards

Examination Tips

By the time your examinations come round you will need to give yourself the best possible chance by making sure you follow some basic advice:

- ❖ Be sure to cut down on any weekend/evening jobs. Most employers know that you need to commit time to your examinations and revision and should not expect you to do extra hours.
- ❖ Ensure you eat and sleep properly. Examination time is not the time to diet or stay up all night.
- ❖ Check your examination timetable.
- ❖ What time is the examination? Where is it? Do make sure you double check.
- ❖ Organise what you need for your examination the evening before.
- ❖ Make sure you have the correct equipment (*calculators, rulers etc.*).
- ❖ Find out what you are not allowed to take in to the examination (*mobile phones, pagers text messages etc.*). Your examination invigilator will remind you of this before the examination starts. Taking unauthorised equipment into the examination room could result in you being disqualified.
- ❖ Have an early night before your examination and get up early enough to have a good breakfast before you leave for school.
- ❖ Stay calm and allow plenty of time to get to school.
- ❖ YouTube can be a source of useful videos on general ideas and specific concepts, for example how to prepare for specific examination papers.

Remember that you can only do your best and if you do that, you will have no regrets!