

2019-20

Examination Preparation Booklet

Name: _____

Form: _____





As you approach your first mock exams, it's time to start thinking about how you can prepare for them. The revision period can be a stressful time so it is important that you plan ahead and start revising now if you haven't already. The revision tips from Tim Foot last year should help as well as the guidance offered to you through PSHEE lessons so you should be in a position to have a go. This booklet is designed to help you do your very best and meet your full potential.

1. What's coming up?

English Language and Maths Mocks will be happening in the week commencing 11 November. Mocks for all other subjects will take place in January 2020. These are designed to provide an opportunity for you to see what a full GCSE exam paper looks like under the allocated time conditions, in a real exam space. The marking of these by your teachers will help you identify areas to focus on in terms of revision and any gaps you may need to make more secure before the summer.

How to revise

Included in this booklet are a few strategies to help you prepare for your Exams. Try some of them out. Each person revises differently so trying a range of techniques is the best suggestion.

2. Looking after yourself

As the revision period can be a stressful time, it is important for you to take good care of yourself so that you are able to perform at your best. Take time out from your revision and ensure you get some regular exercise (20-30 mins, three times per week). You could also consider your diet and eat healthily. You don't have to make radical changes here; simply check you have a healthy, balanced diet. Ensure you are eating plenty of fruit and veg as this provides essential minerals. Brain food such as oily fish and super foods such as blueberries may be something to consider. Also drink plenty of water to keep properly hydrated as your brain needs this. It may also be worth getting a personal 'MOT' with the opticians, doctors and dentists. If you suffer from hay fever it would be worth consulting your GP about appropriate medication to avoid any issues during the summer exam period.

If you are unsure about anything regarding your GCSE exam preparation, see the relevant subject teacher so they can help you straight away or talk to your tutor, mentor, Mr Jaques (KS4 Director of Learning) or Mrs Bougeard (Assistant Principal Academic).

Revision

Effective revision has a considerable impact on your final grades. The keys to effective revision are:



Revision Tips

- ✓ Start your revision in good time.
- ✓ Plan a revision timetable.
- ✓ Highlight coursework deadlines and examination dates and times.
- ✓ Spread your subjects out over time so you cover each one several times.
- ✓ Plan for one-hour slots and break this into three 20 minute sessions with a 2 minute break in between each. Any more of one subject and nothing extra sinks in.
- ✓ In the evenings after school, two or three subjects only. Leave time for relaxation.
- ✓ Allow yourself some days off but not in the few weeks just before the exams.
- ✓ Plan to revise specific topics or aspects of a subject, for example not just 'Science' but 'Human Systems' or 'Waves' or 'Chemical Reactions'.

Don't forget the revision tips below from the sessions we had last year:

Tip 1: Recall

Recall **during** learning

When revising you will remember:

First – the first thing you do

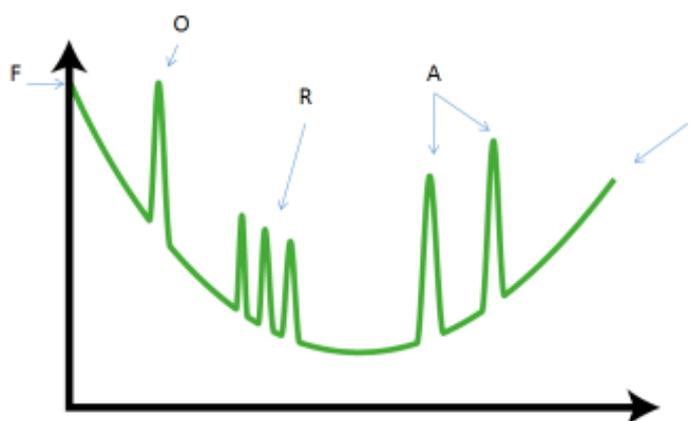
Last – the last thing you do

Outstanding – anything that stands out

Repeated – anything that is repeated

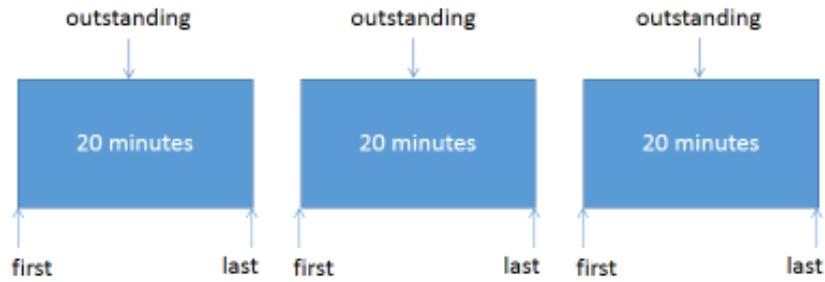
Associated - things that are associated with one another

Make sure you plan for each in your revision sessions.



