

**The Key Stage 4 Learning Challenge links very closely to the Key Stage 3 Learning Challenge and builds on it.**

**The Key Stage 4 Learning Challenge materials should be added to the Key Stage 3 Learning Challenge folder (DfES 0393-2003).**

# **The Key Stage 4 Learning Challenge**

Handbook for School Organisers

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# Contents

## **Part 1 Introduction**

Section 1	What is the Key Stage 4 Learning Challenge?	7
Section 2	Outline of the Key Stage 4 Learning Challenges	10
Section 3	Identifying students	12

## **Part 2 The Key Stage 4 Learning Challenges**

	Contents of Part 2	17
Challenge 1	The planning challenge	19
Challenge 2	The revision challenge	47
Challenge 3	The examination challenge	63

## **Part 3 Appendices**

Appendix 1	Identifying students for the Key Stage 4 Learning Challenge	92
Appendix 2	Student self-assessment	93
Appendix 3	The Key Stage 4 Learning Challenge: Profile sheet	98
Appendix 4	The Key Stage 4 Learning Challenge: Information for coaches	100
Appendix 5	The Key Stage 4 Learning Challenge: Coach's record form	101
Appendix 6	Certificates for students after completion of the Key Stage 4 Learning Challenge	102
Appendix 7	Letter to parents or guardians	104



# *Part* **1**

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Introduction





# Section 1 What is the Key Stage 4 Learning Challenge?

The Key Stage 4 Learning Challenge builds on the good work done by schools using the Key Stage 3 Learning Challenge. The Key Stage 4 Learning Challenge and the *GCSE booster pack* make up a set of materials for schools to help them to support students who are having difficulty preparing for coursework and the GCSE examinations at the end of Year 11.

The Key Stage 4 Learning Challenge provides a set of modules to help students improve the general skills they will need in planning their time and coursework, doing revision and approaching their GCSE examinations. The main aim is to help students improve their preparation for examinations, and develop their confidence in completing coursework and sitting examinations. The Key Stage 4 Learning Challenge is linked to subject-specific booster material to help subject teachers provide intervention for students who need some extra help in preparing for GCSE examinations in some subjects.

The Key Stage 4 Learning Challenge is designed in the same way as the Key Stage 3 Learning Challenge. It is a flexible, 'little and often', programme of interventions which, together with the Key Stage 4 subject-specific booster materials and the programmes that schools themselves run to help students prepare for GCSEs, will help students perform as well as they can in GCSE examinations.

## Rationale

The Key Stage 4 Learning Challenge is designed to help schools intervene and support students who have been identified as experiencing difficulties in preparing for the GCSE examinations. It will also help them to develop more effective responses in the examinations.

- Some students need additional support to help them organise their time, so that they can manage the demands of coursework and complete what is required for each subject to meet deadlines.
- Some students need additional support to help them manage the revision they need to do, and plan their time to make sure they are able to fit all their revision into the time available.
- Some students do not really understand how to revise and need support to help them.
- Some students do not really understand how to approach examinations; they do not plan their time well during an examination and do not answer questions well.
- Some students are not confident about sitting examinations because they lack understanding of how to approach examination questions.
- Some students respond well to coaching, individually or in very small groups, and find it increases their motivation.
- Coaching can help increase students' motivation through the use of praise, clear feedback and setting of appropriate tasks for students to practise. The consolidation of new learning will help build their self-confidence because they are successful in these tasks.
- An appropriate, achievable, short-term target can focus coaching for each student more effectively.



## Outline

There are three challenges in the Key Stage 4 Learning Challenge. Each of these deals with a different aspect of preparing for GCSEs and sitting examinations. They are to be found in Part 2 of the Key Stage 4 Learning Challenge section of this handbook. As with the Key Stage 3 Learning Challenge, each challenge has more than one module that breaks down the learning into small bites. This will enable coaches to meet students frequently to check and reinforce their progress, and to help students embed what they are learning into their routine practice. The modules are written to be self-contained and can be used in any combination to best meet students' identified needs.

**The challenges are intended to provide students with a firm base from which they can approach their coursework and GCSE examinations. Subject teachers will need to be aware of what individual students are doing in the Key Stage 4 Learning Challenge, so that they can build on this in the subject-specific programme they have planned for preparing students for examinations.**

## Who can benefit from the Key Stage 4 Learning Challenge?

The Key Stage 4 Learning Challenge is designed for those students who may be disorganised in planning and using their time, have poor revision skills, or who do not perform well in tests and examinations even though they have sufficient knowledge and understanding of the subject. As with the Key Stage 3 Learning Challenge, the targeted group should be those students who have the capacity to use the additional support to improve their performance. These are likely to be the students who could raise their GCSE score by one grade if these areas were improved.

## How does the scheme work?

The scheme works in exactly the same way as the Key Stage 3 Learning Challenge.

Learning targets are identified for each student and coaching is provided to help the student reach these targets. The support may be arranged on a one-to-one basis, or with a coach supporting two or three students with similar needs in a small group. Parents need to be informed about the programme and may be able to help their sons and daughters with some of the work.

The school organiser for the Key Stage 4 Learning Challenge could be the same as that for the Key Stage 3 Learning Challenge, as the procedures and requirements are exactly the same.

The school organiser should:

- identify which students will be involved in the Key Stage 4 Learning Challenge;
- know their areas of difficulty and set their targets for improvement;
- decide which challenges and modules each student should follow;
- allocate students to coaches;
- provide advice and support for coaches;
- monitor students' progress;
- liaise with the students' tutors and subject teachers.

