

GCSE Revision Help



Top Ten Revision Tips

1. Short bursts of revision (20 - 30 minutes) are most effective. Your concentration lapses after about an hour and you need to take a short break (10 minutes).
2. Find a quiet place to revise - your bedroom, school, the library - and refuse to be interrupted or distracted.
3. Make sure you don't just revise the subjects and topics you like. Work on your weaker ones as well.
4. Make your own revision notes because you will remember what you have written down more easily. Stick key notes to cupboards or doors so you see them everyday.
5. Rewrite the key points of your revision notes; read them out loud to yourself. We remember more than twice as much of what we say aloud than of what we merely read. Make revision cards to help you.
6. Use different techniques. Make your own learning maps, use post-it notes to write key words on, create flash cards. Record your notes and listen to them back. Ask friends and family to test you. Use highlighter pens to mark important points. Chant or even make up a song.
7. Practise on **past exam papers** or revision tests available on the web. Initially do one section at a time and progress to doing an entire paper against the clock.
8. You will need help at some stage; ask parents, older brothers and sisters, teachers or friends. Never be afraid to ask your teachers for help. Use websites specifically designed for revision.
9. **Don't get stressed out!** Eat properly and get lots of sleep!
10. **Believe in yourself and be positive.** If you think you can succeed you will; if you convince yourself that you will fail, that's what will probably happen.



REVISION - Do's and don'ts

DO

1. Make a list of all the topics you need to revise:

Each subject that you are studying can be broken down into its basic parts, with main sections, sub-topics and supporting details. A very useful start is to list out all the topics on the course according to this hierarchy and use this as a 'revision checklist' for the subject. Tick topics off as you've learnt them.

2. Create a realistic schedule.

Block the waking part of each day into three portions. Allow yourself one portion a day off and allocate subjects and topics to the remaining two. Put the schedule on display so that your family can see when you are available. It will also reassure your parents that you are in control.



3. Plan ahead by working backwards

By using revision checklists in your various subjects, you should know what quantity of material has to be covered over the coming months. Start from the final date and divide your revision up week by week, allowing some flexibility for unforeseen delays. Surprise yourself by being ready in time! Use the timetables and other sheets you have been given.



4. Revise using your preferred learning style.

Have you tried; mind maps, diagrams, colour, mnemonics, recording yourself and listening back to it, rewriting your favourite song using your revision notes for a topic as the words, walking round (Great for kinaesthetic learners - try read out the positive effects of X standing on the left hand side of the room and negative effects on the right hand side).

DON'T

Just keep going! The body and the mind need regular 'time-outs'. When you're tired, concentration is more difficult, you get distracted much easier and learning and memorisation is less effective. There comes a point in an evening study session when it is counter-productive to stay at the desk - nothing is going in and you are only tiring yourself further. Use breaks effectively, particularly after completing a task.

Learning Styles

Know how you learn best and then you can revise in ways that suit your style.

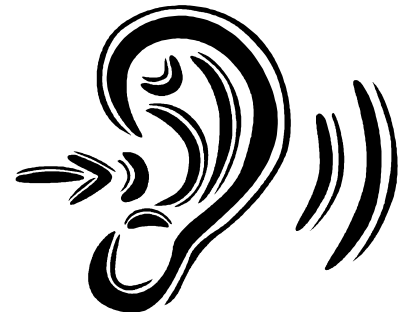


Visual learners prefer to:

- ❖ Draw pictures and diagrams
- ❖ Colour code their work
- ❖ Use different coloured paper, pens etc
- ❖ Use their own system of symbols etc
- ❖ Create images and scenes in their minds

Auditory learners prefer to:

- ❖ Say their work aloud
- ❖ Give presentations to an imaginary audience
- ❖ Record notes on a tape recorder
- ❖ Use silly noises to remember things
- ❖ Hear the information in their mind
- ❖ Play instrumental music



Kinaesthetic learners prefer to:

- ❖ Do actions when learning key facts
- ❖ Walk about when learning
- ❖ Find it harder to sit at a desk
- ❖ Add emotions and textures to exaggerate information
- ❖ Try to experience what they are learning

How should I revise? Try one of these.....

1: MIND MAPS: Make mind-maps or association maps rather than taking linear notes. Mapping your notes by radiating key words out in a pattern of links from a central point will make best use of your memory. If you use colour and images on the maps, you'll be harnessing the power of both sides of your brain - creative and logical.

