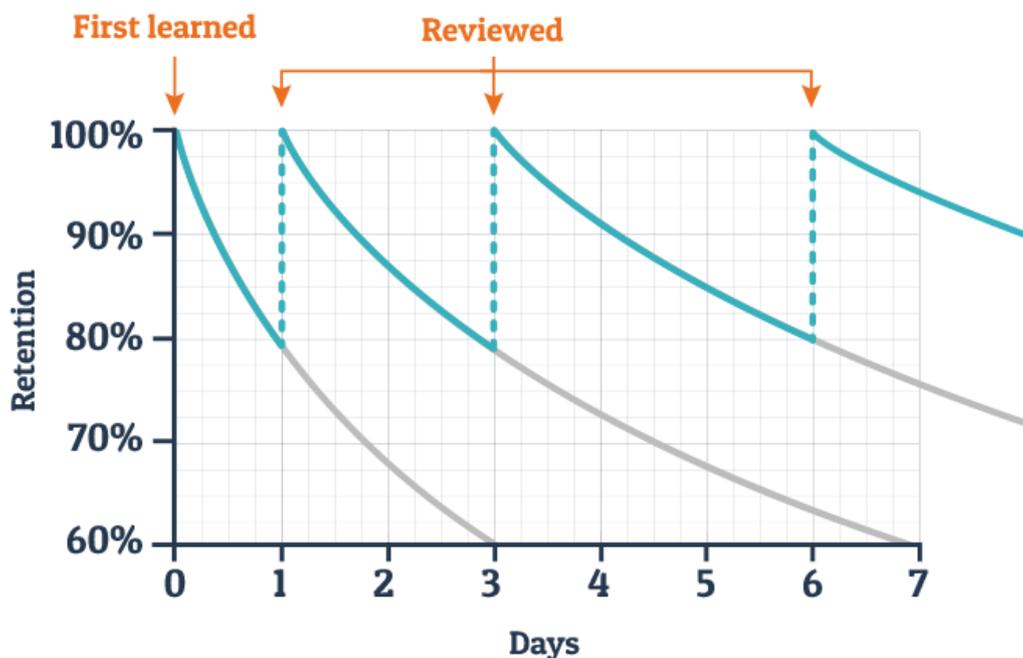


Launceston College

GCSE Revision 2020

Typical Forgetting Curve for Newly Learned Information



This includes:

- Great Learning Habits
- Revision ready
- Top revision tips
- Revision strategies in depth
 - Highlighters
 - Flash cards
 - Mind maps
 - Mnemonics
 - Revision websites and apps
- What should you do before an exam?
- Revision timetables



Great Learning Habits

1. Get an overview



New learning happens when it links to what you already know. How does your learning link to the subject as a whole, what you learned last time, or what's coming next?

2. Learn a bit at a time



Your working memory needs to process information properly for it to be stored long-term. Most humans can only hold 7 chunks of information in their working memory at a time. Don't overload!

3. Use meta-cognition

'with' or
'alongside'



"thinking"

Metacognition is the process of understanding and monitoring how you think and learn. Plan your learning, think about it as you go, and review when you've finished!

4. Space out your practice



You need to revisit learning and practise it to stop it fading away. People remember more when they repeatedly practise the same thing with a few days or weeks in between.

5. Respond to feedback



When you get feedback on your learning, you should think about it and then act on it! If you know your next steps, you are more likely to learn better.

6. Rehearse and repeat



Learning rarely sticks first time. You should repeat and rehearse the things you need to learn to make them stick. Then test yourself!



Launceston College
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Are you revision ready?

Revision is absolutely essential in order to succeed in your exams.

Here are some things to consider before you start.

What should you revise?

- Plan your work carefully around the topics you need to focus on.
- Being aware that you have gaps in your knowledge can create nerves but having a plan of how you will fill these will make you feel better. To do this you will need to **get an overview** of each subject and then the topics within them.
- Find out what is involved in the exam: when and where will it take place? How much time is allowed? How many questions do you need to answer?

