



# THOMAS MILLS HIGH SCHOOL

Supporting your child through their GCSEs

# Challenging times

- GCSEs are hard
- GCSEs are important
- Focus of five (or eleven) years of work
- Sixth Form
- College
- Training / University / Jobs
- STRESS!



# ***Some Advice***

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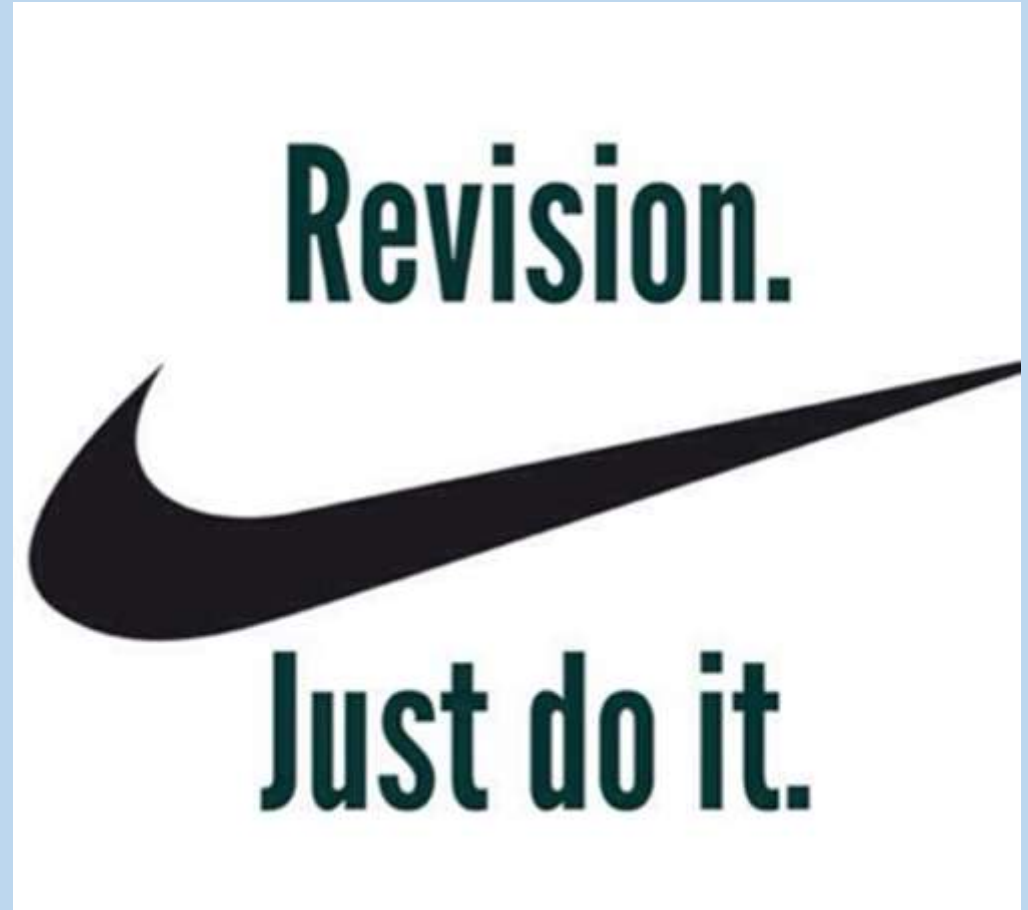
# Perspective



