Study Skills Workshops
Rehoboth Christian College

2. Revision Workshop

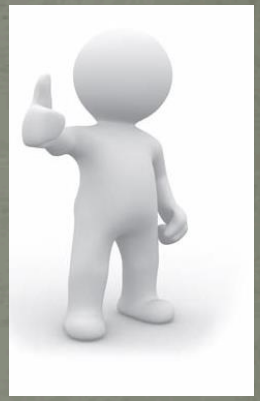
Workshops Overview

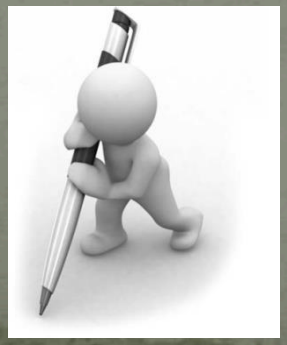
1 – Study Habits Workshop

An overview of Study Techniques; Motivation; Setting Goals; Getting Organized; Time Management and Revision Techniques.

2 – Revision Workshop

Ideas for Planning your time, Putting together a Revision Timetable, Getting the most out of Revision; Simple techniques, Tips to help you Revise in a way that suits; Memory tools, Mnemonics and much, much, more.





3 – Exams Workshop

This covers Understanding Exams; Instructions, Command and Keywords; Preparing for Exams; During the Exam; Managing Exam Stress; Exam Techniques and Stirling's Tips.

Planning your Time

Task:

In this first section you will work with other members of your group to write down the ideas you already have about revision, what's best to do, when you should start etc.

You have **5 minutes** to write down your thoughts.

Be ready to share your groups ideas with the rest of your group.

So to start…
What do you think?

Key Points on Getting Organised

Write down what your group thinks

*In **5** minutes time give feedback to the rest of your group.*

Here's what some other students suggested. Do you agree?

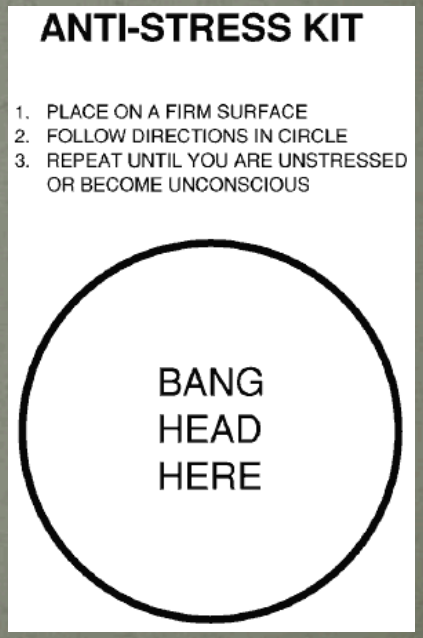
Key Points on Getting Started

1. Produce a detailed timetable and add this to your planner or diary
2. Start well in advance
3. Know your dates and times of exams
4. Build in 'free time' and breaks
5. Prioritize
6. Use different revision techniques and revise different subjects on the same day
7. Discuss your plans and timetables with other students
8. Think about your diet, i.e. what you eat and drink
9. Make a checklist
10. Get the necessary revision resources and materials

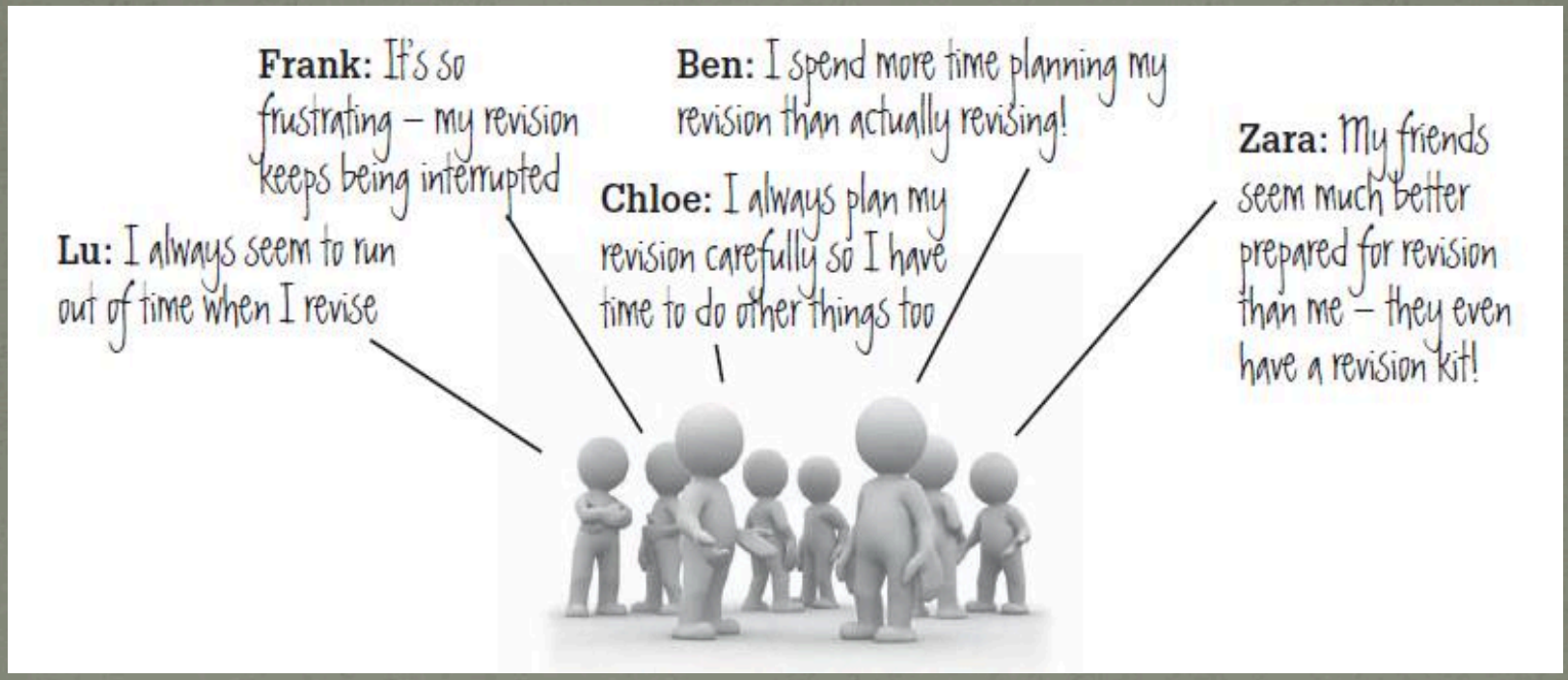
Planning Revision

Planning revision is important if you want it to be effective. Planning helps you make the most of the time you have and makes sure you have the resources you need.

