

## Year 11 Subject by Subject Top Revision Tips

Obviously in each subject you will have been given advice about how to revise for that subject. In form period you have also been given general advice on revision and guidance on scheduling revision. On the following pages each department has highlighted the top tips for their subject and we would ask you to heed these points in your preparation for the GCSEs.

The top tips for all subjects though must be:

- Learn the subject content
- Apply the subject content using past papers and practice tasks
- Check you are using the subject content in accordance with the mark schemes and the requirements of each task in every exam.

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE

1. **Read the question** with great care. Make sure you address every aspect of it; every bullet-point. At the end of each paragraph, check that you are indeed answering the question.
2. **Watch the clock** and ensure you **finish the paper**.
3. Always **plan** your essay carefully. Spend at least five minutes doing this.
4. Use **subordinate clauses**, in different positions and vary sentence length.
5. Use **connectives** and subordinating conjunctions to link ideas and paragraphs.
6. Ensure language and style is **appropriate** for the task.
7. Use “stunt” or ostentatious **vocabulary** (but don’t overdo it.)
8. Use a variety of **punctuation**.
9. Remember to **compare** and explore the **cultural** aspects in the Paper Two Poetry question.
10. Prepare in advance a brief account (50-80 words) of what each pre-released media text is about.

### ENGLISH LITERATURE

1. Identify **the key words** in a question and use these or synonyms thereof in your answer, once per paragraph.
2. **Embed** quotations within sentences.
3. **Memorise** key quotes.
4. Use Point-Quote-Comment template in your answers.
5. Don’t just explain your quotation as a comment. Say something interesting about it, about the **language**, if you can.
6. Write a short introduction and conclusion. Try to make your introductions arresting. Prepare some in advance (on the *one-size-fits-many* principle).
7. Mention the writer’s name.
8. Use literary-critical terminology where you can.
9. Make at least four/five points an essay.
10. Remember you are supposed to show knowledge of social and cultural background in the Drama essay.

## **MATHS**

1. Make a list of useful formulae, and learn them.
2. Complete as many past papers and exam questions as you can.
3. Use feedback sheets from mock exams to identify areas for development.
4. Don't attempt to cover all of the topics you have been taught, but concentrate on those identified as needing more practice.
5. Use the worked examples in the text book: Cover up the solution and try to do it yourself. You learn much more by solving it yourself (with help from the book's solution if necessary) than by reading the book's solution.
6. A revision guide is useful, again, read the explanations and then complete questions.
7. We can't stress enough...practise, practise, practise.

## **FRENCH, GERMAN, SPANISH**

1. Make sure that you practise writing and speaking in equal measure.
2. Go through your Year 9-11 exercise books, making sure that you can use all the constructions and grammar points that you have practised in your homeworks accurately. Don't forget that there are further explanations of grammar points in the back of your text books.
3. Visit 'languagesonline.org.uk' for exercises on accuracy and vocabulary. Remember that these exercises have been designed for you by members of RGS staff. We also recommend [www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebiteize/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebiteize/)(plus French or German or Spanish).
4. When preparing a topic area (eg school, holidays, house and home, hobbies) write down 15 items of vocabulary that you would expect to use.
5. When reminding yourself of items of vocabulary, make sure you practise using them in sentences. Learning lists of isolated vocabulary is of limited value. Remember to practise writing and speaking in equal measure.
6. Use the role play books, which have been designed for you by members of RGS staff, on a very regular basis - 10 a day recommended.
7. Practise writing individual paragraphs in preparation for the writing paper. Make sure you have good quality material for each topic area and that you give justified opinions.
8. Make sure that you have a good repertoire of time expressions to use with the past, present and future tenses.
9. Use your sample oral questions on a regular basis, being careful to answer in the correct tense. Use a tape recorder sometimes, so that you can hear what the examiner will hear. Do you sound confident? Do you sound interesting?
10. Practise past papers which can be acquired from [aqa.org.uk](http://aqa.org.uk). These are particularly useful for extra reading comprehension material.