The person in the school who oversees Key Stage 4 should coordinate and establish the Key Stage 4 Learning Challenge along with the other Key Stage 4 intervention programmes provided by the Strategy. In addition, they should ensure that the Key

Stage 4 Learning Challenge is coordinated with programmes the school has in place to help students prepare for examinations. They will need to have an overview of the students being supported by the Key Stage 4 Learning Challenge and ensure that their subject teachers know what they are doing, so that they can reinforce and develop the students' improved skills within their subjects.

**The organisational needs of the Key Stage 4 Learning Challenge are the same as those for the Key Stage 3 Learning Challenge. Please refer to the following sections of the *Handbook for School Organisers for the Key Stage 3 Learning Challenge* for support:**

- **Part 1, Section 2: Implementing the Learning Challenge**
- **Part 1, Section 5: Matching coaches to identified needs**
- **Part 3: Advice to coaches.**



## Section 2 Outline of the Key Stage 4 Learning Challenges

The three constituent challenges each focus on a different aspect of preparing for and sitting examinations. The challenges are listed in outline below and can be found in full in Part 2 of the Key Stage 4 Learning Challenge section of this handbook. Once students' needs have been identified, the school can select the most appropriate challenges for them.

These challenges link closely to the Key Stage 3 Learning Challenges. The links are referred to in the introduction to each Key Stage 4 Learning Challenge. In many cases it will be useful to revise the Key Stage 3 challenge modules if students have already followed them during Key Stage 3. If they have not, it would be useful to run the relevant Key Stage 3 challenge modules prior to running those for Key Stage 4.

<b>Challenge 1: The planning challenge</b>		
	Focus	Target
1.1 and 1.2 Planning your coursework	Planning time for completing coursework (2 main sessions and checking sessions)	The student is able to schedule time to help them plan for completion of coursework in all subjects. The student can also plan time to ensure they work systematically through each individual coursework assignment.
1.3–1.5 Planning your revision	Planning time for revision (3 linked sessions and checking sessions as necessary)	The student is able to plan time for revision over the long-, medium- and short-term periods leading up to examinations.

<b>Challenge 2: The revision challenge</b>		
	Focus	Target
2.1–2.4	Improving skills needed to revise and retain information (4 linked sessions and checking sessions)	The student is able to apply the new revision strategies they have learned, and is better able to retain information.

## Challenge 3: The examination challenge

	Focus	Target
3.1 and 3.2 Before answering the questions	Improving what students do in an examination before they answer the questions (2 sessions and checking sessions)	Students will have improved their skills in reading and understanding what is required before beginning to answer examination questions.
3.3–3.5 Answering the questions	Improving techniques in understanding and answering questions (3 sessions and checking sessions)	Students will have an improved understanding of how to unpick questions and understand exactly what is required before beginning to answer them.
3.6 and 3.7 At the end of an examination	Improving understanding of what students can do if they run out of time, and the value of checking answers (2 sessions and checking sessions)	Students will be able to summarise an answer in bullet points. Students will have increased awareness of how they can use the time at the end of the examination profitably.

# Section 3 Identifying students

## 3.1 Identifying students

As with the Key Stage 3 Learning Challenge, the accurate identification of students to take each challenge is the key to success. The target group of students is likely to be those who could improve their GCSE result by a grade if they had some help with their time organisation, revision skills and the way they approach examinations.

They are likely to exhibit some of the following characteristics:

- they are not very engaged with their GCSE work;
- they do not record and complete homework;
- they do not organise themselves to cope with the demands of coursework;
- they do not retain information well;
- they have limited support for school work outside lessons;
- they have received support from the Key Stage 3 Learning Challenge or one of the other Key Stage 3 interventions – e.g. *Springboard 7* and *Literacy Progress Units*;
- they do not have useful skills for effective revision;
- they perform badly in tests and exams.

Tutors and subject teachers will be asked to comment on aspects of each student's difficulties in relation to preparation for GCSEs. As with the Key Stage 3 Learning Challenge, organisers will need to remember that the scheme is not intended for students who have been identified as having special educational needs. It is a scheme designed primarily to give a boost to students who are achieving below expectations through underachievement.

The checklist in Appendix 1 can be photocopied and used to help identify students who would benefit from taking part in the Key Stage 4 Learning Challenge. This will provide a broad indication but is not an exact science. Subject teachers and tutors will also have information about students that you can draw on.

Subject teachers and tutors should complete the checklist, as this will contribute to the overall picture of the student as a learner. Appendix 2 is a self-assessment sheet that can be copied and given to students to complete. They can then discuss this with the school organiser. The checklist can be adjusted according to the circumstances that apply in the school.

Name of pupil:	Year group:	Tutor role:	Appendix 1: Checklist for identifying pupils' needs						
			Characteristic	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Pupil interview	
			Engage in class						
			Engage in extra-curricular activities						
			Engage in games etc.						
			Engage in homework						
			Engage in revision						
			Doesn't finish homework						
			Doesn't record homework or enough detail						
			Doesn't finish class work						
			Lacks motivation						
			Engage in information or consultancy						
			Misses school progress in time or other subjects						
			Has difficulty in keeping on top of his/her work						
			Has limited support outside lessons						
			Gets up difficult when meeting on his/her own						
			Finds working in a group difficult						
			Has weak attendance						
			Strikes well in a one-to-one situation						
			Lacks confidence						
			Has specialist requirements in literacy and numeracy						

Appendix 1

The Key Stage 4 Learning Challenge works by prioritising one key factor and focusing the coaching directly on this. The organising teacher should use the available information to identify one priority and set a target against which the student can be coached to make progress. Other priorities can be addressed later.

