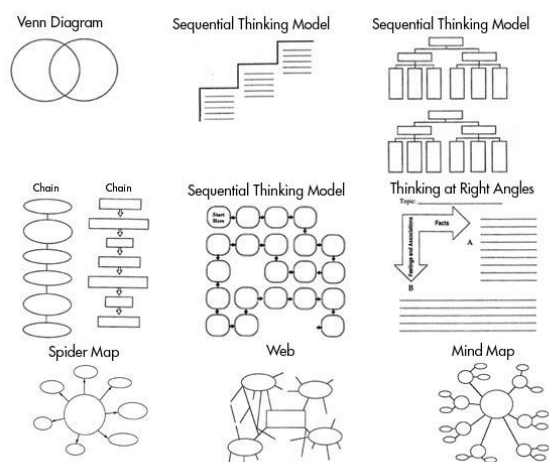


## Revision advice for Students

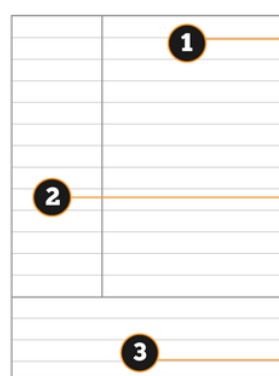
- 1. Retrieval Practice.** [Self-testing](#) or quizzing has been proven to be a robust revision strategy, so that you can calibrate your knowledge and remembering. Revision guides often contain example short questions or multiple-choice questions that you can use to self-test.
- 2. Flashcards.** Flashcards are a very familiar tool used by students. Essentially, they are used for self-testing/retrieval practice. Flashcards have facts on one side and questions on the other. They might also be used to learn key vocabulary with key words on one side and definitions on the other. The simpler flashcards make it easier to identify strengths and weaknesses. Students should drop flash cards from their pack once they are confident that they know the material. [www.quizlet.co.uk](http://www.quizlet.co.uk) has a number of pre-created quizzes. Teachers will also share relevant Quizlets with students.



- 3. Graphic organisers.** You need to be active in revision, **not just reading your notes and doing some colouring in with a rainbow of highlighters.** Graphic organisers are a handy vehicle to get you reconstructing your revision topics, making meaningful links and connections (in cognitive science, this is labelled the '**generation effect**'). A concrete example would be using a **mind map** to **summarise** a topic or concept. Selecting the key information from your revision means you will have to think more carefully about what you write. It is more beneficial than copying.

- 4. Cornell Note-Taking Method.** Another strategy that utilises the '**generation effect**' is the well-known note-taking approach: the **Cornell Method**. Named after the US university, this strategy gets you thinking metacognitively, asking questions, noting key terms, and summarising the content being revised. This can be used during a lesson, following a lesson and then during revision or retrieval. (See example to the right).

## The Cornell Method



## Notes

This is the section where you should take your notes during the course of the lecture. Use bullets, sentences, short-hand, etc.

## Cues

Questions, main points, visual clues, and other clues that jog your memory go here. Fill this section in after class.

## Summary

Most important points and main ideas go here. Fill in this section after class when you are in the reviewing process.

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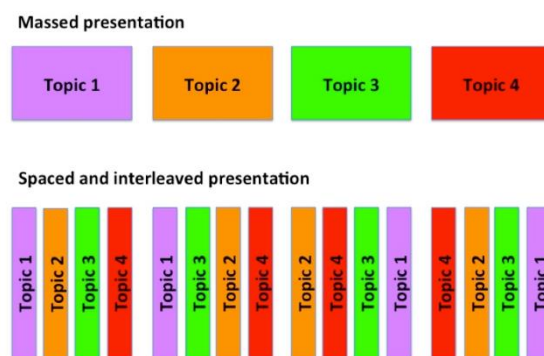
- 5. 'Just a minute'.** Put simply, you must talk for a minute on the given term/topic – no pauses, no hesitations. Slips or repetitions or micro pauses lose a 'life' – three strikes and you're out. This strategy harnesses the '**self-explanation effect**'. In short, if you can elaborate on a topic and explain it well, you have retrieved it from memory – a good revision act – as well as likely consolidating it too

**6. 'Prepare to teach'/Elaboration.** Similar to 'Just a Minute ', the 'Prepare to teach' strategy involves the common idea of getting you to teach a peer a topic/term from your revision. Once more, it gets you to **elaborate** on your knowledge. Even **expecting to teach appears to have a positive impact on you learning material**, so this seemingly inconsequential tweak can have very beneficial effects.

**7. Topic ranking.** By getting you to rank your own knowledge of your topics being revised, you deploy the important metacognitive strategy of evaluating your learning. Though **you may be inaccurate – indeed overoptimistic – in your judgments of your knowledge and learning**, it still helps you better calibrate your revision and monitor your ongoing progress. You can use exam specification checklists provided by your teacher to do this.

**8. Past questions.** You need to **practice examination questions/practice questions or tasks**, over and over, well-**spaced over time**. The effect of exploring **worked examples** or **exam answers**, as well as writing your own, helps you process, practice and refine your revision to meet the parameters of exam success. Places to find exam papers are sign-posted in each of the subject areas of this guide but you can also find them on exam board websites.

**9. Interleaving** is a learning technique that involves mixing different topics or forms of practice, in order to facilitate learning. For example, if a student uses interleaving while preparing types of questions for an exam, they can mix up different types of questions, rather than study only one type of question at a time. Interleaving, which is sometimes referred to as mixed practice or varied practice, is contrasted with specific/block practice (sometimes referred to as massed practice), which involves focusing on only a single topic or form of practice at a time. Consider this when planning your timetable.



### Key Take away messages for you

- Make your revision active. Don't just read notes. Use the examples above e.g. flash cards, self-testing, mind maps.
- Getting a good night's sleep is vital. Accept when your head is full and get up early the next day.
- Ensure you are revising in a place that is free of distractions. Mobile phones should be put away/switched off.
- Take five-minute breaks every half an hour. Make sure you eat the right foods and drink plenty of water. Energy drinks don't allow your brain to function properly so are not a good option.

### Six Effective Study Habits

The Learning Sciences are cognitive psychological scientists interested in research on education. Their main research focus is on the science of learning. (Hence, "The Learning Scientists"! ). Below you will find some videos that explain 6 habits of highly successful students.

<https://www.learningscientists.org/videos>