## LATIN

### Unseen

- Constant vocabulary revision from the learning sheets. Start well ahead of the exam and try to do it in bite-sized chunks.
- Ten words just before you go to bed may help – or singing them in the shower (who cares what people think if it works). Recording and playing back on an MP3 player can also be useful.
- Just before you go into the exam: read carefully through any piece of Latin you are already familiar with for ten minutes and get used to the sentence structure and idioms, so that you are thinking “Latin” as you go into the exam room.

### Set Texts

- Revise systematically using the rearranged text so that you know what each word and phrase means in its context. BUT remember that the text you get in the exam will be the ORIGINAL LATIN, not the rearranged study version.
- For every line of each text you need to be able to show : 1. what it means; 2. how it relates to the whole text; 3. any useful background information; 4. what literary techniques are being used.
- Just before the exam: read through the whole of each text in English several times to get the overall sense – see the wood for the trees!

### Background

- Make sure you are fully familiar with the set response material. Make sure also that you also have a general understanding of the set themes for the essay question.

## GREEK

- See above, changing “Latin” to “Greek” each time and ignoring the “Background” segment.

## CLASSICAL CIVILISATION

- Use **checklist** provided as a guide to the topic requirements and to organise your notes.
- For Literature-read the text **very** thoroughly. You need to know it in great detail. The examiners are keen on asking very detailed questions on the text. What happened before this incident? What happened after this passage ends? Read the line by line notes in parallel with the text, until you are sure of the references.
- Look over past essays/short questions and any comments made, as these may help if a similar question is asked in the exam.
- Exam timing will be **crucial**. 45 minutes are allowed for each topic studied. This means short questions must be answered in 10 minutes, essays should take 25 minutes. Use your time wisely, but do take a few minutes to make the correct choice of question.
- In the exam make sure you answer the correct number of questions :
  - 2 out of 3 short questions
  - 1 out of 2 essays for each topic on the paper.
  - Look out for 2 part essays
  - Always refer back to the questions, checking your answer is **relevant**

## **BIOLOGY**

1. Obtain a copy of the specification/syllabus and divide it up into topic chunks. Start revising the most difficult topics and leave the easier ones until last. (Using a traffic light system to colour code topics would be useful here)
2. Revise a topic and then find a question on it to test yourself. Mark using the relevant mark scheme.
3. For each topic, highlight words whose definitions need to be learned. Write these out on cards and get someone to test you.
4. Work out a schedule for when you will cover a topic so that you fit them all in. Planner on the wall is useful.
5. On the specification pay careful attention to the wording so that you know whether you need to recall, describe, explain etc.
6. If given tests/exam papers to do at home try and do them in time conditions, preferably after some revision has been done and don't refer to notes/books whilst you do them.
7. Use a range of revision techniques to find which one works best. Could use cue cards, mind maps, rewriting clear concise bullet-pointed notes etc.
8. Many biological processes can be summarised in flow diagrams.
9. Use coloured A4 paper and pin up revision diagrams/flow charts etc at home on the doors, walls and cereal packets.

## **CHEMISTRY**

### **1. Use your revision guide**

You are doing Edexcel 360Science. Make sure your revision guides are written for this syllabus. Revision guides available from chemistry department at a very reasonable cost.

### **2. GCSE chemistry started in Year 9**

Go back and revise ALL work from year 9 onwards. You should also glance over KS3 chemistry as it is assumed you know this.

### **3. Revise for the exam you are doing**

Each of the chemistry exams covers a small section of the syllabus. Make sure you know what area to revise for the exam you are taking.

### **4. Summarise industrial processes**

Put these (Haber process, Contact process etc) into bullet points on cards. This idea can also be used in many other areas.

### **5. Do the end of summary questions**

We will be doing past paper question practice but you should also do any relevant questions you can find.

## **6. Learn valencies of the particles on the valency sheet.**

Remember you can get the combining power from the Periodic Table for the elements. You must learn the radical valencies. Get someone to test you on these!