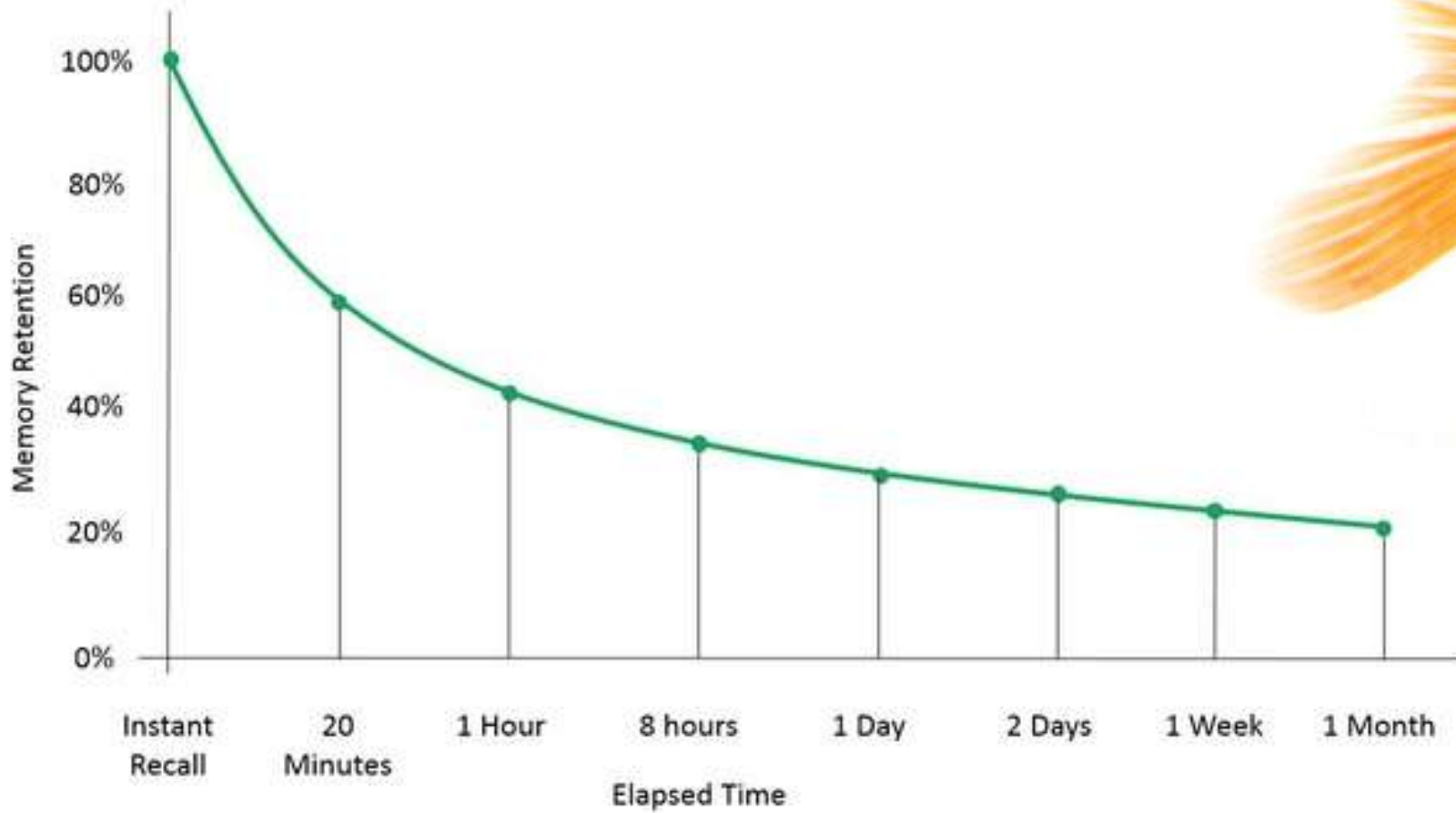
- It is not life or death
- You can only do your best
- Many in the world would love to have your problems / opportunities
- You will get through this
- You might even enjoy it!