In identifying students for the challenges, the teacher should:

- consider relevant information on the student already at hand;
- get the student to complete the self-assessment sheet and discuss this with them;
- identify the student's key area for development;
- set an appropriate target;
- identify the appropriate coaching strategy.

**Appendix 2: Student self-assessment**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Year Group: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

You should try to complete the following as honestly as possible.

**Classwork**

I always try hard in	Yes	Nearly always	No
English			
Mathematics			
Science			
ICT			
History			
Geography			
PE			
Design and Technology			
Music			
Art and design			
French/Spanish/German			
Other			

When I don't try hard in class it is because:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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**Appendix 2**

## 3.2 Student self-assessment

The main aim of the student self-assessment is to help students identify the difficulties they are having in preparing for GCSE examinations. Following the self-assessment, the school organiser (or the student's form tutor) should talk with the student about the self-assessment. The conversation should focus on the following issues:

- where they have identified what they are doing well;
- where they have identified they are having difficulties;
- where they think they can improve;
- where they think they need help.

During the conversation, the organiser can make notes and add comments to the student identification checklist. They will need to ask questions often, to prompt the student to expand on what they are saying. Prompts such as *Could you say a bit more about that?*, or *Why do you think this is the case?*, are often helpful.

It might be useful to repeat the self-assessment after the student has been involved in the Key Stage 4 Learning Challenge, so they can identify areas where they have improved.

## 3.3 After identifying the students

Once the students who will be taking part in the Key Stage 4 Learning Challenge have been identified, the organiser can begin the process of identifying the most appropriate challenge(s) for each student. They will also need to allocate coaches and set up a coaching timetable. This process is exactly as in the Key Stage 3 Learning Challenge, and Sections 2, 5 and 6 of Part 1 of the *Handbook for School Organisers* will provide guidance on how to do this.



# *Part* **2**

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The Key Stage 4

Learning Challenges





# Contents of Part 2

<b>Challenge 1</b>	<b>The planning challenge</b>	19
<b>1A</b>	<b>Planning your coursework</b>	
1.1	Organising your coursework (a)	20
1.2	Organising your coursework (b)	22
Resource 1	Planning time line	24
Resource 2	Subjects	25
Resource 3	Calendar dates for January–April 2004	26
Resource 4	Time line for school dinners report	27
Resource 5	Blank time line for my piece of coursework	28
<b>1B</b>	<b>Planning your revision</b>	
1.3	Organising your revision timetable	29
1.4	A revision calendar	31
1.5	Planning your daily revision	33
Resource 6	Revision dates example	35
Resource 7	Calendar dates for April, May and June 2004	36
Resource 8	Revision dates	37
Resource 9	Revision calendar for April	38
Resource 10	Revision calendar for May	39
Resource 11	Revision calendar for May 2004	40
Resource 12	Revision calendar for June	41
Resource 13	Revision calendar for June 2004	42
Resource 14	Munir’s daily revision diary for one week	43
Resource 15	Blank daily revision diary for one week	45
<b>Challenge 2</b>	<b>The revision challenge</b>	47
2.1	Remembering things: mnemonics	48
2.2	Using Mind Maps® for revision	51
2.3	How to make study/revision cards	53
2.4	How to turn a study card into a paragraph	56
Resource 1	The order of the planets	58
Resource 2	Mind Map style diagram	59

Resource 3	What are metals and why are they so useful?	60
Resource 4	Completed metals study card	61
Resource 5	What do metals react with?	62

## **Challenge 3    The examination challenge** 63

<b>3A</b>	<b>Before answering the questions</b>	
3.1	Getting ready for examinations	64
3.2	The first 10 minutes of an examination	66
Resource 1	Card sort	68
Resource 2	Organisation sheet	69
Resource 3	Summary sheet	70
Resource 4	Things to do in the first few minutes of an examination	71
<b>3B</b>	<b>Answering the questions</b>	
3.3	Command words	72
3.4	Unpicking the questions	74
3.5	Working out what is needed for the answer	76
Resource 5	Command words card sort	78
Resource 6	Command words and meanings	79
Resource 7	Examination questions (a)	80
Resource 8	Examination questions (b)	81
Resource 9	WILT	82
Resource 10	WILT grid	83
Resource 11	Using WILT to plan an answer	84
Resource 12	Using WILT to plan an answer – completed version	85
<b>3C</b>	<b>The end of an examination</b>	
3.6	What to do when you are running out of time	86
3.7	Checking your answers	88
Resource 13	A question to try	89
Resource 14	Checklist for proofreading an examination question	90



# Challenge 1: The planning challenge

## 1.1 and 1.2 Planning your coursework

## 1.3–1.5 Planning your revision

### Aims

There are five modules in the Planning challenge. They are all aimed at helping students improve how they organise their time. This will make them more able to plan the work they have to do when completing coursework and in the run-up to examinations.

The first two modules help students to organise themselves so that they can complete their coursework on time. The last three are focused on helping them plan their time for revision.