## **7. RTO<sup>2</sup>**

Read The Question – write the answer – Read The Question again with your answer.

## **8. ASK**

Ask if you don't understand! See your teacher after the lesson/luncheon/when you are on study leave. Attend any lunchtime revision sessions that your teacher offers.

## **9. Web-sites**

The following websites are good for testing your knowledge:-

[www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/chemistry/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/chemistry/)

[www.creative-chemistry.org.uk/gcse](http://www.creative-chemistry.org.uk/gcse)

[www.s-cool.co.uk](http://www.s-cool.co.uk)

[www.docbrown](http://www.docbrown)

[www.scribermonkey.com](http://www.scribermonkey.com)

## **10. DO NOT PANIC!!**

### **PHYSICS**

1. Conduct your revision using the different topic headings - do a topic at a time.
2. Make sure you know which content is examined in each exam - the contents page of the CGP purple or white books helps here.
3. Revise the content (paying especial attention to any formulae) using your notes, the CGP Purple book and the RGS's own revision notes. You may also want to consult the syllabus. Making your own revision summary notes on sheets of paper or index cards is better than just reading the book.
4. Then consolidate your knowledge by answering the questions on that topic in the CGP White workbook.
5. Finally, check your answers.
6. It makes excellent sense to do a quick re-revision of the topic (using the RGS revision notes or your own notes) within a week. The more frequently you review your learning (even if the review is quite brief) the less likely you are to forget it.
7. Quick re-revision can also be done over the web. Try out the BBC bitesize site for P1 (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/science/edexcel/>). You can also use (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/physics/>), and <http://www.gcse.com/physics.htm>, and <http://www.s-cool.co.uk> for revision of general physics GCSE principles - do not rely too much on these sites for specific exam-focused P2 and P3 revision - these areas aren't dealt with in the detail you will need.
8. Once study leave commences, it makes sense to revise P2 first, then P3, then P1. The P2 module exams are on 5th June, P3 is on 11th June and P1 is on 20th June. Also remember that the P3 exam is worth 30% of the total GCSE, and it contains some of the hardest material, so learn it well.
9. Make sure you look at past papers as part of your revision. It is particularly useful to do the multiple choice ones as a quick revision shortly before the multiple choice exams - since the questions are often similar - and it is so easy to check your work using the answer grids provided.

10. You are not required to memorize any formulae, but you will be expected to re-arrange them to change the subject. Occasionally they may not print the formula you would like to use - so it is worth learning them by heart anyway. Make sure you also memorize the unit symbols (e.g. power measured in W), since answers will lose marks if not accompanied by the correct unit.

## GEOGRAPHY

1. Go through your exercise books and tidy them up – sticking in loose sheets for example. If there are gaps, find the place in the textbook and copy up the work or ask your teacher for the appropriate sheet. You should have a copy of the syllabus, either as a whole pack, or as single sheets given out when you did the topic. If you haven't got them, ask.
2. Create your own words and definitions cards at home: write out these words on pieces of card or paper then find the definitions in your textbook and notes and write them on separate pieces of paper. This initial stage may take some time, but by copying the definitions you are learning them. In later revision sessions you can then match up the correct words and definitions without having to write them out again.
3. Look through the physical geography process and landform past questions. Many of them require you to label diagrams. You should draw a version of each diagram mentioned: waterfall, floodplain, cliff section etc. making sure that the labels **explain** how the feature is created. Use all your notes to create a set of detailed labels. Then create another diagram in pen, but label it in pencil so you can use this diagram again once you have compared it to your master.
4. For each of the case studies mentioned create a 5-10 bullet point summary that you can remember and write out from memory.
5. On the human paper the timing works out at roughly a mark a minute, so a 9 mark question should take roughly 9 minutes. So set yourself to write an answer to one of the questions in the appropriate time.