# Revision

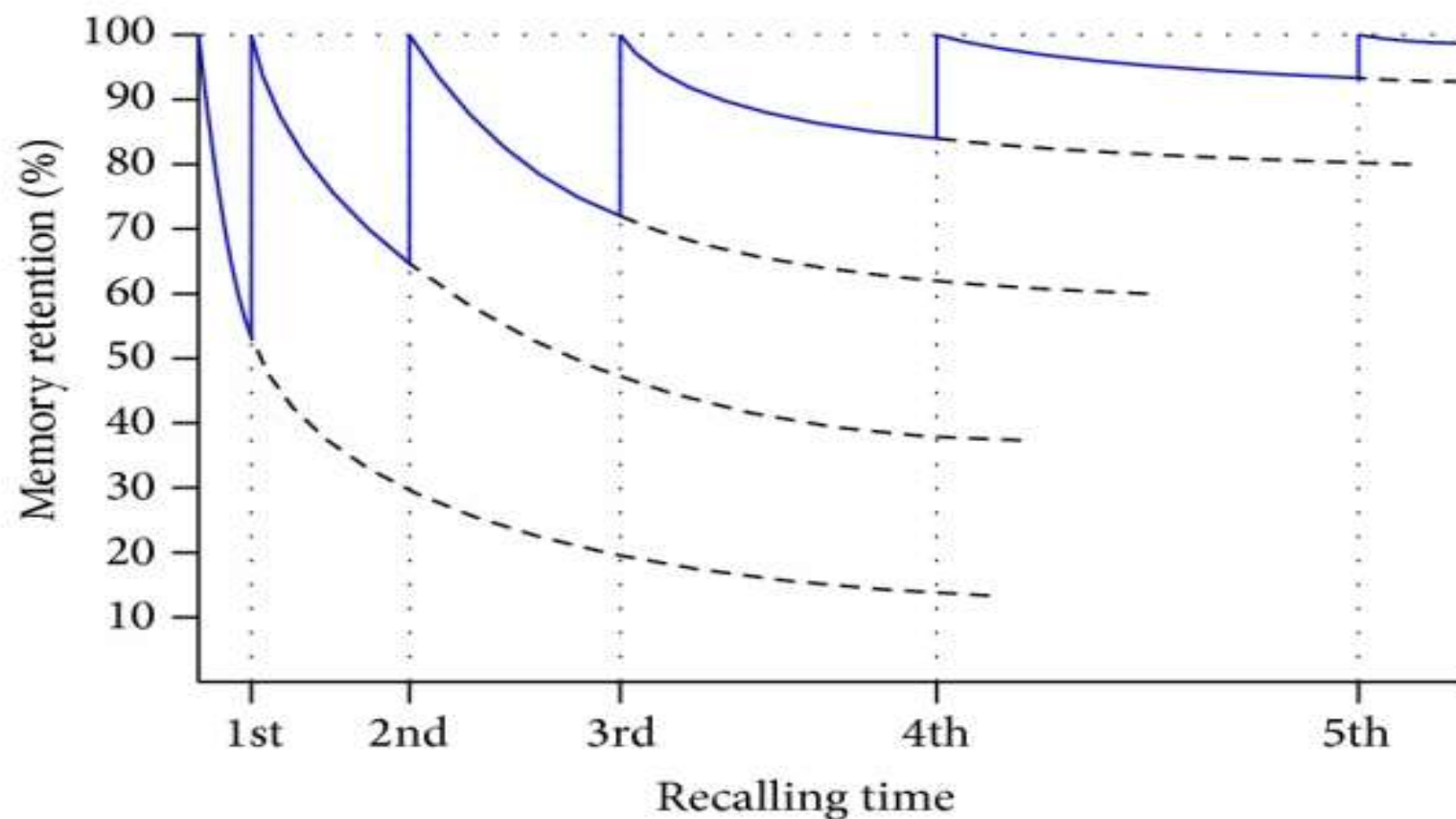
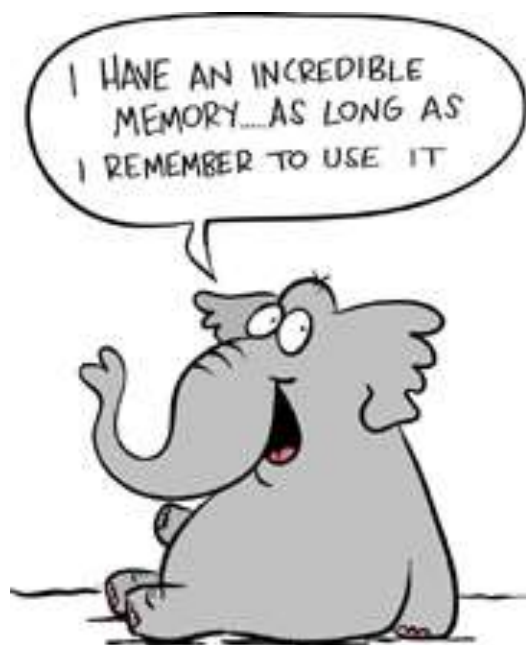
- Lessons are not enough
- Change short-term to long-term memory
- Aid knowledge retrieval
- Improve examination performance



# Forgetting



# Revision limits forgetting



# Retrieval



# Tips

1. Start early (*How many weeks left?*) – Distributed practice
2. Make a revision timetable
3. Get the right environment
4. Don't spend ages making your notes look pretty
5. Use revision guides
6. If on study leave – get up early (*8.00am!*)
7. Stick key points on *Post-it* notes all over the room / the house
8. Working in pairs or a small group might work for some
9. Revise the difficult bits / the bits you don't like



10. Don't procrastinate
11. Don't just read your notes – *use the technique that works for you*
12. Short bursts – *followed by short break or treat*
13. Do lots of past paper questions
14. Check (and re-check) the exam timetable
15. Keep away from distractions and bad influences
16. Use your teachers – they know what they're talking about!
17. No loud “heavy” music!
18. Physical exercise
19. Parents – try to keep positive and encouraging!
20. Keep some perspective!