When should you revise?

- Creating a revision timetable is essential. You should **space your practice**. People remember more when they repeatedly practise the same thing with a few days or weeks in between.
- At the back of this revision guide there is a weekly and monthly timetable to help you create a revision timetable, or you can do this electronically through this website:
 - <https://getrevising.co.uk/planner>
- Short bursts of revision (30-40 minutes) are most effective. Your concentration lapses after about an hour and you need to take a short break (5-10 minutes). This will help you to **learn a little bit at a time**.
- Don't stay up all night revising; being overtired will not help you to do your best. You should aim to get at least 7 hours of quality sleep per night – preferably more!
- Allow yourself some fun time each day to relax.
- Eating and drinking is an important part of a good revision strategy – your brain cells need energy to function well. Make sure you drink plenty of water to avoid becoming dehydrated. Dehydration makes you tired and reduces concentration.

Where should I revise?

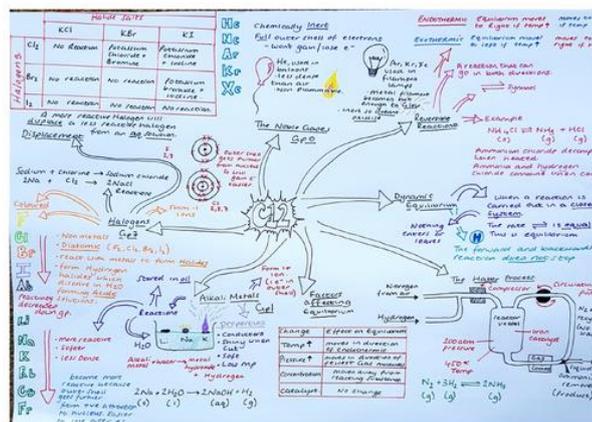
- Find a quiet place to study and make sure you are sitting comfortably, have a table/desk that is well lit, and that background noise is at a minimum. Avoid studying in an area where there will be distractions.
- Have everything you need to do your revision to hand before you start.
- Some people find it easier to work in College as finding an appropriate space at home might be difficult, or they find it easier to stay focused in College. Remember you can stay after College and use the library or a computer room.

How should I revise?

- Everyone revises in a slightly different way. As long as the method you choose enables you to gain a solid grasp of key facts and consolidate your knowledge, then you're doing the right things. There is plenty advice about how to revise later in this booklet.

Top Tips: how to revise

MIND MAPS These are a map of the pictures or themes for each subject. This should allow you to **get an overview** of the things you need to revise. Tick and then cross out areas as you revise them or do look, cover, check. Here's a chemistry example:



LOOK, COVER, CHECK Reading through notes without a purpose is an ineffective revision strategy. Try **scanning** (not close reading) a page of a textbook or a revision guide in a minute or two. Close the book and then write in a minute (or a bit more) everything that you can remember from that page – you can then go back and check what you have missed. This would be a great way to start of a revision session on a certain topic. This should allow you **get an overview** of a topic at the beginning of the session.

BLANK SHEET Choose a revision area and write for as long as you can on a blank sheet. You'll be amazed at what you can remember. The important bit is to go back and check how accurate you were using a revision guide or similar. You don't want to revise misconceptions.

FLASH CARDS Turn your notes or a page of a revision book into cards with key facts on them or questions. You can then sort these into groups, which is an excellent way to **rehearse and repeat key information**.

POST ITS Post it notes are really useful for key words or specific facts and can be used in a range of ways. Start by writing out a series of post it notes with a word or a fact on each. You can then use them as a start of a mind map to **get an overview** or put them around your house. Put them in the loo, on the ceiling, on the back of the cereal packet, by the mirror, anywhere you will see them. When you see them around the house think about what that word means, what topics or theme it is linked to. This will help you **rehearse and repeat** key material.