The key thing is to make sure you actually DO something. Overall you should aim to do a few short tasks from the above suggestions in each 30 – 40 minute revision slot rather than just reading through your notes for a longer time. This means you can come back to the same topic several times and you are more likely to remember it.

## HISTORY

1. Have you got the 'How to answer GCSE questions' booklet?
2. Have you got the Paper 1 Exam questions booklet?
3. Have you got the Paper 2 Exam questions booklet?
4. Have you got the GCSE Revision questions booklet?
5. Have you read and completed all of them?

Everything you need to know about the course and the exam can be found in these booklets – make sure you have them.

If there is a secret to GCSE success, it is making it clear that you have studied the subject for two years rather than simply having some general knowledge. For instance, most people know that Stalin killed lots of his own people and sent many to Siberia. However, how many people know that by 1937 an estimated 18 million people had been transported to labour camps and of that number, 10 million died? Although both points are essentially the same, the first is general whilst the second is specific.

## MUSIC

1. Make sure your COURSEWORK is in and is as good as it can possibly be. Remember that you must have TWO compositions recorded and TWO performances – one solo, one ensemble. The earlier you finish it, the more time you have to correct mistakes. Final date is April 4<sup>th</sup>.
2. Listen as widely as possible. Remember, in the exam, you will not have heard the extracts before.
3. Practice **active listening** until the exam. Try writing down features of music you have not heard before (you can do this listening to the radio in the car!).
4. Revise **the glossary** from the textbook. Test yourself with the vocabulary sheets from the syllabus.
5. Listen to as many examples of the Areas of Study as possible. Try to write down lists of the **key features/main characteristics** of each one.

## ART

The Art examination is completed by the end of the Spring Term so revision guidance has been given already by the Department.

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

1. When referring to product specifications ALWAYS use areas that you can effectively justify, i.e. safety:- the product must have no sharp edges that might harm the user.
2. On the design question, apply your answer (solution diagram) **to satisfy the specifications** points in the question. It is not about a pretty design.
3. When giving answers to questions with multiple marks, i.e. 6 marks, have you got 6 clear points. Bullet points could satisfy the answer better than an extended written answer.
4. Make sure **all questions** whether they are design questions or not **are fully annotated**.
5. Read the question two or three times. What is it asking for? Key words etc. Do not dive in straight away. **THINK?**

## ICT

1. For factual learning of the definitions or meanings of subject-specific terms used within the subject:
  - Write the word or phrase naming the term on one side of a 3” x 5” index card.
  - Write the definition on the other side. Keep to a short 2-3 sentence format.
  - Learn the definitions and then get someone to test you from the cards.
  - Ideal when on a bus or train journey, or sitting in the car.

2. Identify difficult topics or examination question certainties and condense the content to bullet point lists:  
E.g. The Data Protection Act 1998; there are three aspects tested in examination questions (rights of data subjects, responsibilities of data users, exemptions from the provisions of the Act). Write down 5 bullet points for each aspect.
3. Review topics that appear in past papers:
  - Formats of questions
  - Topics that are tested
  - Length of questions
  - Number of marks allocated
4. Plan revision: only attempt to learn one or at most two subjects on any one day of the revision period. If working on two subjects divide the day equally and do one subject, then the other.
5. Get someone else to test you on your knowledge and understanding of a subject. Use index cards (see 1. above) or prepare questions that they can ask, but allow them to select them randomly and to vary the wording.
6. Try to put yourself in the position of the examiner and attempt to write questions that test the topics, knowledge and understanding implied in the syllabus. Vary the style of questions.
7. Look for past papers questions from other examination boards and syllabi that might be suitable for the subject, level and approach of your examination. Try to answer them against the clock without study materials.

## **RE**

1. Revise all topics in your text and use your notes and revision guide to make lists of the main facts to be learned.
2. Use mind maps and memory techniques for remembering key information and arguments.
3. Make sure that you understand the key terms and practice writing explanations of these.
4. Use mock examination and past examination questions, and practice writing answers for these.
5. Don't just read your text notes – always write summaries of the information that you are reading.