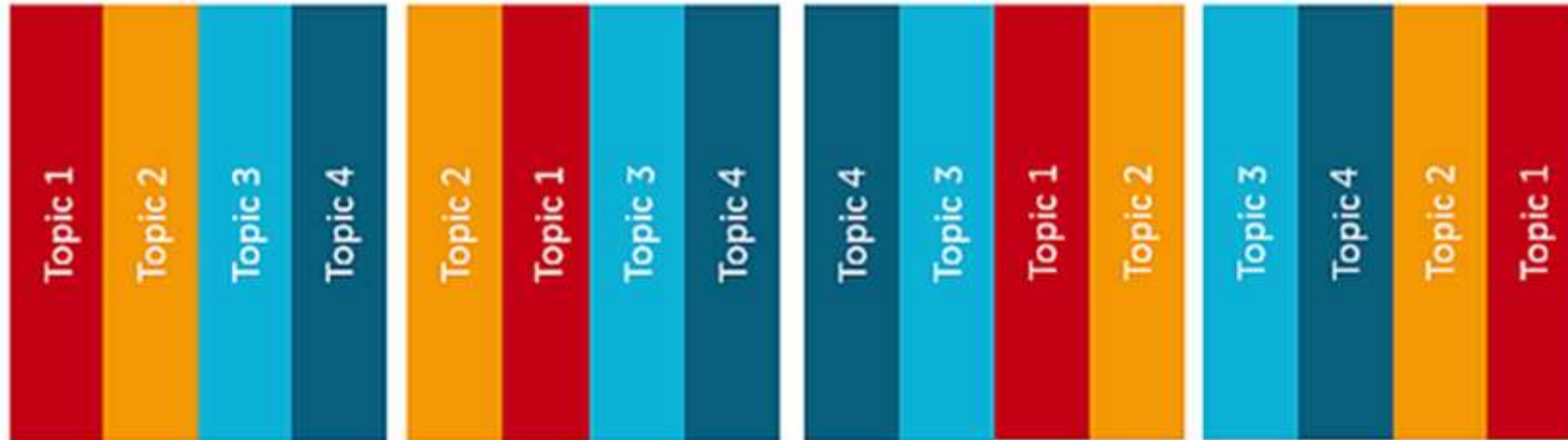


# Interleaving