This section ...
Will help you start to plan your time.
And hopefully get you to start thinking about the process of
REVISION.



Is this you?
Who do you identify with?



Who would you like to be?

Where to start … ?

STARTING TO PLAN YOUR TIME

Answer these questions to help you get started:

- How long can you learn effectively without a break (let's call this a 'learning chunk')?
- Which times of day are you better at revising?
- How many subjects do you need to revise for?
- Are any of your exams more important than the others (do you want to prioritise them)?
- What other commitments do you have which prevent you from revising?
- When do you want to start?
- What is the minimum amount of time you want to revise for each exam?
- What is the maximum time you think you want to revise for each exam?

You can use this information to work out a revision timetable.

Task: Think For A Minute

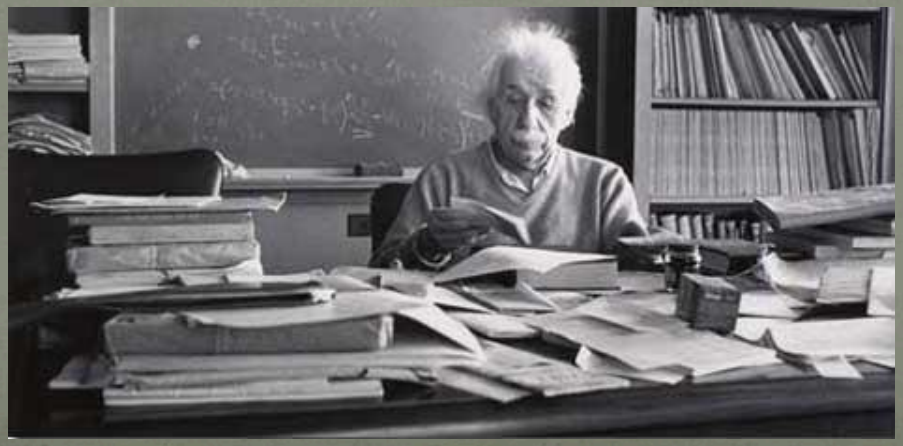
1. How would you answer the above?
2. Did you think about these things when planning your timetable?

Putting Together a Timetable

To make your own revision timetable by hand you will need:

- **A diary, planner or calendar**
- **A pencil**
- **An eraser**

Don't forget – If you have internet access, there are sites that will help you.



Working Out A Timetable

HOW TO WORK OUT A REVISION TIMETABLE

- Enter the exam dates in your diary, planner or calendar
- Enter your intended revision start date
- Enter your other commitments
- This should reveal the times when you are free to revise – ideally at least some of these will be times when you are at your most effective
- Divide these times into 'learning chunks'
- Remember to leave some gaps for breaks, food, fun and sleep
- Allocate particular subjects/exams to each learning chunk, taking into account the maximum and minimum times you want to spend on each subject
- Check that you have covered each exam/subject adequately
- You should also make sure that you revise in a sensible order – no point preparing for the last exam first!
- Amend your revision plan as you go along – this is why it's sensible to use a pencil

→ Don't overcomplicate it
→ Be realistic

Construct a Revision timetable of your own …

Show and Share Timetables …

You should all have a copy of your timetable for revision.
In your group compare what you have done.

Could your timetable be improved, is it detailed enough, can you help others with some advice on how to improve their version?

→How should I revise?

We asked some students how they revised. This what they said:

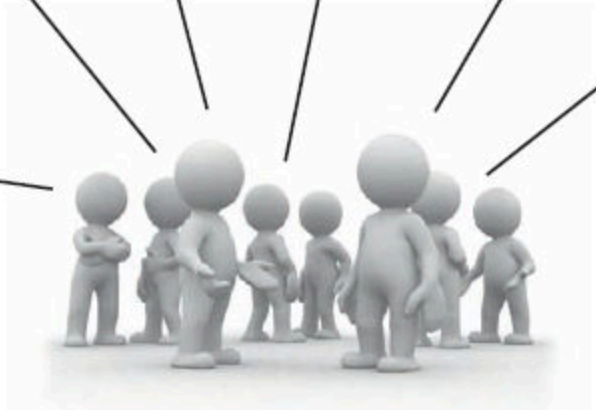
My mum bought me a roll of wallpaper lining paper so that I had loads of space to scribble things down

I can't revise without highlighter pens – they make text stand out for me, and it's less boring than just black and white

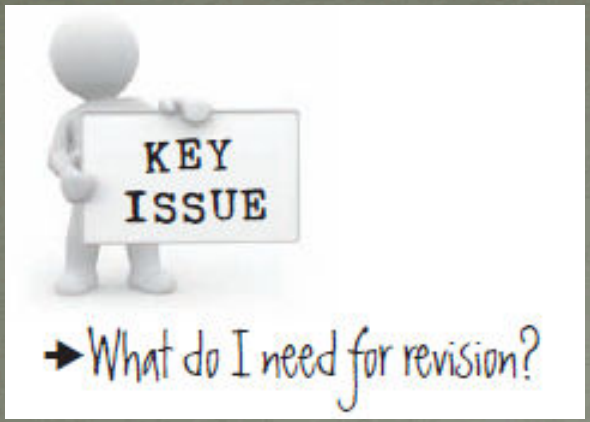
I have a fantastic software package on my computer which enables me to create mind maps and spider diagrams – in colour, with notes. Brilliant!

I like to use coloured paper. I remember things better by remembering the colour

I use index cards or blank postcards: I summarise one topic on a single card



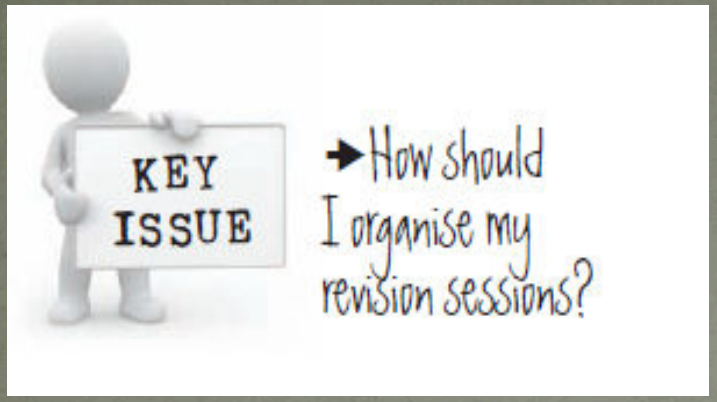
I have a small tape recorder so I read notes (sometimes from a revision guide) into it and play them back when I'm doing other things



No student can expect to do effective revision if they don't have the right environment and the right materials. So it's worth spending a bit of time working out exactly what you need.