The modules in the Planning your revision section will supplement the section in the *GCSE booster pack*, Organising your revision timetable. Students following the Key Stage 4 Learning Challenge could use the activities in this challenge to help them fill in the timetable in this part of the *GCSE booster pack*.

### Organisation

The students who are following the Key Stage 4 Learning Challenge are likely to face real problems organising their time and the work they have to do. Some of these students will need a lot of support. Accordingly there will need to be on going support beyond that which is given here.

Subject teachers also need to know what students are doing in the Key Stage 4 Learning Challenge, so that they can provide additional support when students need to organise their work in ways that are specific to that subject. Helping to set milestones in planning, to break coursework into smaller chunks, would be particularly useful.

The subject-specific support teachers give to students to help them in planning and writing their coursework could include:

- writing frames to help students focus on coursework, and plan what they need to answer for a minimum mark;
- lead-in sentences to help students get started on paragraphs and sections;
- a form for writing up experiments that includes areas such as aim, equipment lists, method, results, conclusion etc.;
- a checklist of points and techniques that need to be covered in coursework for a certain level of marks to be obtained, e.g. use of vocabulary, methods of comparison or statistical methods, analysis, conclusion, etc.



# Challenge 1.1: Organising your coursework (a)

## Objective/Target for session:

This session will help students plan and organise their time in order to complete all their coursework.

**Resources needed: Resource 1: Planning time line**

**Resource 2: Subjects, copied one per student and cut up before the session**

**Resource 3: Calendar dates for January–April 2004 (updated annually thereafter), blown up to A3 size**

**Coloured pencils**

**Please note: all timings are approximate. How long each section takes will very much depend on students' responses.**

Teaching intention	Details – work with students
<b>Introduction</b> (1 minute)	Explain the objective for the session. Say: <i>Today we will look at how you can organise your time to make sure you are able to do all your coursework and hand it in on time.</i>
<b>Learning check – what are they doing now?</b> (1 minute)	Ask students how they organise their coursework now. Expect answers that show they don't plan for what they will do or when they will do it. These could be along the lines of: 'I don't have to hand it in until May so I haven't started it yet', or 'Well, I started doing my maths but then we got some geography and so I started that but I haven't finished my maths yet'.
<b>Modelling</b> (4 minutes)	Say: <i>I was thinking of what I do when I've got a lot to do. First of all I work out what I have to do and by which dates. I make myself a planner like this one.</i>  Show Resource 1. Say: <i>This helps me to plan what I have to do to get everything in on time.</i>
<b>Interactive session</b> (10 minutes)	Say: <i>Now we're going to have a go at making a time line for your coursework. First of all we're going to organise all your coursework so we know when it all has to be handed in.</i> Take the cards prepared from Resource 2. Ask students to choose the subjects they have coursework in. There are blank cards to allow for any other subject not listed. Ask them to sort them into three piles: the work they have finished, the work they have nearly finished, and the work where they still have a lot to do. Talk about what is in each pile, looking at which one has most cards in.

	<p>Say: <i>Do you know when all these different pieces of coursework need to be handed in? It would be helpful if you have found this out yourself before the session in case students do not know all the deadlines.</i></p> <p>Now get students to write on the cards for each subject the date when the coursework needs to be handed in. They should then arrange the three piles in a line according to the date for completion. They should then add colour to the cards. They should use three colours to show work finished, work nearly finished and work still with a lot to do before it is finished.</p> <p>Next, they should colour the dates on an A3 copy of Resource 3, using the same colours and adding the title of the coursework in each case.</p>
<p><b>Review</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Say: <i>In this session we have looked at what you have to do and by when. Which pieces of coursework do you think you should try to finish first? Look for answers that show they are thinking about what has to be handed in first, or looking at pieces of work they have nearly finished.</i></p>
<p><b>What next?</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Say: <i>Take your timetable home and stick it up somewhere near where you do your homework. In our next session we'll look at how you can break a piece of coursework down into smaller sections to help you get it done on time. Before then, choose one of the pieces of coursework you think you should finish first and bring it with you for next time. Write this in your planner/diary so you won't forget.</i></p>



# Challenge 1.2: Organising your coursework (b)

## Objective/Target for session:

This session will help students plan and organise each piece of coursework in order to complete it on time.

**Resources needed:** Resource 4: Time line for school dinners report, copied one per student  
Resource 5: Blank time line for my piece of coursework, copied one per student

**Please note:** all timings are approximate. How long each section takes will very much depend on students' responses.

Teaching intention	Details – work with students
<b>Introduction</b> (1 minute)	Explain the objective for the session. Say: <i>Today we will look at how you can organise your coursework so you aren't trying to do too much at once.</i>
<b>Learning check – what are they doing now?</b> (1 minute)	Ask students how they do each piece of coursework now. Expect answers such as 'I just do it', or 'I do it just before I have to hand it in', or 'I hardly ever manage to finish in time'.
<b>Modelling</b> (4 minutes)	<p>Say: <i>I was thinking of what I do when I've got a lot to do. First of all I work out what I have to do and by which dates. Then, if I have to hand some work in by a certain date I break the work down into smaller bits so it doesn't seem as much to do. Then I work backwards from that date and make myself a timetable. Look, here's one I've already done. What I did here was, first of all I thought about what should be in the report. Then I wrote a heading for each section. Then I spread this out and worked back from the date it was due in. Then I decided to have each section ready by a certain time before that date, so that I wasn't trying to do it all at once. The times that I planned to have each bit ready are called <b>milestones</b>. You can use milestones help you organise your work.</i></p> <p>You can either create your own time line for this or use Resource 4.</p> <p>Say: <i>This helps me to see that I'm doing as much as I need to make sure I can hand the work in on time. It lets me see a big piece of work in smaller bits, which helps me plan my time, and that helps me control what I have to do.</i></p>