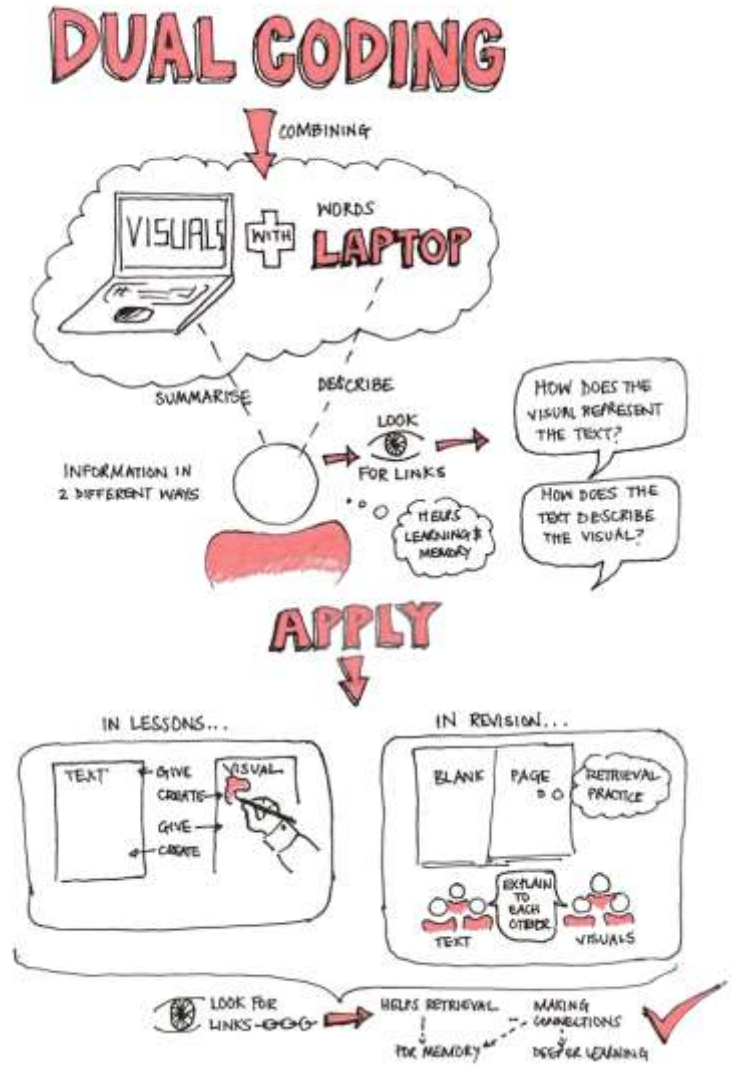
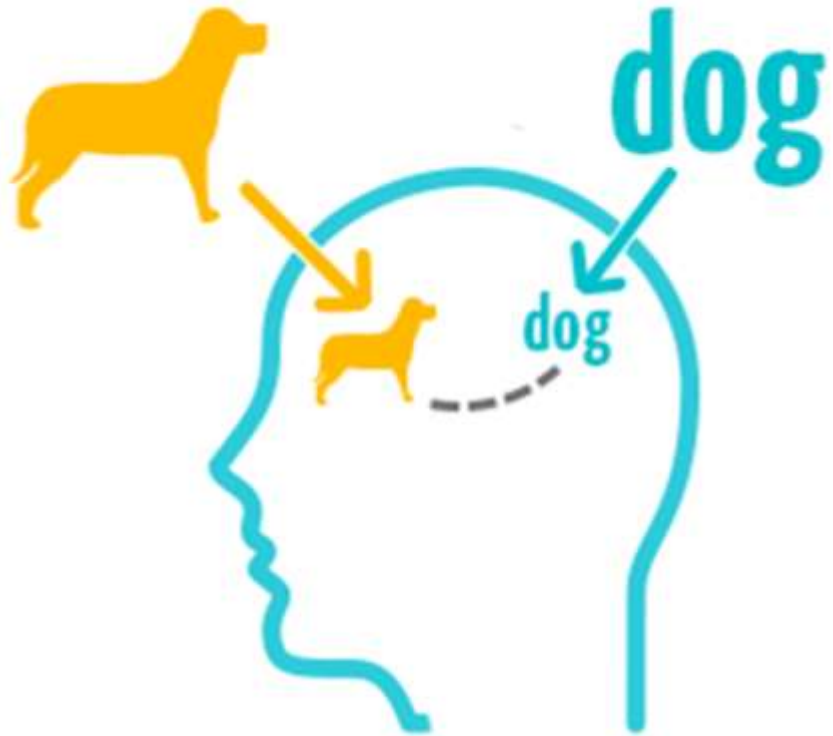
## Blocking