Text books	Pens and pencils	Lined paper	Post-it notes
Blank cards	Calculator	Large sheets of blank paper	Your classwork, homework, and notes
A revision guide	Highlighter pens	Computer access	Past exam papers

Think about what you need and get organised …



For each subject the most common approach has four stages:

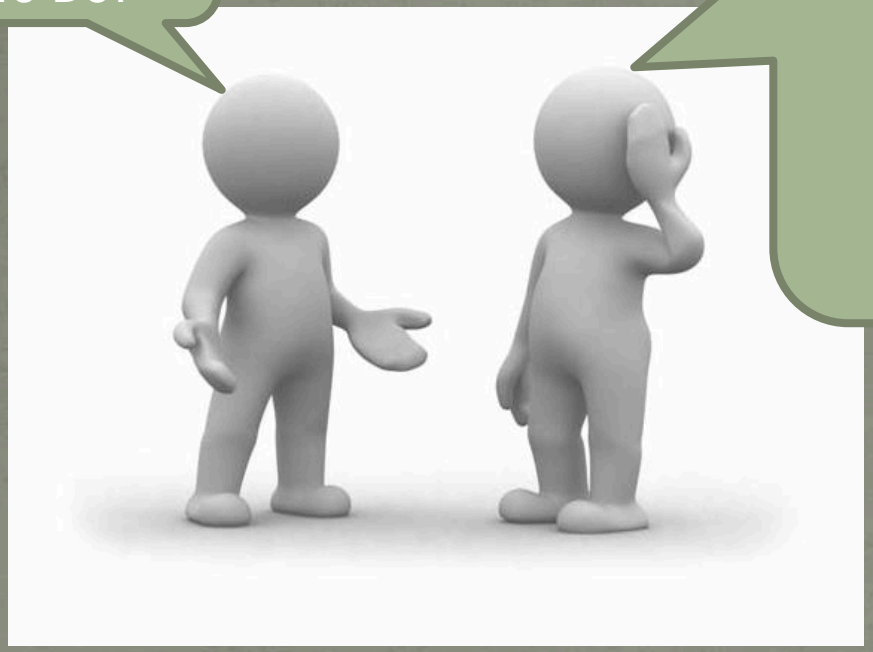
1. **Understand your exams**
2. **Organise your course materials**
3. **Create revision materials**
4. **Learn from your revision materials and self-test**

For most students the first stage may take only 10% of the available time. Stage two probably takes 20%. Stages three and four probably take up the bulk of the time (the remaining 70%).

	✓	✗	What could I do about this?
Am I always clear about why I am learning things?	☐	☐	
Do I give myself rewards during revision?	☐	☐	
Am I aware of how the information I am learning fits into the course as a whole?	☐	☐	
Do I ever visualise myself achieving the outcome I want?	☐	☐	
Do I have a suitable space and environment for revising?	☐	☐	
Do I eat and drink sensibly during the revision period?	☐	☐	
Do I have a method of testing myself?	☐	☐	
Do I revise material more than once?	☐	☐	
Am I free from interference when I want to revise?	☐	☐	
Do I have enough breaks during revision?	☐	☐	

How To Revise

I Don't Know What To Do?



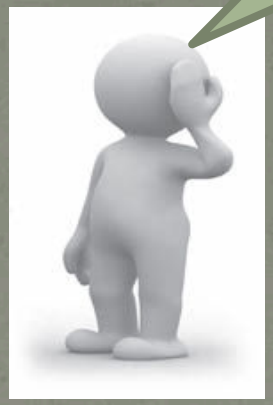
Make Your revision
ACTIVE
Why not try:

Revision Cards
Mind Maps
Self Testing

Success with Revision Cards
How To Mind Maps
Make the most of Yourself

Task

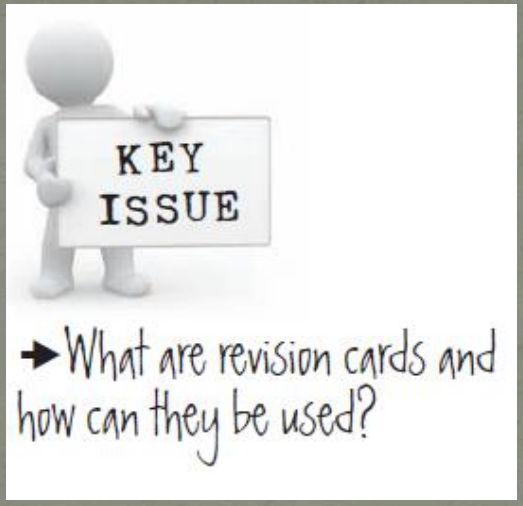
In this **section,** we are going to begin to look at the actual process of '**how to revise?**'



Working as a group you have 5 minutes to write down as many different techniques that you may have used/tried or may simply just have heard of.

Don't worry if you don't know how to use the technique, lots of them will be covered in this section.

Making Revision Cards



Revision cards are among the most popular revision resources. The idea is that you summarise some information on a single blank postcard or note card (front and back if necessary). Several different types are available from stationers or you can make them online at www.getrevising.co.uk. You then use the card for revision.

Five things to do with revision cards

1. Write questions on one side and answers on the other – then test yourself or ask someone else to test you.

2. Write key names or terms on one side and a summary of what they wrote or the definition on the other side.

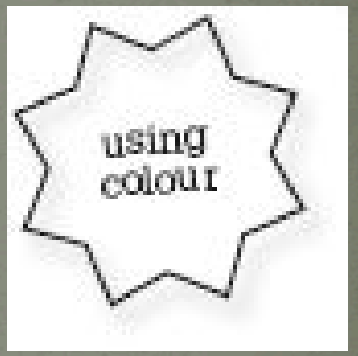
3. Write the advantages of something on one side and the disadvantages or criticisms on the other.

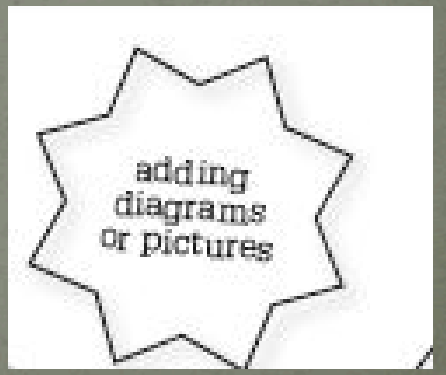
4. Write about something in reasonable detail on one side and use the other side to summarise its key points as a short list (no more than five points).

5. Discuss a subject with a few friends and decide what sort of cards would be most useful. Divide the subject up into sections and make each person responsible for making revision cards for one or more sections. Meet up when the cards are made and revise from the cards together, for example by testing each other.