<p><b>Interactive session</b> (10 minutes)</p>	<p><i>Say: Now we're going to look at the coursework you have brought and try to break it down into small bits like I did. Remember that I thought about the headings I could give to the smaller bits. You'll find it helpful to do the same.</i></p> <p>Students should then go through the coursework they have brought and break it into sections and give each section a heading. Some students may need help with this, others will have done it already. When they have identified three or four sections they should complete Resource 5, working back from the date they have to hand the work in. Give them a lot of praise for doing this.</p>
<p><b>Review</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Remind students that they have been looking at how they can break down a piece of coursework into smaller sections, and how milestones can make it easier to finish the work. <i>Say: You should try this with all the coursework you have to do, starting with the ones that have to be handed in first.</i></p>
<p><b>Where next?</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p><i>Say: Choose another piece of coursework that you think you should work on first. Try to break it into smaller bits just like I did. Make yourself a time line, working backwards from the deadline to today and bring it with you next time so we can talk about how you did it.</i></p> <p>Give students Resources 4 and 5 to help them do this.</p>

You will need to set a date to review how they have got on with this task.

The students you are working with are likely to find planning and completing their coursework very difficult. It would be a good idea to repeat this session several times, to help them break down each piece of coursework they have to do. Some students will need a lot more support than others.





# Resource 1: Planning time line

<b>8 April</b>	<b>30 April</b>	<b>14 May</b>	<b>20 May</b>
Hand in music essay	Hand in school dinners report	Hand in art project	Hand in results of survey about school uniform



## Resource 2: Subjects

English	History	Mathematics	Science	ICT
Art and design	Geography	Humanities	PE	RE
Media studies	Design and technology	Music		
	French/German/Spanish			



# Resource 3: Calendar dates for January–April 2004

## January

<b>M</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>S</b>
			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	

## February

<b>M</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>S</b>
						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

## March

<b>M</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>S</b>
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				

## April

<b>M</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>S</b>
			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		



# Resource 4: Time line for school dinners report

**Report about school dinners to be handed in by 30 April.**

Title: School dinners

- 1: Purpose of report
- 2: Main findings
- 3: Conclusions
- 4: Read through and redraft

<b>Start date</b>	<b>Date for completion of each section</b>				
20 February 2004	Purpose of report: 16 March 2004	Main findings: 6 April 2004	Conclusions: 16 April 2004	Read through and redraft: 27 April 2004	Hand in: 30 April 2004



# Resource 5: Blank time line for my piece of coursework

Title of coursework: \_\_\_\_\_

Main sections of coursework – things to be included:

1:

2:

3:

4: Read through and redraft

Start date	Date for completion of each section				
				Read through and redraft:	Hand in:



# Challenge 1.3: Organising your revision timetable

## Objective/Target for session:

This session will help students to plan when and what they are going to revise in the weeks preceding the examinations.

**Resources needed:** Resource 6: Revision dates example  
Resource 7: Calendar dates for April, May and June 2004 (updated annually thereafter)  
Resource 8: Revision dates, copied one per student

**Preparation:** it would be very useful to have the dates of the examinations that the students in the session will be sitting. You can get these from the head of Year 11, or the person in the school who organises examinations.

**Please note:** all timings are approximate. How long each section takes will very much depend on students' responses.

Teaching intention	Details – work with students
<b>Introduction</b> (1 minute)	<p>Explain the objective for the session. Say: <i>We are going to look at how you will plan your time for revision in the few weeks before the examinations. How will this help you? What might happen if you don't plan your revision time?</i></p> <p>Focus on answers that are linked to organisation, such as 'I will (not) have enough time to revise', or learning, like 'I will know more for my examinations'.</p> <p>Explain how planning their time will help them be better prepared for their examinations.</p>
<b>Learning check – what are they doing now?</b> (2 minutes)	<p>Ask students: <i>How do you plan your revision at the moment?</i> Make positive comments for answers that refer to writing what they plan to do in their planner, on the dates they plan to do it, writing precisely what they have to do, etc. (See Key Stage 3 Learning Challenge 1.2: Understanding your homework.)</p>
<b>Modelling</b> (2 minutes)	<p>Say: <i>When I have to prepare for something I write when it is going to happen in my diary. I also think about what I need to do to get ready for this and when I have to do it. I make sure I write this in my diary too. Why do I need to do these things?</i></p> <p>Look for responses such as: 'You'd forget it if it wasn't written down', or 'If you don't get things ready it will go wrong'.</p>