TEACH SOMEONE ELSE This is something to do when you are more confident with a topic. Try explaining a particular topic to someone else, for example osmosis in biology. The act of explaining it to them will force you to remember particular facts and information which should make it stick in your brain. You need to ensure you give them your notes so that they can check what you are saying.

TEXT TO IMAGE The process of turning written or audio material into a series of images can help you remember how something works or what a series of events is. Try reading a page of a revision guide or listening to a revision podcast such as AudioPi. Instead of making notes in written form, try doing it in the form of a diagram or image. For example, create a timeline for Elizabethan England for history or draw a diagram of coastal erosion and landforms in geography. You can then use look, cover, check to **rehearse and repeat** these visual notes.

PRACTICE EXAM QUESTIONS It is important that you practice how to answer exam style questions as part of your revision to know how it will feel in your exam. The important bit is to **get feedback** on how you did. Try using the mark scheme or give it to your teacher for guidance on how to improve.

Revision strategies in depth

The humble highlighter

Sometimes you will come across a topic where you have forgotten a large amount of the information you were taught. For this you will need to do some reading from a textbook, your notes, revision guide or a revision webpage. This is where using a highlighter can be really effective in helping you get to important parts for what you need to know.

When you are revising from your notes, take a highlighter and highlight only the important information. Remember - no repetition, only highlight information likely to be useful in passing exams, do not highlight things that will come to mind automatically when going over the subject – you already know these bits and you need to be focused on the bits you don't know.

Then, either paragraph by paragraph or in other suitably sized chunks, use another color highlighter to select one or two suitable key words to represent that "chunk" of information. Remember it is important to **learn a little at a time** so try not to do a whole topic at once.

When revising, use the initial highlights as a substitute for your point for the summary, and the secondary highlighted words as your key words. When revising make sure that you, look first at the keywords and try to remember the associated facts, as in the revision technique you have been taught.

Geography example

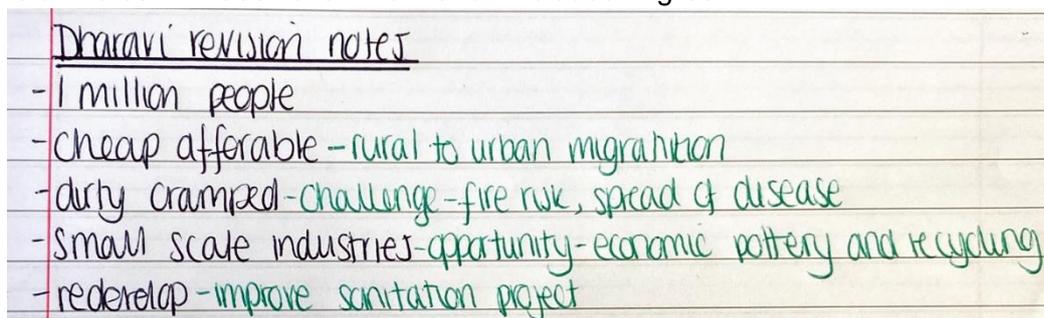
Extract from class notes about Dharavi, Mumbai

Asia's largest slum, Dharavi, lies on prime property right in the middle of India's financial capital, Mumbai (Bombay). It is **home to more than a million people**. Many are second-generation residents, whose parents moved in years ago. Today's Dharavi bears no resemblance to the fishing village it once was. A city within a city, it is one unending stretch of **narrow dirty lanes, open sewers and cramped huts**. In a city where house rents are among the highest in the world, **Dharavi provides a cheap and affordable option to those who move to Mumbai to earn their living**. Rents here can be as low as 185 rupees (\$4/£2.20) per month. As Dharavi is located between Mumbai's two main suburban rail lines, **most people find it convenient for work**. Even in the smallest of rooms, **there is usually a cooking gas stove and continuous electricity**. Many residents have a small colour television with a cable connection that ensures they can catch up with their favourite soaps. Some of them even have a video player.