A Few Ideas For Revision Cards

- Read through the notes you made for a particular topic
- Divide your notes into sensible sized chunks
- Use a different card for each chunk. Write your notes onto the index cards. Try to make them even shorter on the cards
- Use different coloured pens
- Add drawings and cartoons if you want

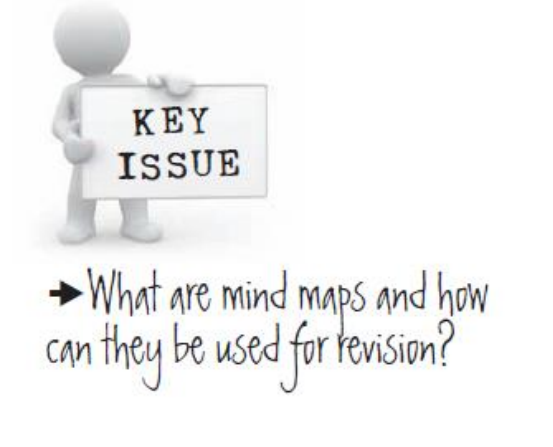


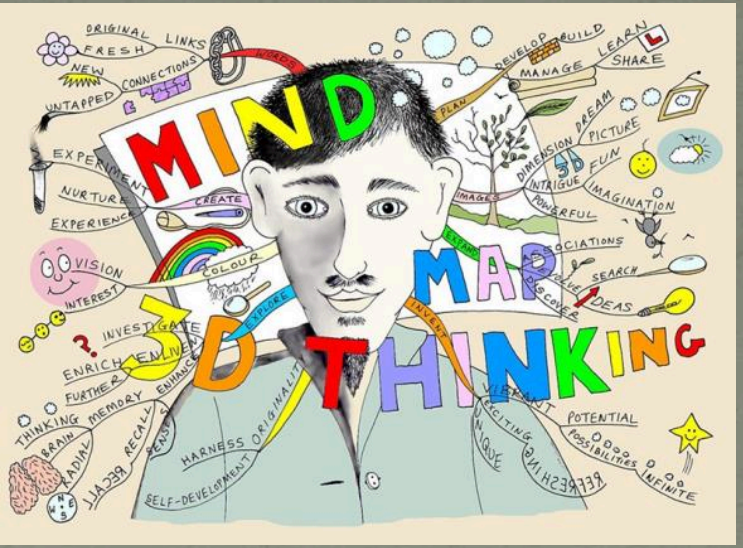


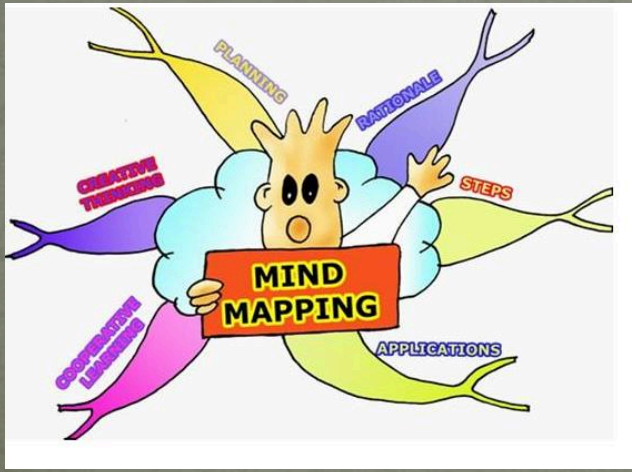
To help you remember key information, you have to rehearse it – go over it several times.

Look over the cue cards whenever you can. You can carry them around, or stick them up around your office or home on the wall, fridge, mirror, anywhere you look at every day.

Making Mind Maps





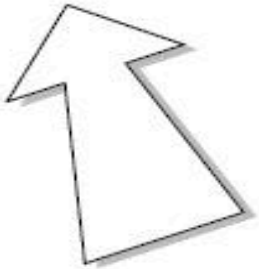


Mind maps are a way of organising ideas about a topic. A mind map usually starts with a central idea with a series of branches, each relating to one aspect of the main idea. These lead to other branches and so it goes on.

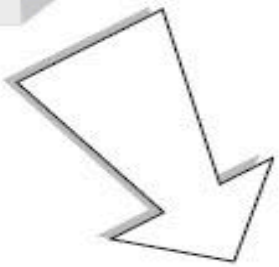
A mind map allows you to see the whole topic on one sheet of paper. And making the mind map helps you learn both the detail and the big picture of a topic.

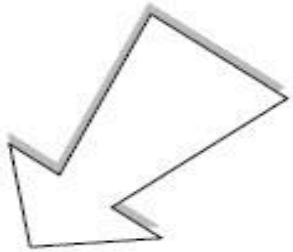
The Toolkit

Paper, any size.



MIND MAP
TOOLKIT





Coloured pens, felt-tips, pencils, crayons, rubber, sharpener.

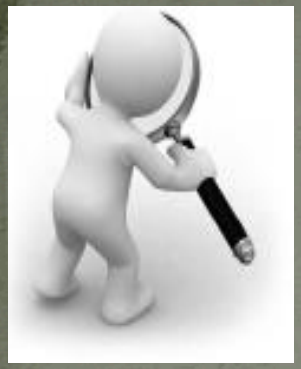
Your brain.

How To Mind Map

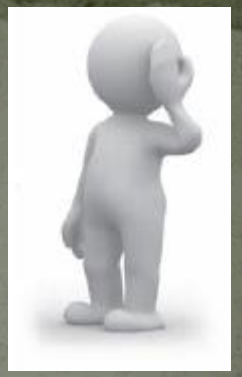
Key Points

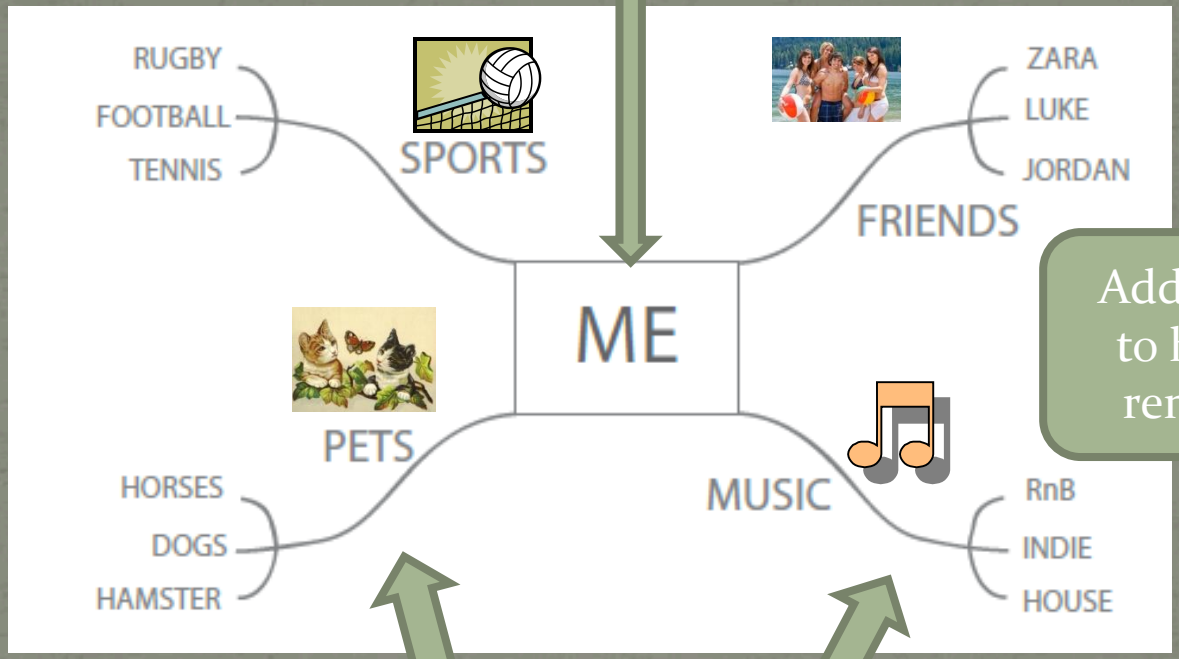
Your brain thinks and remembers in pictures. Think about how pictures in photo albums, books and magazines immediately bring back your memories. So, if you want to remember your house, or anything else, the best way to do it is to draw it!
Mind maps can be constructed by following these five easy steps:

1. Place a blank piece of unlined paper sideways on a flat surface and collect some coloured pens or pencils.
2. Draw a picture in the middle of the page that summarises your chosen topic. This is your main topic.
3. Draw some thick, curved lines coming away from this central picture, one for each of the main ideas you have about this subject. These central branches represent your sub-topic.
4. Label each of these ideas and draw a picture of each one. Drawing these small pictures will ensure that you are using both sides of your brain. Next, underline these key words to highlight their importance.
5. From each of these ideas you can draw smaller connected lines so that you begin to create an image similar to the spreading branches of a tree. Add your thoughts on each of these ideas. These additional branches represent the details.

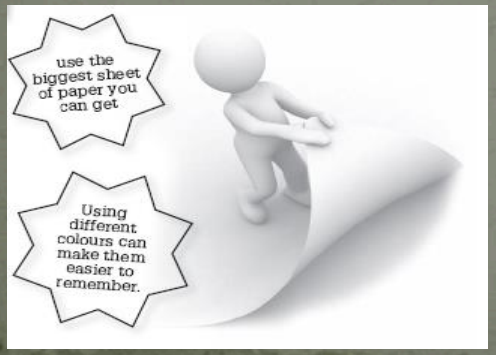


Summary of your chosen topic

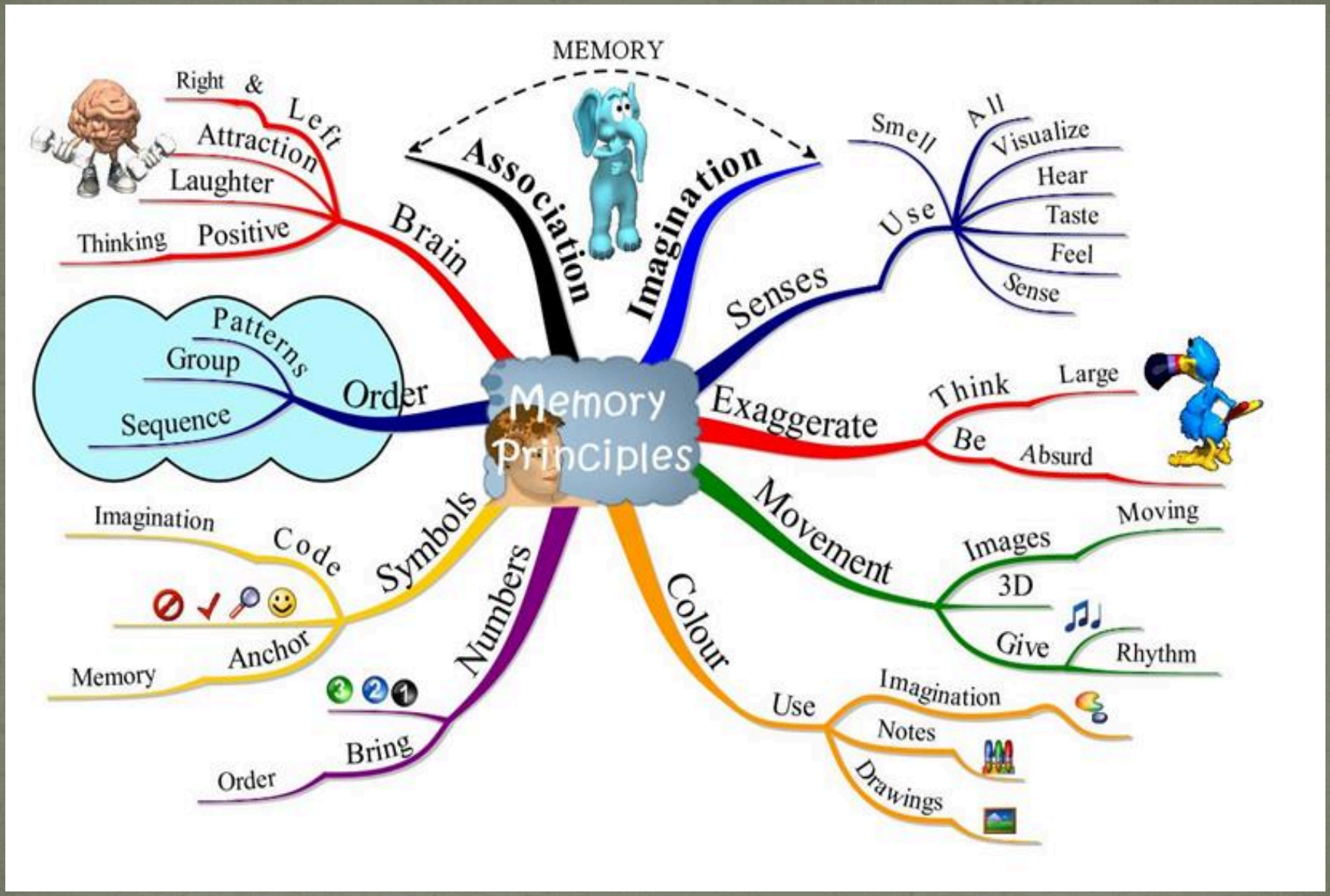




Add pictures to help you remember



Main ideas about this topic


MEMORY
Memory Principles
Brain
Right & Left
Attraction
Laughter
Positive
Thinking
Association
Imagination
Senses
Use
All
Visualize
Hear
Taste
Feel
Sense
Smell
Order
Patterns
Group
Sequence
Exaggerate
Think
Large
Be
Absurd
Movement
Moving
Images
3D
Give
Rhythm
Colour
Use
Imagination
Notes
Drawings
Numbers
Bring
Order
Symbols
Code
Imagination
Anchor
Memory

Testing Yourself

Checking your knowledge and understanding as you go along is an essential part of revision. It lets you know what is going into your brain and what needs 'topping up'.