<p><b>Interactive session</b> (10 minutes)</p>	<p>Show the students Resource 6. This is a calendar with imaginary examination dates on it. Tell the students that these are imaginary dates and that the purpose of what you are doing today is to help them to plan their own time with the real dates of their examinations.</p> <p>Explain that the columns will give the dates when to revise for those examinations (<i>day before, 1 week before, 2 weeks before, etc.</i>).</p> <p><b>NB The grey boxes are to be left blank, so that revision for a particular examination takes place every other weekend (other than the weekend before).</b></p> <p>Use Resource 7, the calendars, to go through the revision dates given for English Paper 1 and D&amp;T Paper 2 on Resource 6. Explain that the student doing these papers has planned revision to start five weekends before the examination and has worked out a programme starting on that date.</p> <p><i>Say: Look, the first English paper is on 1 June, so this student has decided to start revising on 1 May – this is a weekend 5 weeks before the date of the examination. They have planned in a whole lot of dates, taking them right up to the date of the examination. But you can see they aren't planning to revise English every single weekend.</i></p> <p>Get the students to fill in the dates to revise Mathematics Paper 2, using the calendar to help them. Check the dates.</p>
<p><b>Review</b> (3 minutes)</p>	<p><i>Say: We've looked at a way of planning the dates when you are going to revise for your examinations. Remind me why it will be useful to do this.</i></p> <p>Look for responses that are linked to organisation and learning.</p>
<p><b>Where next?</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p><i>Say: Before the next session you are going to write the dates of your examinations on this blank planner and the dates when you will revise them. Give them Resource 8. It would be better if you have the actual examination dates for the students you are working with, so that you can give them to the students as well as the planner.</i></p> <p>Ask them how they are going to do this and reinforce the method used in the session.</p>



# Challenge 1.4: A revision calendar

## Objective/Target for session:

This session will build on the previous session, to help students plan their revision timetable better and in a more visual manner.

**Resources needed:** Resource 9: Revision calendar for April, with current year's dates, one per student

Resource 10: Revision calendar for May, with current year's dates, one per student

Resource 11: Revision calendar for May 2004

Resource 12: Revision calendar for June, with current year's dates, one per student

Resource 13: Revision calendar for June 2004

It will also be useful for students to have their completed Revision dates example (Resource 6), from the last session, and a completed Resource 8, done as homework after the last session.

Please note: all timings are approximate. How long each section takes will very much depend on students' responses.

Teaching intention	Details – work with students
<b>Introduction</b> (14 minutes)	Remind students that they were going to complete a revision plan on Resource 8 for their own GCSE subjects. Ask them to show it and spend a few minutes talking about it.  <i>Say: In this session we are going to look at putting your examination and revision dates on a revision calendar.</i>  Ask the students why this is useful. Look for responses that are linked to being able to see at a glance what revision needs to happen on a given date.
<b>Learning check – what are they doing now?</b> (2 minutes)	Remind the students of the previous session, when they wrote down the dates of the examinations and when to revise for them. Ask the students why they did this. Look for responses like 'I'll find it useful to organise the time I have between now and the examination so that I can make sure I plan time for all subjects'.
<b>Modelling</b> (3 minutes)	<i>Say: I have many dates to remember, such as parents' evenings, visiting the dentist (or alternative events). I am sometimes given a list of these, or they are written down for me. What do you think I do with these?</i>



	<p>Look for answers like ‘Put them on a calendar’ or ‘Write them in your diary’. Praise students for answers like this.</p> <p>Now say: <i>Because I have things I need to do and know when they are going to happen, I need to plan ahead and <b>see</b> I have to do these things. A calendar and a diary really help me do this.</i></p>
<p><b>Interactive session</b> (10 minutes)</p>	<p>Say: <i>We are going to look at how you can put your examination and revision dates on a calendar to help you see when your revision needs to happen, and what you are going to revise. Why is this going to help you?</i></p> <p>Look for responses to do with organisation and being able to see easily what to do and when.</p> <p>Give students Resources 9, 10 and 12 (the blank revision calendars for April, May and June) to look at. Ask them to identify how these would be useful in planning their time. Look for answers like: ‘It’ll help me to spread things out’, and ‘I’ll be able to see easily what I have to do and when’.</p> <p>Then get the students to look at the partially completed calendars (Resources 11 and 13) along with the partially completed revision timetable example (Resource 6) used in the last session. Remind them that these dates are imaginary and not the real examination dates for this year.</p> <p>Go through how the dates on the timetable have been entered in the corresponding places on the calendars.</p> <p>Get the students to complete the dates.</p>
<p><b>Review</b> (3 minutes)</p>	<p>Reinforce why it will be useful to have a revision calendar.</p> <p>Say: <i>Having this calendar will help you see easily what subject and examination you need to revise for on each day leading up to the examinations. It will also help you spread things out so you aren’t trying to do too much on the same day.</i></p> <p>Ask the students how they might use the calendar. Look for responses that suggest they are thinking about where they might put it so they can refer to it easily and how it will help plan their time.</p>
<p><b>What next?</b> (1 minute)</p>	<p>Say: <i>Before we next meet you are going to fill in the blank calendars for your own examinations, and bring them to the next session. Remember why you are doing this and think of where you will put the completed calendars so you can use them effectively during your revision. You will need to bring your completed calendars to the next session.</i></p>



# Challenge 1.5: Planning your daily revision

## Objective/Target for session:

This session will help students to organise their time when they are revising and help them improve the quality of the revision they do each day. It will build on the two previous sessions and overlaps with, and builds on, Key Stage 3 Organisation challenge 1.4: Planning your homework.