Tip 2: Spaced Revision

1 hour revision session



Tip 3: Review Learning

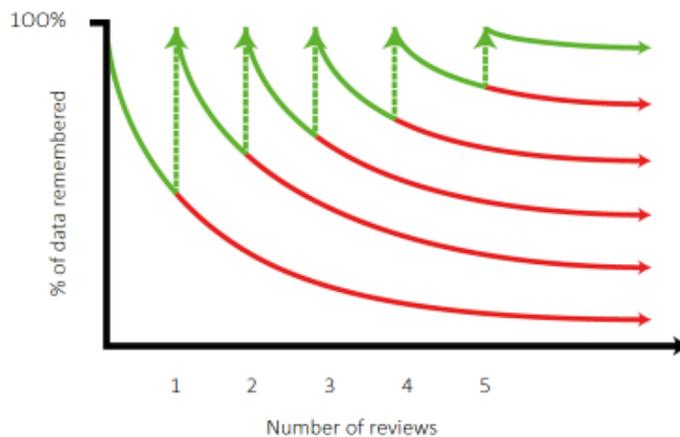
Review schedule



- 1 hour
- 1 day
- 1 week
- 1 month
- 6 months

Tip 4 : The 'not' forgetting curve

Every time you review the content you will remember a little bit more!



Revision Techniques

Everybody has a way of learning that suits them well. What works best for you? Do you remember things better if you write them down on flash cards, or perhaps draw a 'spider diagram', or maybe record some notes on your phone and listen to them?

Try some of these to see what works for you:

Set the tone: Music in the background sometimes helps, but don't try to revise with the TV or radio on. Music should set the ambiance and not draw your attention in any way, you could consider setting up an ambient play list using Spotify or other apps. Make sure that you are not distracted by Facebook, Snapchat, text messages, and phone calls. Each time you lose focus, your brain takes 5 minutes to get back in 'the zone'. Save yourself time by going 'offline'. Revision sessions are for revision only. Plan social sessions to do all the rest.

- 1. Personal podcasts:** For subjects where you need to remember a lot of detail, why not record it onto your phone in small, 1 minute, podcasts. These are very versatile as you can share them with your friends. Your brain likes to hear its own voice so this technique will serve to increase your recall of information from 10% to 40%. They are good for on the go - you can play them back on the bus ride to school.
- 2. Flashcards:** On small cards, summarise a case study/important event/definitions into one (or both) sides of the cards and refer to it regularly. Make sure that you include key facts and number as you condense the case study to fit the card.
- 3. Colour coding:** colour code large pieces of text into sections. For example, it could be positives/negatives, point/evidence.
- 4. Memory tests:** You could look at an important diagram for 20 seconds, then cover it over and draw what you remember. Then give yourself another 20 seconds to see what you missed and add it in. Eventually, you will be able to draw the diagram without looking at a copy.
- 5. Key words test:** You could ask someone to read out 10 definitions and you have to say what the key word is. Then you could try it the other way around which is harder with someone giving you a key word to define.
- 6. Concept Maps (mind maps):** Write a key theme in the centre of an A3 piece of paper. Write the sub-themes around it with important ideas evidence to back them up. Stick your finished spider diagram somewhere visible where you will be able to refer to it often (e.g. fridge door, bedroom wall).
- 7. Practice exam questions:** Look at the examples of past paper questions. Practise writing responses to these questions using the flashcards or colour coded case studies you have created. Ask your teacher for these - they will have loads!

8. **Summarising:** Condense a section of text into a set number of bullet points. Use these to refer back to often.
9. **Reading aloud:** Read a section of text aloud, then try to say aloud all the facts and figures you remember without the summary. You could also read your keyword lists aloud. Your brain loves the sound of its own voice: you will remember 40% of what you say compared to 10% of what others say.
10. **Repeated writing:** Copy out pieces of information more than one time (five times would be appropriate). The repetition will help you to fix the facts in your memory. Your mind remembers words as pictures, the more it sees them, the better it will remember them.
11. **Paired Work:** Work with a partner to help and test each other on, for example, explaining the meaning of key words (and spelling them correctly), rearranging chemical equations, performing calculations, recalling linked facts or dates, drawing conclusions from evidence.

When you revise, it is useful to keep coming back to the same information. Revision should be completed little and often to allow your brain to convert short term memory to long term memory. Once you have created a range of revision materials (using some techniques from the above list) share them and keep using them. If you create materials from your mock exams - they are there for the real exams so this saves you time in the long run.