Here are some suggestions for checking your revision progress.

Look, cover, test, check

If you've made resources such as revision cards, you can study them, cover them, and try to reproduce what was there (either in your mind, speaking it, or writing it down again).

??!

!?!

Quiz time

Give your revision materials to a friend or member of the family and ask them to make up questions to test you. There is something of an art to this (see the activity below) – so you may need to train your quiz master.

Do some exam questions

This can be very effective, especially if you have access to someone who can mark them or if you are good at using a mark scheme. If you have planned your revision effectively you should have time to set yourself a mock exam.

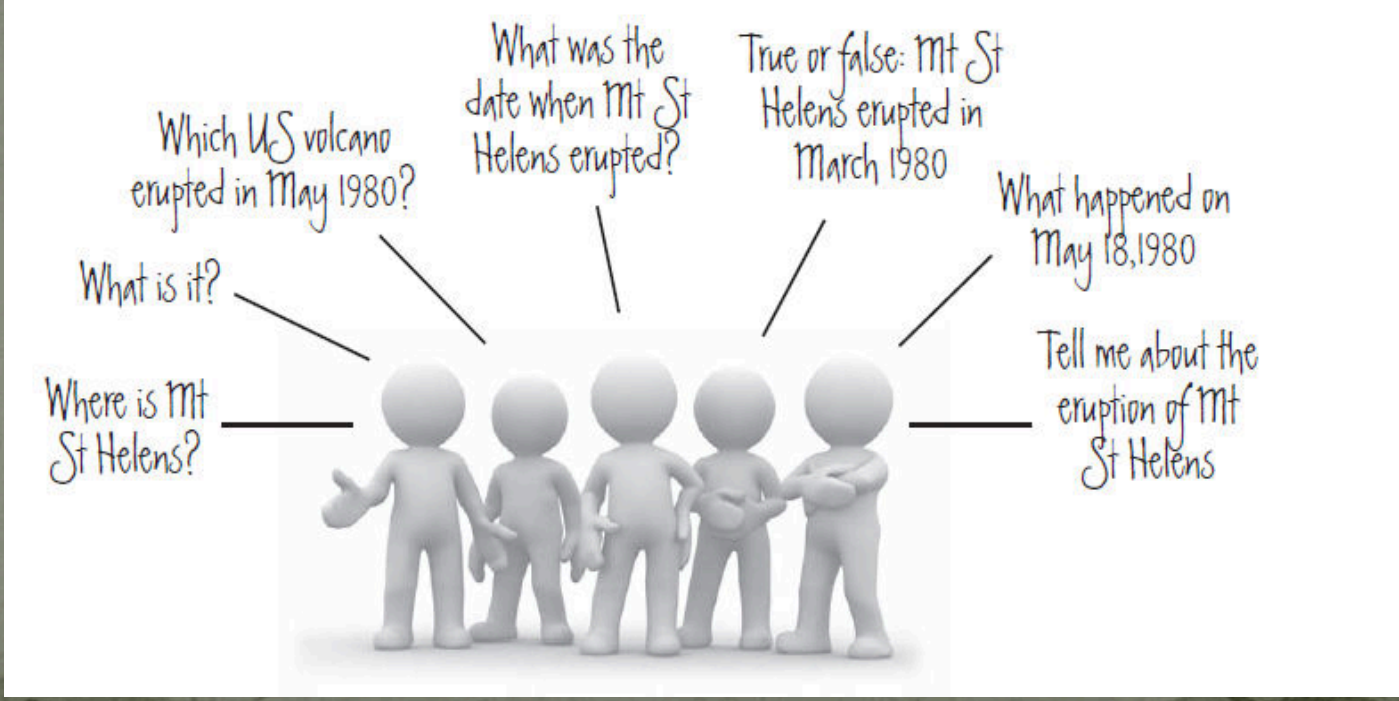
A good quiz master is able to ask several different questions based on the same information. This is better for checking your revision than having to answer the same question over and over again.

For example, look at this one sentence.

The eruption of Mount St. Helens on May 18th, 1980, at 8:32am, killed 57 people. 250 homes, 47 bridges, 15 miles (24 km) of railways, and 185 miles (298 km) of highway were destroyed.

You could ask the following questions

not all in the same revision session though!



Revising Boring Topics

Even in our favourite subjects there may be bits we find less interesting.

The table below contains suggestions on how to make these boring bits more interesting. Tick the ones you already use and the ones you might try next time it all gets a bit dull.

Have you any ideas of your own that work for you and that might help others?

ACTIVITY

To make the boring bits more interesting I can	I do this already	I'll try this
Revise with someone else	☐	☐
Find a new angle on the topic (such as finding someone famous this topic applies to and how it has affected them)	☐	☐
Find a way in which this topic relates to me personally	☐	☐
Find out how it can be linked to the topics I am interested in	☐	☐
Find a new source of information – such as a different textbook, website, CD-ROM	☐	☐
Go somewhere else to revise the topic (for a change of scenery)	☐	☐
Break the revision into chunks of time and stick to the schedule	☐	☐
Revise in an unusual way – why not make a podcast, cut and paste from magazines or create a poster?	☐	☐
Give myself a big reward when I've learnt it	☐	☐
Other?	☐	☐
Other?	☐	☐

More Ideas for Revision

I need some more ideas for revision

Ok … So have you thought about:

Learn a rhyme or get on line; both are great and save you

Acronyms & Mnemonics
Post Its & Posters
Using the INTERNET
SEGE?

Task

Still not sure how to revise, need a few more tips and ideas to get you started or to keep you going ...

HELP
I need some variation in my revision – I'm starting to get bored!!

There are so many good excuses for not revising! It's amazing how many TV programmes are unmissable, how many dogs eat notes, how many other days there are before the exam...

Look at the following reasons why students put off revising. What advice would you give them that might help them get started?

➔How can I stop avoiding revision?

Take another look at the list.

Have you used any of these excuses?

If so, should you follow your own advice?