**Resources needed: Resource 14: Munir's daily revision diary, blown up to A3 size**

**Resource 15: Daily revision diary, blown up to A3 size, one per student**

**It will also be useful for students to have their completed Revision calendars for April, May and June (Resources 9, 10 and 12), done as 'homework' after the last session.**

**Please note: all timings are approximate. How long each section takes will very much depend on students' responses.**

Teaching intention	Details – work with students
<p><b>Introduction</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Say: <i>In this session we are going to look at what you are going to revise each day now that you have your revision calendar. This will also help you plan your revision better.</i></p> <p>Remind the students that they were asked to complete their revision calendars for homework. Say: <i>Tell me what you did and how it will help you.</i> Give them a moment to talk through what they have done and praise them for their efforts.</p>
<p><b>Learning check – what are they doing now?</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Say: <i>Do you always manage to fit in all the revision you want to do?</i> Look for responses like: 'I don't always have enough time', or 'Some nights I play sport', or 'I manage to do it if I plan time for it'. Focus on the last kind of answer. If they don't raise this, then raise it yourself.</p> <p>Say: <i>When is the best time for you to revise?</i> Give a few moments to share responses.</p>
<p><b>Modelling</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Say: <i>I really like watching 'The Simpsons' (or an alternative activity) but I usually have things to prepare. So what do you think I do?</i> Look for answers like 'Do your preparation before the programme starts'.</p> <p>Now say: <i>Because I have things I want to do in the evening, I have to think ahead and plan my work time so that I can do my preparation and still have time to do other things. I also find it better to do my work in short</i></p>

	<p><i>bursts, say for about 20 or 30 minutes, and then change the subject and do something else.</i></p>
<p><b>Interactive session</b> (12 minutes)</p>	<p>Say: <i>Now we are going to look at a way to help you fit all your revision in and still have time for other things. Why does this matter?</i></p> <p>Look for answers like: 'I need to do my revision because I want to learn better and get better grades in my examinations. But I also want to have time to play football/ watch TV/ play computer games.'</p> <p>Say: <i>So you really need to get organised and plan what you will do each night. Look at Munir's revision diary (Resource 14). What does he do apart from his revision?</i></p> <p>Pause for answers. <i>Does he manage to do his revision as well?</i></p> <p>Pause for answers. <i>How does he do this?</i> Look for responses like 'He plans out his time', or 'He is doing more than one subject in an hour. That means he is doing things in short bursts'.</p> <p>Then say: <i>Here is an outline weekly revision diary (Resource 15) for you to complete. We are only going to do it for Monday and Tuesday at the moment. Fill in which examination you need to revise for each night. Look back at the revision calendars we have already done to remind you when your examinations are.</i></p>
<p><b>Review</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Ask: <i>Have you changed your mind about the best time to revise?</i> Probe for responses that show they have understood the need to plan revision into the time they have each day.</p>
<p><b>Where next?</b> (1 minute)</p>	<p>Say: <i>When you are revising you will see you are making progress if you tick off topics as they are revised and give yourself a reward. Remember that revision is probably best done in short bursts of 20–30 minutes long, followed by a break and a change of subject. Before we meet again you are going to fill in the sheet for the whole week. Don't forget to think about how you will organise your time at the weekend to make sure you get your weekend revision done.</i></p>

You will need to plan some review sessions to follow up this activity and check that students have completed their revision diary. After the first review session, they should go away with sheets to complete for a number of weeks so they can plan ahead. You will need to meet them again to check these and give them support if they are finding it difficult.



# Resource 6: Revision dates example

Subject / Examination	Dates to revise										
	Exam date	Day before	Week-end before	1 week before	2 week-ends before	2 weeks before	3 week-ends before	3 weeks before	4 week-ends before	4 weeks before	5 week-ends before
English Paper 1	1 June	31 May	29/30 May	25 May		18 May	15/16 May	11 May		4 May	1/2 May
English Paper 2	3 June										
Mathematics Paper 1	4 June										
Mathematics Paper 2	7 June										
Science Paper 1	2 June										
Science Paper 2	9 June										
Geography Paper 1	31 May										
Geography Paper 2	8 June										
D&T Paper 1	9 June										
D&T Paper 2	11 June	10 June	5/6 June	4 June	29/30 May	28 May		21 May	15/16 May	14 May	
French Paper 1	10 June										
French Paper 2	15 June										
PE Paper 1	14 June										
PE Paper 2	17 June										



# Resource 7: Calendar dates for April, May and June 2004

## April

<b>M</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>S</b>
			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		

## May

<b>M</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>S</b>
					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						

## June

<b>M</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>S</b>
	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				



# Resource 8: Revision dates

Subject / Examination	Dates to revise										
	Exam date	Day before	Week-end before	1 week before	2 week-ends before	2 weeks before	3 week-ends before	3 weeks before	4 week-ends before	4 weeks before	5 week-ends before



# Resource 9: Revision calendar for April

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<b>Date</b>							
<b>Examination</b>							
<b>Revision</b>							
<b>Date</b>							
<b>Examination</b>							
<b>Revision</b>							
<b>Date</b>							
<b>Examination</b>							
<b>Revision</b>							
<b>Date</b>							
<b>Examination</b>							
<b>Revision</b>							
<b>Date</b>							
<b>Examination</b>							
<b>Revision</b>							



# Resource 10: Revision calendar for May

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<b>Date</b>							
<b>Examination</b>							
<b>Revision</b>							
<b>Date</b>							
<b>Examination</b>							
<b>Revision</b>							
<b>Date</b>							
<b>Examination</b>							
<b>Revision</b>							
<b>Date</b>							
<b>Examination</b>							
<b>Revision</b>							
<b>Date</b>							
<b>Examination</b>							
<b>Revision</b>							





