



Planning for the Year 11 Examinations

Preparation before each set of examinations or tests is considered to be as important as your performance in each exam, so use the guide below as a checklist.

1. Plan Revision

- Make sure that all your notes are in order and up to date.
- Find out the date and length of each exam.
- Draw up a revision timetable, and stick to it.

2. Preparation

- Obtain copies of the specification/past papers/revision guides. Understand what each exam involves and what the examiners are looking for.
- Read through your notes, highlighting or rewriting key words/phrases.
- Aim to work in 45 minute stretches, taking 15 minute breaks.

3. Before Each Exam

- A good night's sleep is very important!
- Reread through your notes but take a quality break, e.g. have a bath/shower.
- Make sure that you have all the equipment needed, including refills for your pen(s).
- Make sure that you are comfortable and have a light snack/meal before each exam.

4. In the Exam

- Read the instructions carefully – do the right number of questions.
- Plan your time – allocate enough time for each question you must answer.
- Answer the question set – not the one you hoped for.

5. At the End of the Exam

- When you think you have finished, check your script for mistakes and complete any unfinished sections.
- Cross out any rough work you do not want to be marked.
- Ensure that all diagrams have titles and are fully labelled.

Dos and Don'ts

- **Don't** leave all the revision for your examinations until the last moment then have a cramming session.
 - ❖ This is inefficient
 - ❖ Exhausting
 - ❖ Creates tension that reduces effectiveness
- **Don't** work all night. Long periods of revision without a break are not effective.
 - ❖ You will get very tired.
 - ❖ You will learn inefficiently as time goes by.
- **Don't** "watch" television or have background music on. This is obviously inefficient since it is distracting.
- **Don't** learn everything you've written. Learn the important points – these need to be selected first.

- **Do** plan a revision timetable for the weeks leading up to the examination. Once worked out – keep to it. Leave a little spare time in your revision programme in case something comes up and you miss some of your work.
- **Do** put a series of rewards in your programme to give you a break and an incentive to work hard, e.g. an hour off to watch TV or a break to listen to some music/see your friends etc.
- **Do** make sure your programme is designed so that you do not have a very long period without a break and that you do not go on too late into the evening. Get plenty of sleep. This will reduce boredom, increase efficiency and keep you reasonably fresh.
- **Do** make sure you have in your programme some periods of time for recall of material you've already learned. This will help to keep information in your brain.
- **Do** find somewhere quiet to revise.
- **Do** ask your teacher if you are stuck, can't understand something or need advice. Your teacher cannot read your mind.
- **Do** as many past papers as possible. **Remember that knowing the content of each subject is only half of your preparation. You need to practice applying the information so working on past questions is a vital part of your revision.** Start by completing past papers using your notes and no time restrictions and then work up to doing past papers without any revision notes and under timed conditions.
- **Do** use examination mark schemes and your teachers to mark your past paper questions.

Hints

- Go through your notes and highlight the most important by either:
 - ❖ Starring them or underlining them in colour.
 - ❖ Where you keep getting something wrong or making silly mistakes – write a message to yourself. It may seem silly but it is very effective.
- Reduce a topic to a series of numbered points on a small piece of card. Learning by numbers is a useful way of remembering information, e.g. I need to remember 10 points about the Battle of Hastings or 6 properties of transition metals.
- Have a large pile of scrap paper available and scribble main points and outline sketches of diagrams when you are revising. This:
 - ❖ Helps to focus your attention and stops you being distracted.
 - ❖ Gives you something to compare with the original to see if what you are doing is accurate.
- A good way to revise is with a friend who is taking the same examination. The occasional testing of each other is very useful since:
 - ❖ The tester is learning at the same time as the tested.
 - ❖ You feel better since you realise you are not alone. A friendly, sympathetic ear is good if your morale is low.