"My memory doesn't work very well"

"I don't know where to start"

"Revision is boring and I don't enjoy it"

"I don't have a complete set of course notes to work from"

"I can never remember what I've been reading"

"I likes to do it all in a rush at the last minute"

"There's no point revising because I'm rubbish at exams"

"I don't have any revision materials"

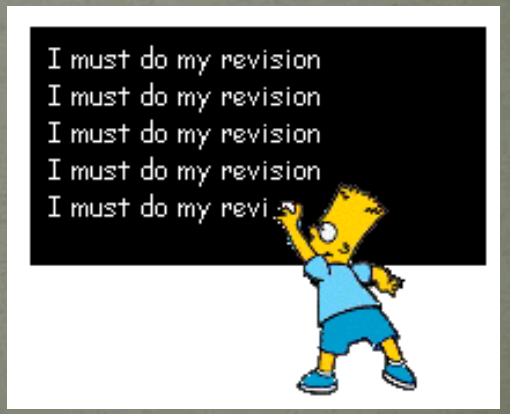
"No-one else has started yet"

"There is so much stuff that I know I can't learn it all"

Variation is the name of the game

OK, it's not something most people would do as a matter of choice but there are things you can do to make revision more enjoyable.

Here's a few more revision tips and ideas to keep you on your road to success.



Simple But Effective

Mnemonics

A mnemonic is a word or a rhyme that helps you to remember a fact or a spelling. The first letter acts as a memory prompt.

Examples

You can remember the order of the planets from the sun as follows:
My Very Easy Method Just Speeds Up Naming Planets
Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, Pluto.

The colours of the rainbow:
Richard Of York Gave Battle In Vain
Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue, Indigo, Violet

Reading music manuscripts:
Every Good Boy Deserves Fish for the lines.

→ Making links helps memory

Still Simple and Still Effective

Acronyms are a useful way of remembering important information or condensing key facts about a topic. You use the first letter of the key words or names of the topic to create a word that you will then remember. In Geography, for example, the tectonic plates that float on the earth's mantle can be recorded as follows:

Africa

North America

Antarctica

South America

Pacific

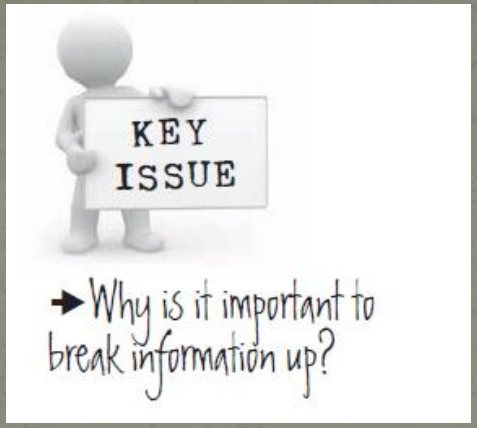
Indo-Australia

Eurasia

Acronyms

→Grouping information makes it easier to learn

5 is the Magic Number



Breaking down information into bite-size chunks helps you learn and remember. And the brain seems to work best if the chunks have five or fewer bits.

Five seems to be the magic number

And 7 is most definitely where you should stop … think about you mobile number, more than 7 digits?
Bet you've broken it down into chunks;
maybe you even give it out in chunks.

Staying Simple ...

Questions

The Great Fire of London

When you are interested in a topic, this can help you to learn faster and memorise better. In order to improve both your understanding and memory you can ask questions.

1. WHO started it?
2. HOW far did it spread?
3. WHEN did it start and when did it end?
4. WHAT happened to London and the people after the fire?
5. WHY did the fire do so much damage to London?
6. WHERE exactly did the Great Fire start?

Key Words Post-its

A useful way to memorise information is to write a list of KEY WORDS and then tell yourself all the details that go with those key words. These can be written onto Post-it notes which can be posted around your room.

Design a Poster

A useful way to revise and memorise facts is to create a ***colourful poster.*** This can include the key topics or pieces of information that you are studying.

You can write the topic across the centre of the page and then write and illustrate the key facts around this. Alternatively, you can write the topic at the top of the page and then have a flow-chart or bullet points underneath this.

SEGE Pneumonic

This gets you to think about answering a question in different ways and in different amounts of detail. For example when describing a quadrilateral in Maths …

Say It

All Quadrilaterals have four sides.

Explain

Quadrilaterals include squares, rectangles, rhombuses, parallelograms, kites and trapeziums and each of these shapes has four sides.

Give an Example

A rhombus looks like a square pushed over. It has four sides of equal length and the opposite sides are parallel and the opposite angles are equal.

Evaluate It

This is a useful way to remember a lot of complex information and I think I can give examples and descriptions for all the quadrilaterals.

S

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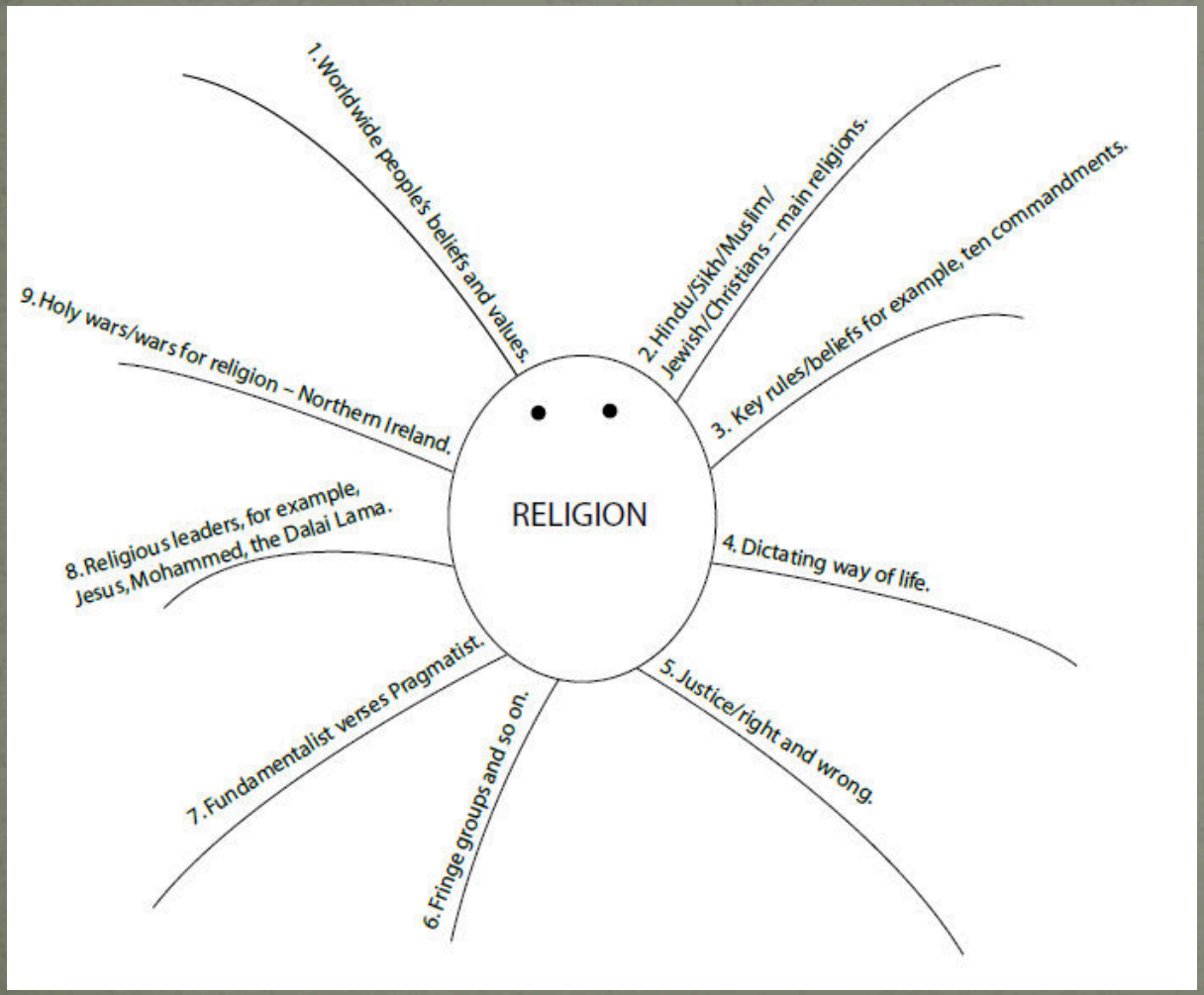
Spidergram!