Dharavi also has a **large number of thriving small-scale industries that produce embroidered garments, export quality leather goods, pottery and plastic**. Most of these products are made in tiny manufacturing units spread across the slum and are sold in domestic as well as international markets. The annual turnover of business here is estimated to be more than \$650m (£350m) a year.

The state government has plans to redevelop Dharavi and transform it into a modern township, complete with proper housing and shopping complexes, hospitals and schools. It is estimated that the project will cost \$2.1bn (£1.1bn).

Revision notes with additional information included in green.



Flash cards

There are many ways to use flash cards. The most important thing is that you don't make them and then put them to one side. You need to use them to **rehearse and repeat** content or key facts and figures this means revisiting the cards on a regular basis.

Flash cards for recalling facts

Flash cards are a great way to help you remember facts. Get a flash card or even just a slip of paper to write the question or word on one side and the answer or definition on the other. See the examples from maths, geography and English.

Keep the cards with you in your bag and re-use regularly as part your revision.

You could use the Leitner system to group your cards into what you know well and what you need to go back to revisit more frequently. This would be an excellent way to **space your practice**.

To find out more about the Leitner system watch this

[YouTube video](#).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C20EvKtdJwQ&feature=youtu.be>

Front question	Reverse answer
How do you calculate the area of circle?	$A = \pi r^2$
Erosion when rocks rub together	attrition
Shakespeare's line rhythm	iambic pentameter

Flash cards to summarize notes

Sometimes you will come across a topic where you have forgotten a large amount of the information you were taught. For this will you need to do some reading from a textbook, your notes, revision guide or a revision webpage. The idea is not to just read – this is where a flash card can be used to help you summarise the notes and do something active with the material. There is plenty of evidence to show that reading alone is an ineffective revision strategy.

Following or during your reading you can use a flash cards to:

- Draw or write brief outline notes on a topic.
- The notes must be *condensed* notes so try to write in bullet points or shorthand, or even draw images.
- Use colours to code ideas e.g. all your physics cards or equations could be on blue card – this will help you to order your notes or any key, subject specific vocabulary could be in orange.
- Try different sized card to find the one that suites you – 4x3 inches, postcard size, A5 sized etc. (Try not to get bigger than A5 size).
- These type of flash cards can be a psychological boost – look at what you can condense the information into! But be careful not to just do this - you will need to revisit them as part of your **spaced practice** to use them to best effect.
- Keep them anywhere you have to wait around so that you can **rehearse and repeat by** looking at them.

Mind maps

Mind maps are a very useful way of **getting an overview** as they show the connections between ideas and allow you to go with the flow of ideas, from titles to main concepts to supporting details. They capture a great deal of information in a small space so you can summarise your information into short points or words or sometimes images, as a way to help summarise information and also help with the visual appearance of the mind map.

The important part about creating a mind map is that you review this material as part of **spacing your practice**. One way you can do this is through repetition. Try redrawing the mind map from memory as part of a blank page activity and then adding the parts you didn't remember in a different coloured pen. The parts you missed can then be added to flash cards or quizzes or you can have another go at drawing the mind map in a few days' time to see if you can remember the information then.



Mnemonics

Mnemonics are a technique used to help remember things by association. For example, you might have learnt the order of the colours of the rainbow with the phrase “Richard Of York Gave Battle In Vain” with the first letter of each word corresponding to the first letter of the colour it represents. So, it translates to red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet. Or maybe you learnt the compass points with “Never Eat Shredded Wheat”.

If you have to remember things in a certain order for your exam, making up a mnemonic like this can be a great way to help you. Mnemonics work by creating more meaningful associations and giving you cues to help you retrieve the information from your long-term memory. Researchers Shetty and Srinivasan looked into the study skills of 137 Dental students and found that the use of mnemonics was associated with higher exam scores.