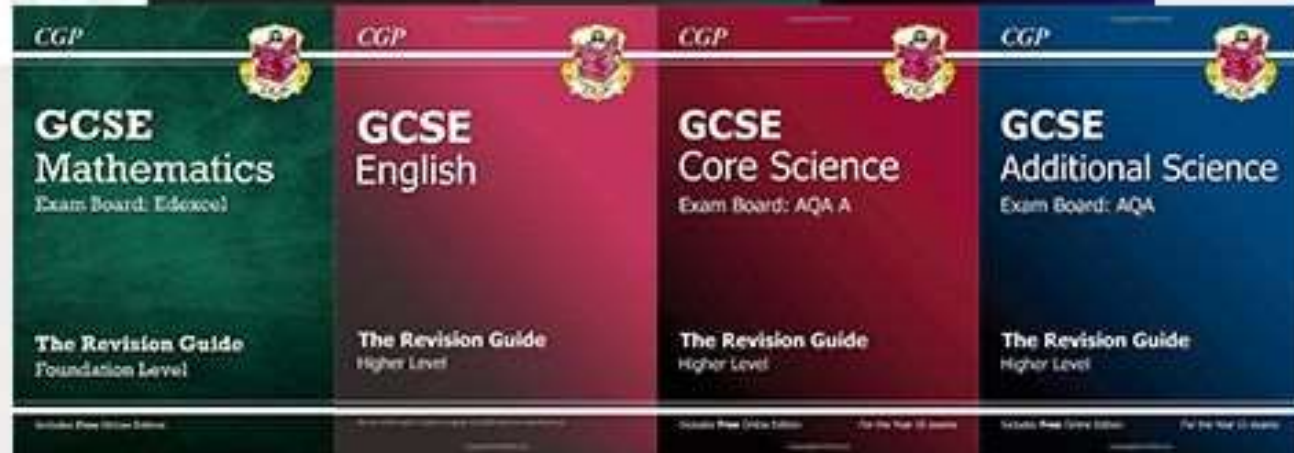
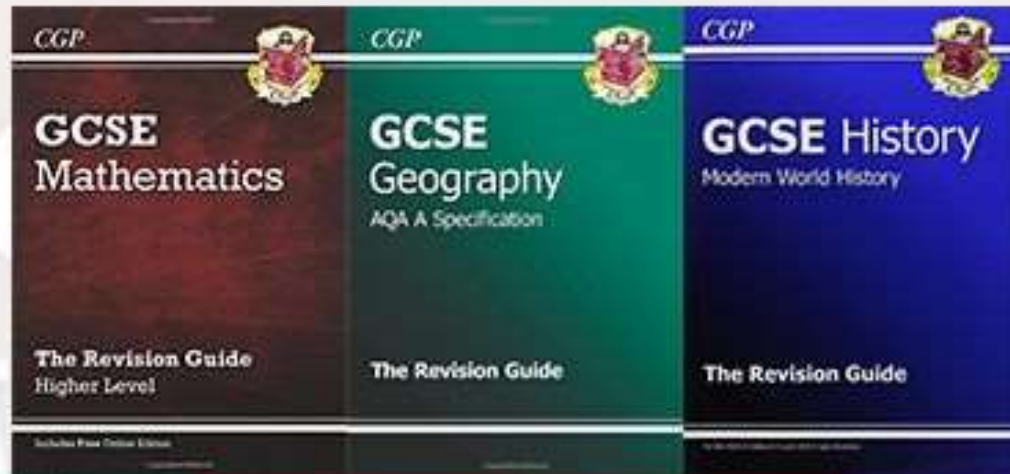


## Interleaving



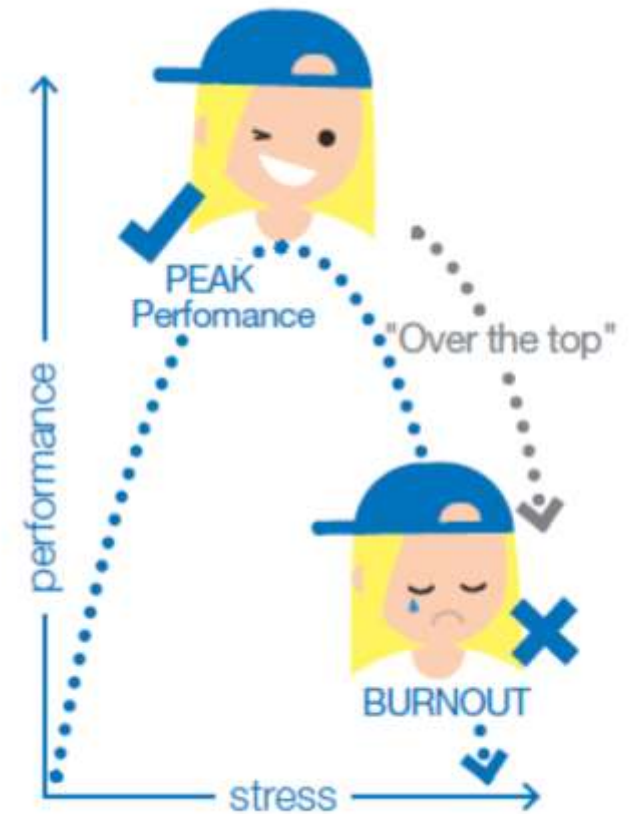
# Dual Coding





# Dealing with stress

- The right amount of stress is actually good
- We need a little stress to perform at our best
- Preparation and managing stress is what is important





## **20 minute chunks**

- We all have a limited attention/focus span
- Have a break/change tasks every 20 minutes to stay fresh
- This makes the most effective use of your time and your brain