Getting it right on the day

- ✓ **Be Prepared:** Make sure you have all the equipment you could ever need for all exams. This includes at least 3 **black** pens, pencils, rubber, a ruler, protractor, set square, calculator.
- ✓ While waiting for the exam to start, read the front of the exam paper so you know exactly what to do.
- ✓ Read each question carefully - twice is better than once. Check how many marks are available for the answer. Write the relevant amount for the marks, not too much or too little.
- ✓ Answer the question; don't simply repeat it or make up a question of your own.
- ✓ Write your answer if you feel confident. If not, go on to the next question. Don't spend time on questions you are unsure of until you have been through the whole paper once.
- ✓ Check all calculations. Does the answer make sense and have you included the units?
- ✓ Check information in graphs tables and pictures. Did you read them correctly?
- ✓ Check your spellings of specific words, but if you are not sure of the spelling write your answer anyway. You may get the mark.
- ✓ If you have to draw diagrams, charts or graphs, use a sharp pencil and draw accurately using a ruler where necessary.
- ✓ Once you have answered all the more straightforward questions go through the paper again, tackling those questions which are more difficult. If on the second reading a question is still very difficult, move on to the next question.
- ✓ SPAG (Spelling, Punctuation & Grammar) are marked on most papers. Make sure you have considered this when writing your answers.

Above all, **don't panic**. If you remain calm and think things through, you will succeed. Being prepared will be the best way to stay calm.

Revision Planner

When planning for your revision, start by writing down all of your subjects and subdivide by the number of exams you have for each subject. You should revise per exam, not per subject. This will help you to plan enough revision in the right areas.

Plan Online

A great free online study planner can be found here: <https://getrevising.co.uk/planner>

You can use this to schedule your time easily, add exams, deadlines and more. It breaks up the time you have at home into manageable chunks to help plan revision effectively. Don't forget to 'plan a life' too but make sure that you balance this in the correct proportions.

The planner looks like this:

The screenshot shows the 'Study Planner' interface for the week of 1st to 7th December. The interface includes a top navigation bar with 'Edit subjects', 'Edit classes', and 'Edit exams' buttons. A sidebar on the right offers options like 'Printable PDF', 'Study leave', 'Add exams and deadlines', and 'Erase and start again'. The main calendar grid shows time slots from 08:00 to 17:00. School time is indicated by blue blocks from 08:00 to 15:00 on weekdays. After-school time is filled with various revision and leisure activities, each in a different color. Callout boxes provide the following explanations:

- View a week or a month:** Points to the 'Week' and 'Month' toggle buttons.
- Adds blocks for school time:** Points to the blue 'School' blocks in the weekday columns.
- Use colours to split up subjects:** Points to the multi-colored blocks representing different subjects and activities.
- Plan after school time:** Points to the blocks scheduled between 15:00 and 17:00.
- Weekend slots broken into 1hr:** Points to the 1-hour slots on Saturday and Sunday.

Time Slot	Mon 1st	Tue 2nd	Wed 3rd	Thu 4th	Fri 5th	Sat 6th	Sun 7th
08:00 - 09:00		School	School	School	School	add activity	add activity
09:00 - 10:00		School	School	School	School	meeting with friends	free
10:00 - 11:00		School	School	School	School	Geography Paper 1 revision	History Paper 1 revision
11:00 - 12:00		School	School	School	School	EATI	X-Box
14:00 - 15:00						Maths Paper 1 revision	English Language revision
15:00 - 16:00						Science Biology revision	free
16:00 - 17:00			French Writing revision	English Lit Revision	Maths Paper 2 Revision	Family afternoon activity	Product Design Coursework
			French reading revision	Science Physics revision	Geography Paper 2 revision		free

Independent Revision and Study Planner

Day	9:00 - 10:00	10:00 - 11:00	11:00 - 12:00	12:00 - 1:00	1:00 - 2:00	2:00 - 3:00	4:00 - 5:00	5:00 - 6:00	6:00 - 7:00	7:00 - 8:00	8:00 - 9:00	9:00 - 10:00
Monday 21 October												
Tuesday 22 October												
Wednesday 23 October												
Thursday 24 October												
Friday 25 October												
Saturday 26 October												
Sunday 27 October												

Gosfield School

Day	9:00 - 10:00	10:00 - 11:00	11:00 - 12:00	12:00 - 1:00	1:00 - 2:00	2:00 - 3:00	4:00 - 5:00	5:00 - 6:00	6:00 - 7:00	7:00 - 8:00	8:00 - 9:00	9:00 - 10:00
Monday 28 October												
Tuesday 29 October												
Wednesday 30 October												
Thursday 31 October												
Friday 1 November												
Saturday 2 November												
Sunday 3 November												

Gosfield School

Day	9:00 - 10:00	10:00 - 11:00	11:00 - 12:00	12:00 - 1:00	1:00 - 2:00	2:00 - 3:00	4:00 - 5:00	5:00 - 6:00	6:00 - 7:00	7:00 - 8:00	8:00 - 9:00	9:00 - 10:00
Monday 4 November												
Tuesday 5 November												
Wednesday 6 November												
Thursday 7 November												
Friday 8 November												
Saturday 9 November												
Sunday 10 November												

School Day