These are ***not*** mind maps.

Step One: Brainstorm ideas.

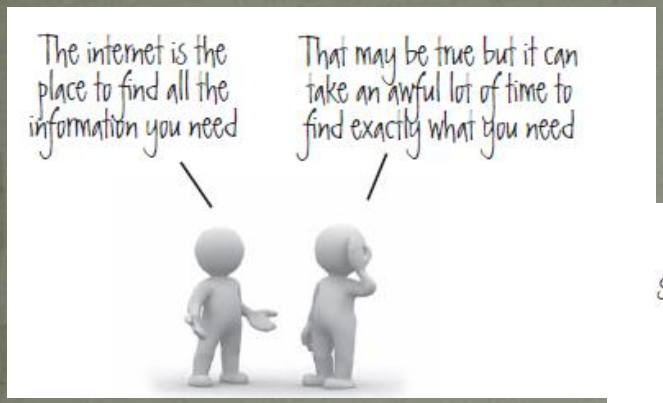
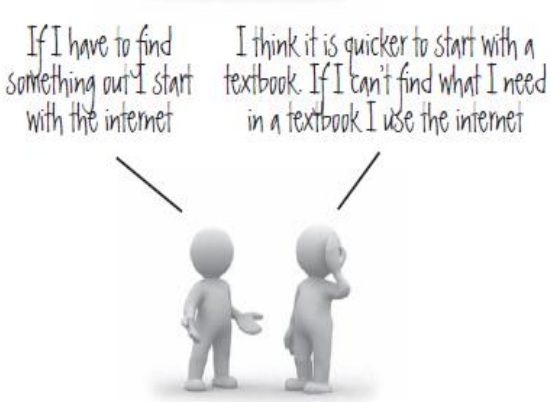
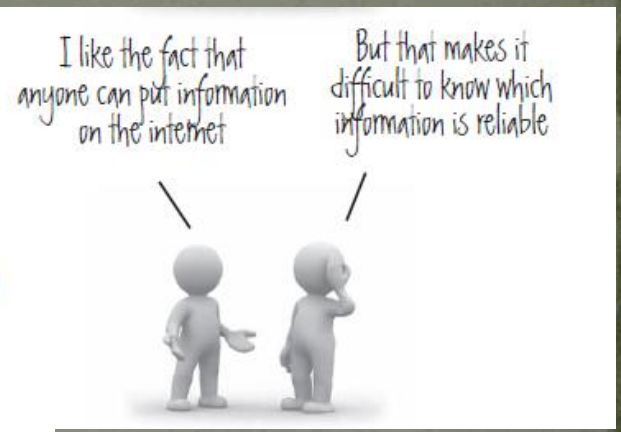
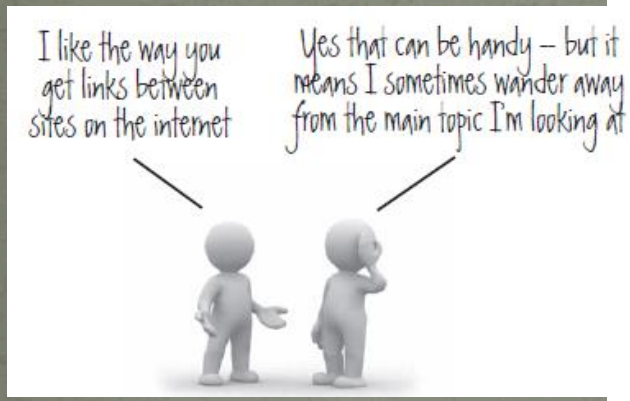
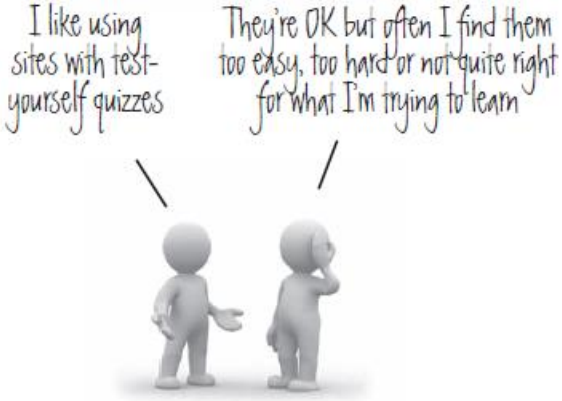
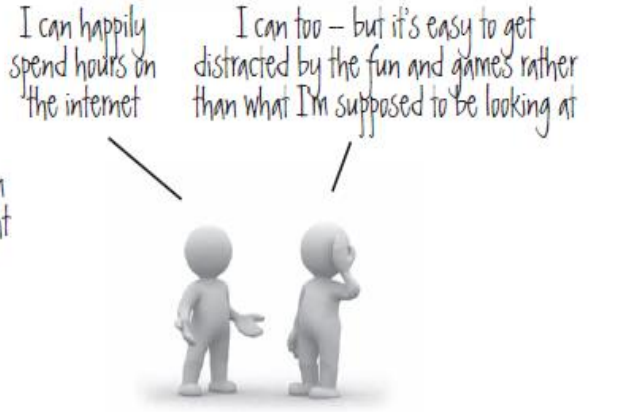
Step Two: Number each leg to form key words to start each paragraph.

There's always the internet ...

Everyone knows the internet is a fantastic source of information and there is no doubt that it can be really useful at revision time.

But learning is about making sense of a course for yourself. That means taking an active role in revision – making up questions, being tested, making revision cards or mind maps for example.

Reading through endless sets of notes presented in slightly different (and possibly contradictory or outdated) ways is not that helpful.

So be careful which sites you choose ...

Be careful though …