# Breaks are good, Distractions are bad

- Distractions (such as quickly checking social media) may only take seconds – but impact on the brain's ability to learn for up to 20 minutes
- Planned, timed, focused breaks can aid the learning process





## Say it out loud!

- One of the most effective ways of learning is to say what you know out loud (an approach to *dual coding*)
- Do this on your own
- Or teach your parents, your siblings or your dog/cat

# Sleep is your friend

- A good night's sleep (8-9 hours) will help you retain more of what you revised the previous day
- *"Burning the midnight oil"* can be detrimental



# **The revision timetable**

- List all the subjects (or topics within subjects) that you need to do revision for.
- Now rank them in order, with the first being the subject in which you need to do the most revision.
- Think about your target grades and current attainment to work this out.
- Discuss with teachers if you need to.

Subjects to revise for:

- ▶ Maths
- ▶ English
- ▶ Science
- ▶ Geography
- ▶ RS
- ▶ Music
- ▶ Business Studies



Rank order (most revision needed)

- 1<sup>st</sup>. Science
- 2<sup>nd</sup>. Maths
- 3<sup>rd</sup>. Geography
- 4<sup>th</sup>. English
- 5<sup>th</sup>. Business Studies
- 6<sup>th</sup>. Music
- 7<sup>th</sup>. RS

# Making the revision timetable personal

- Add in jobs, hobbies and family commitments
- Allocate the number of “slots” you can do
- Interleave subjects and topics (colour code – to aid quick reading)
- Be realistic! For example: Don’t plan to revise maths for 12 hours solid on a Saturday, because it won’t happen and you won’t benefit from it
- Have your revision timetable somewhere where you will see it everyday, so it acts as a reminder of what you need to do
- Put a copy on your phone or set alarms/reminders that will help you stick to your plan

# Revision timetable

| Week | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
|------|--------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|----------|--------|
| 1    |        |         |           |          |        |          |        |
| 2    |        |         |           |          |        |          |        |
| 3    |        |         |           |          |        |          |        |
| 4    |        |         |           |          |        |          |        |
| 5    |        |         |           |          |        |          |        |
| 6    |        |         |           |          |        |          |        |