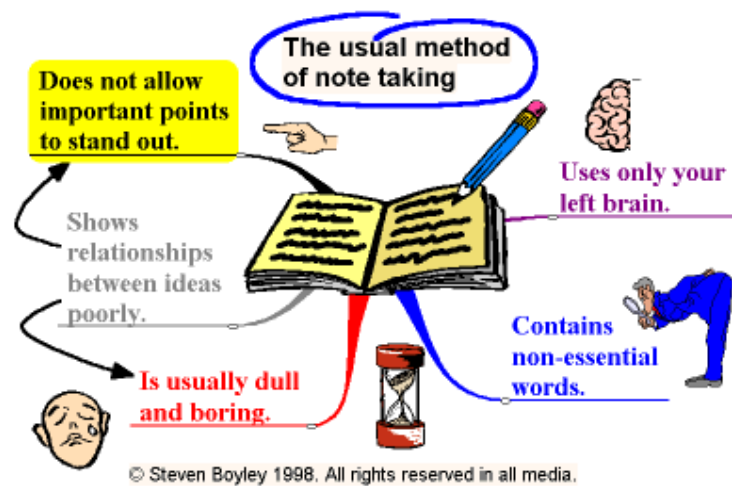
How to mind map:

1. Start with the theme in the middle of the page.

2. Then develop your main idea.

3. Each branch must relate to the branch before it.

4. Use only key words and images.



5. Key words must be written along the branches.

6. Printing your key words makes them more memorable.

7. Use highlighters and coloured markers to colour code branches.



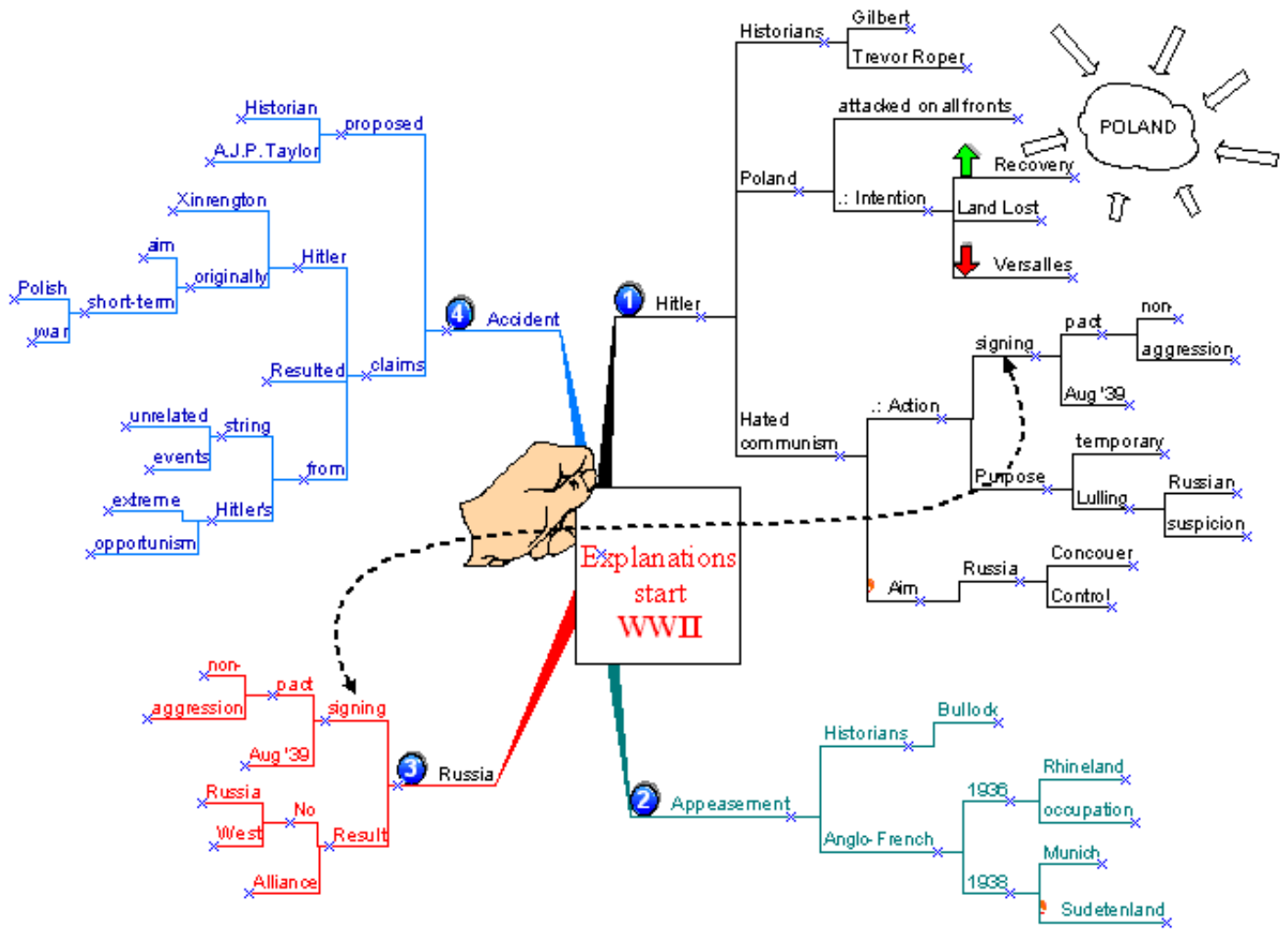
8. Make things stand out on the page so they stand out in your mind. (This doesn't show up well on a black and white photocopied booklet! You should use a different colour for each main branch and all its sub-branches)