Mnemonics to help remember order:

Remembering the order or sequence in which things happen or need to be done is important for a number of subjects. In maths you may have used BODMAS to help you know which order to solve mathematical problems (or sums).

The **BODMAS** acronym is for:

- **B**rackets (parts of a calculation inside brackets always come first).
- **O**rders (numbers involving powers or square roots).
- **D**ivision.
- **M**ultiplication.
- **A**ddition.
- **S**ubtraction

You might want to use this method to create your own mnemonics to help you remember the order or sequence of events.

For example:

- Timeline for a historical period
- Sequence of events in a play
- Sequence of points to explain a process such as urbanisation in geography or how enzymes work in science.

Mnemonics to help with categories

Mnemonics can also be used to help you remember a way to categorise factors or things to consider in an extended exam question.

For example, in History it is important to consider the social, political, economic, religious and military reasons why an event took place. To do this I can remember SPERM.

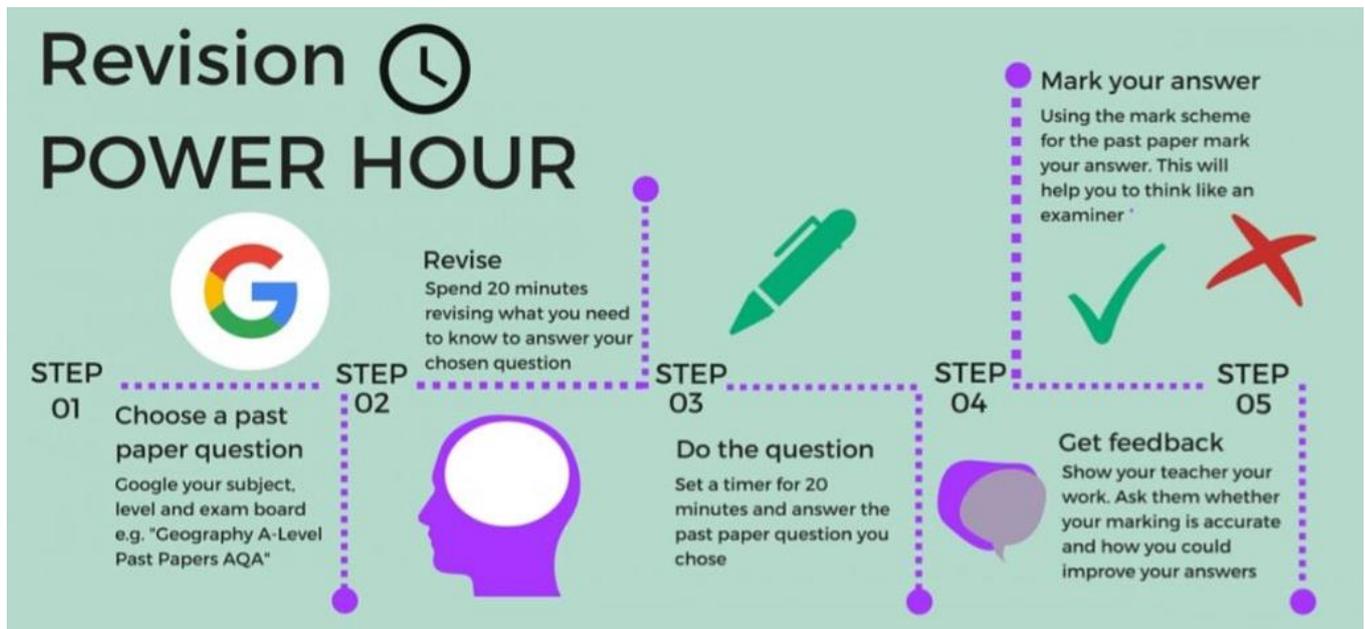
In geography when describing a graph your teacher might ask you to remember TEA to help you remember you need to state the Trends, quote an Example and highlight any Anomalies. You can create your own to help you remember how to categorise factors or important features.