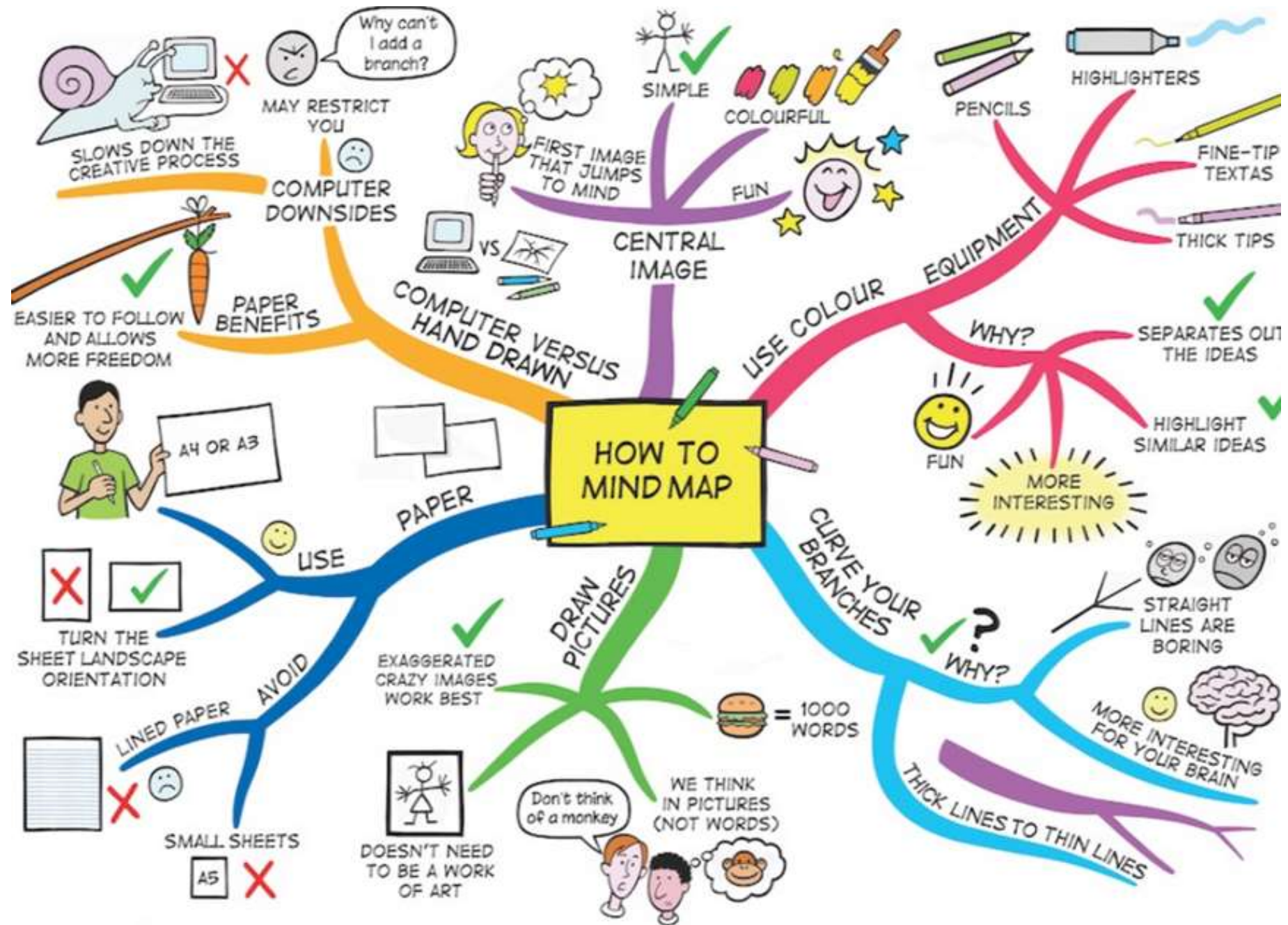
# Revision timetable

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

|       | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
|-------|--------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|----------|--------|
| 8 am  |        |         |           |          |        |          |        |
| 9 am  |        |         |           |          |        |          |        |
| 10 am |        |         |           |          |        |          |        |
| 11 am |        |         |           |          |        |          |        |
| 12 pm |        |         |           |          |        |          |        |
| 1 pm  |        |         |           |          |        |          |        |
| 2 pm  |        |         |           |          |        |          |        |
| 3 pm  |        |         |           |          |        |          |        |

# Techniques to try

- Highlight key words and phrases (preparation)
- Condense information: first to one side of A4 then onto a post card
- Summarise information as pictures and mind maps (dual coding)
- Flash cards
- Record key information and quotes onto smart phone / digital recorder / MP3 player (or tape!) and play them back
- Talk – read notes and recall key points out loud
- Teach your parent/sibling/pet (speaking as part of dual coding)
- Test progress regularly – blank paper retrieval
- Past questions and papers – in real time





# Good websites & apps for revision

- <https://studywise.co.uk/gcse-revision/>
- <https://revisionworld.com/gcse-revision>
- <https://studymaths.co.uk/>
- <https://getrevising.co.uk>
- <https://s-cool.co.uk>
- <https://bbc.co.uk/bitesize>





bubbl.us



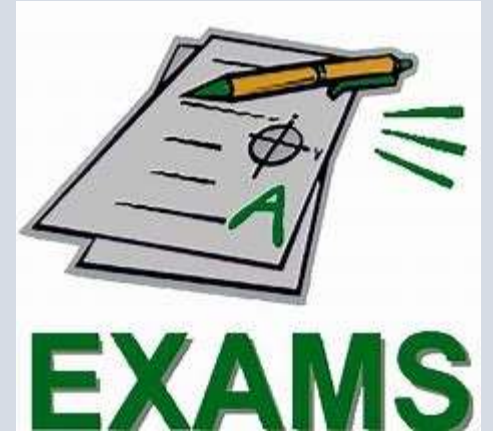
GR  
learn  
together

Quizlet



# Exams

- Eat well (quality)
- Sleep well (*as well as you can*)
- Bottle of water (no label)
- Do not listen to those who claim they are doing no revision... they are probably exaggerating their lack of work!
- Check the exam timetable for dates and times (again)
- Adjust revision focus for later subjects
- Serious problems? – get them to pop in and talk to a teacher



# **Frequently asked questions**

- How long should my child revise for?
- How do I stop my son/daughter from spending all his/her time on Instagram and Snap Chat?
- My son/daughter spends all his time on his/her Play Station (or X-Box) – what can I do?
- My son /daughter likes to work independently. How can I help him/her?

***Any questions***

Thank you for coming

Good Luck!