9. Brainstorm ideas. Be creative.

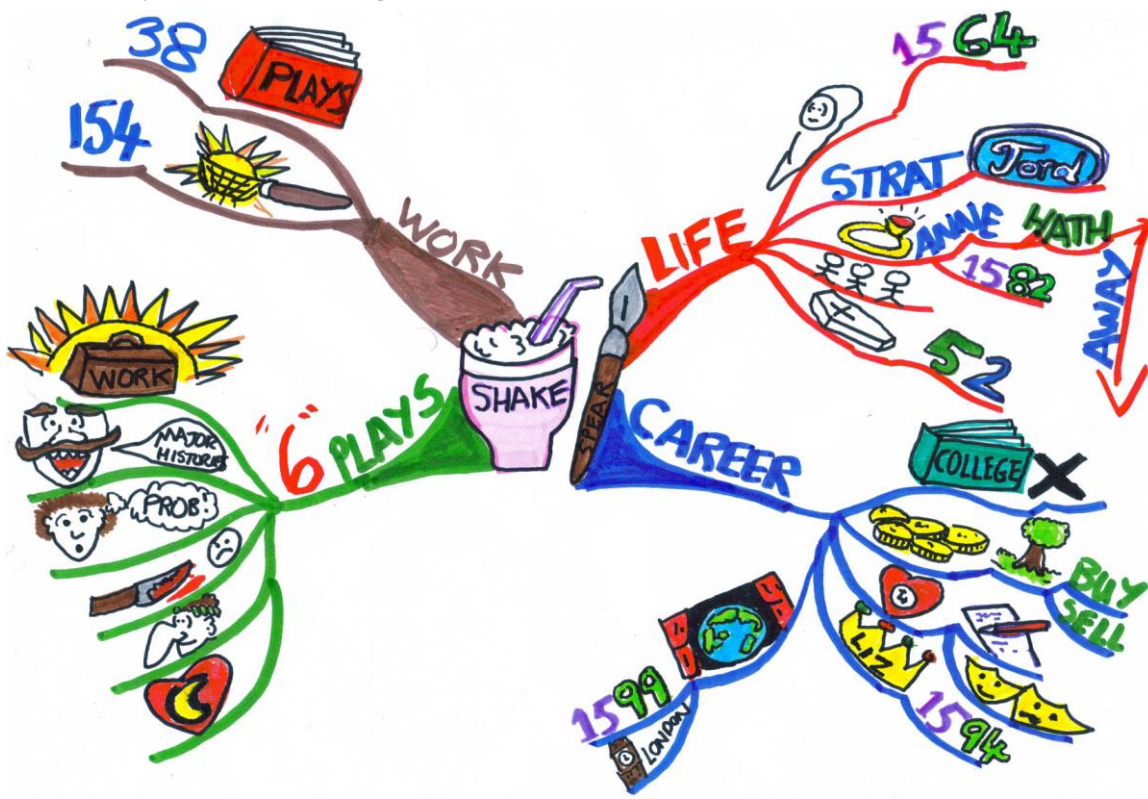


10. Design images you can relate to which will help you remember key information.

Mindmaps can be mostly text...



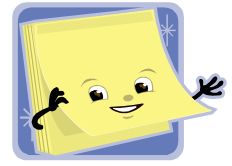
Or they can include more images (much easier to remember!) Look at this one summarising William Shakespeare's life..... (again - much better in colour!)





2: Read intelligently. Spend five minutes flipping through a book or your notes looking at headings and summaries. Then attempt to mind map what you have spotted and what you can remember.

3: Use cards. Write questions on one side and answers on the other. Then get your family to test you. Merely creating the cards will help your recall. You can also use them to test yourself when faced with 'dead' time at bus stops or waiting for someone.



4: Physical learning: Use the environment Use a different room for each subject.

- ❖ Notice aspects of the environment such as the light or feel of the room - how do you feel in that place?
- ❖ Attach your notes to the furniture. Notice their location.
- ❖ Associate a different location with each subject. Associate furniture, windows, plants and ornaments with particular topics.

Use motor memory

- ❖ Study on the move. If you exercise, associate each movement with something you wish to remember. To refresh the memory, go through the exercise in your mind.
- ❖ Writing, drawing and speaking also use motor memory: the fine-muscle sequence is recorded by the brain.

5: Condense. Fitting notes onto one side of paper makes them easier to stomach, so rewrite and cut down as you go.

6: Highlight. Target key areas using colours and symbols. Visuals help you remember the facts.

7: Record. Try putting important points, quotes and formulae on tape. If you hear them and read them, they're more likely to sink in.



8: Talk. Read your notes out loud, it's one way of getting them to register.

9: Test. See what you can remember without notes, but avoid testing yourself on subjects you know already. Why not ask someone else to test you?

10: Time. Do past exam papers against the clock; it's an excellent way of getting up to speed and of checking where there are gaps in your knowledge.