Mnemonics to help with tricky spellings:

Rhythm - Rhythm Helps Your Two Hips Move

Timed practice exam questions

It is important to attempt as many past/practice exam questions as possible as this will help you to get used to the way questions are written. You can find links to many practice questions on the revision hub. You should do this after you have the key knowledge so this might be something you do after you have revised a topic or a theme. Time yourself, do a plan, write your answer – if you can, get your teacher to look through your attempt and **give feedback**. Using the revision power hour method, detailed below, is a great way to start with this. Timing how long it takes you to respond to questions is important as your exam timing will be tight. Use an alarm clock and set it for 10, 20, 30 etc. minutes. Normally exams work on a about a minute per mark but check with your subject teacher. If you are easily distracted, try not to use your phone as a way to time yourself.



Online resources – website and apps

Each subject has a range of online resources they recommend – these are clearly highlighted and linked on the subject revision hub and each also recommends a revision guide for their course. For many this is the CGP revision guide but not always, so it is worth checking.

There are also a series of online revision resources we would recommend detailed below. Many cover a range of subjects, whereas others are quite specific. All subject specific ones are detailed on the revision hubs. The more generic ones are detailed below.

Websites:

Seneca learning - <https://www.senecalearning.com/>

A quizzing and testing website which requires a log in but is free. We recommend students use their school email and memorable password. Students and parents can track progress for each subject and teachers can set their classes specific quizzes to do for homework.

BBC Bitesize - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/>

Good starting point which covers most subjects with key information followed by short videos, clips and quizzes. Make sure you get the right exam board – these can be checked on the revision hub.

Audiopi www.audiopi.co.uk

Short (5-15 minute) podcasts covering a range of English literature and religious studies. Some subjects have quizzes to guide student listening. Password and username available from the English or humanities faculty.

Kerboodle – www.kerboodle.com

A useful textbook-style resource with quizzes to go alongside this. Currently used by the science and language faculty. All students have a login to this resource.

Apps:

Quizlett

A quizzing based app which covers most topics. Be careful that the quiz matches the exam content. Signing up is free.



CGP

CGP are in the process of creating revision apps, and they are already available on the App Store for science. This is aligned to the books and more will be available in due course.



Gojimo

Similar to Quizlett but provides reading material to support learning should you get a question wrong.



What to do a day before an exam

- Eat breakfast! Your brain needs food and water to be at its best.
- Don't panic – you won't be the only student who is anxious.
- Be on time, or even a little early – you do not want to be rushed or panicking because you are going to be late
- Remember your seat number.
- Have a quick look at your revision plan.
- All equipment must be in a clear bag or pencil case. Bring spare pens & highlighters.
- Mobile phones and watches should be switched off and in your bag – double check this with a pat down.
- Have a drink, in a clear bottle with no labels.
- As you begin, look through the paper first and mark difficult questions/initial thoughts.
- Look at the marks available and read the questions carefully, following instructions given in the paper (e.g. to show all workings, word limits etc.)
- Use the information provided on the front of the paper.
- Pace yourself and allow enough time to answer all the required questions.
- Write as neatly as possible to help the examiner to mark your work. Marking untidy writing is difficult and the examiner will not spend time trying to decipher unclear work.
- For longer answers, take a few minutes before you begin to produce a structured plan of what you are going to include in each section.
- Give every question a go – no answer definitely means no marks.
- Try to allow yourself ten minutes at the end to read through your answers and correct any mistakes.
- Do not waste time at the end doing nothing – you might as well keep checking your work, you never know what mistakes you might be able to correct!

School revision timetable (after school & lunchtime sessions)

Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			

Home revision timetable

Monday					
Tuesday					
Wednesday					
Thursday					
Friday					
Saturday					
Sunday					

APRIL 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29	30	31	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	1	2

MAY 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26	27	28	29	30	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	1	2	3	4	5	6

JUNE 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	1	2	3	4