# Resource 11: Revision calendar for May 2004

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<b>Date</b>						<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Examination</b>						Revision: English Paper 1	
<b>Revision</b>							
<b>Date</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Examination</b>							
<b>Revision</b>		English Paper 1					
<b>Date</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Examination</b>						Revision: English Paper 1	
<b>Revision</b>		English Paper 1			D&T Paper 2		
<b>Date</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Examination</b>							
<b>Revision</b>			English Paper 1		D&T Paper 2		
<b>Date</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Examination</b>						Revision: English Paper 1	
<b>Revision</b>		English Paper 1			D&T Paper 2		
<b>Date</b>	<b>31</b>						
<b>Examination</b>							
<b>Revision</b>	English Paper 1						



# Resource 12: Revision calendar for June

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<b>Date</b>							
<b>Examination</b>							
<b>Revision</b>							
<b>Date</b>							
<b>Examination</b>							
<b>Revision</b>							
<b>Date</b>							
<b>Examination</b>							
<b>Revision</b>							
<b>Date</b>							
<b>Examination</b>							
<b>Revision</b>							
<b>Date</b>							
<b>Examination</b>							
<b>Revision</b>							



# Resource 13: Revision calendar for June 2004

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<b>Date</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Examination</b>		English Paper 1				Revision: D&T Paper 2	
<b>Revision</b>					D&T Paper 2		
<b>Date</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Examination</b>					D&T Paper 2	Revision:	
<b>Revision</b>				D&T Paper 2			
<b>Date</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Examination</b>						Revision:	
<b>Revision</b>							
<b>Date</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Examination</b>						Revision:	
<b>Revision</b>							
<b>Date</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>				
<b>Examination</b>							
<b>Revision</b>							
<b>Date</b>							
<b>Examination</b>							
<b>Revision</b>							



# Resource 14: Munir's daily revision diary for one week

Day	Date	Subject	Activity	
Monday	24/5	Maths PE English	5.00– 5.25 5.30– 5.55	Dinner
			6.00– 6.25 6.30– 6.55	Maths: Try out some examples of equations.  English: Underline key points from classwork on poetry topic.
			7.00– 7.25 7.30– 7.55	Watch TV
			8.00– 8.25 8.30– 8.55	PE: Underline key points about the importance of training. English: Make study card on poetry topic.
Tuesday	25/5	English Science Maths PE	5.00– 5.25 5.30– 5.55	Dinner
			6.00– 6.25 6.30– 6.55	Maths: Try some more equations.  English: Use study card to write a paragraph about poetry topic.
			7.00– 7.25 7.30– 7.55	Watch TV
			8.00– 8.25 8.30– 8.55	Science: Underline key points about green plants from classwork. PE: Use key points as underlined to make a Mind Map about the importance of training.
Wednesday	26/5	D&T Science English	5.00– 5.25 5.30– 5.55	Dinner
			6.00– 6.25 6.30– 6.55	Science: Use key points about green plants to make a study card. English: Underline key points from classwork on Shakespeare play.
			7.00– 7.25 7.30– 7.55	Cricket training
			8.00– 8.25 8.30– 8.55	D&T: Underline key points about creating a design brief from classwork and coursework notes. Science: Use study card about green plants to write a paragraph about how plants take up water and transpire.
Thursday	27/5	English Maths D&T	5.00– 5.25 5.30– 5.55	Dinner

			6.00–6.25 6.30–6.55	English: Use key points about Shakespeare play to make a study card. Maths: Work through some percentages.
			7.00–7.25 7.30–7.55	Play with PlayStation
			8.00–8.25 8.30–8.55	English: Use study card about Shakespeare to write a paragraph. D&T: Use key points about creating a design brief to make a study card.
Friday	28/5	D&T PE Maths	5.00–5.25 5.30–5.55	PE: Use Mind Map about training to write a paragraph. Maths: Practise some more fractions.
			6.00–6.25 6.30–6.55	Dinner
			7.00–7.25 7.30–7.55	Maths: Work through some percentages. D&T: Use study card about writing a design brief to write a paragraph.
			8.00–8.25 8.30–8.55	Watch TV
Saturday	29/5	English Maths Science Geography	2.00–2.25 2.30–2.55	English: Underline key points from classwork about the book we are reading. Science: Use study card about green plants to write a paragraph about photosynthesis.
			3.00–3.25 3.30–3.55	Geography: Underline key points from classwork about development. Science: Go over examination question about green plants and highlight command words and underline key words to help me know what to include in the answer.
			7.00–7.25 7.30–7.55	Maths: Practise some more percentages. English: Use the underlined work about the book to make a study card about it.
			8.00–8.25 8.30–8.55	Go out with friends
Sunday	30/5	Geography PE English Science	2.00–2.25 2.30–2.55	PE: Underline key words from classwork about muscles. Science: Use the underlining from the examination question about green plants to make a study card to outline the answer.
			3.00–3.25 3.30–3.55	Geography: Use the underlined work about development to make a study card. PE: Use underlining about muscles to make a study card.
			7.00–7.25 7.30–7.55	Geography: Use the study card to write a paragraph about development. English: Use the study card about the book to write a paragraph.
			8.00–8.25 8.30–8.55	Watch TV



# Resource 15: Blank daily revision diary for one week

Day	Date	Subject	Activity
Monday			5.00– 5.25 5.30– 5.55
			6.00– 6.25 6.30– 6.55
			7.00– 7.25 7.30– 7.55
			8.00– 8.25 8.30– 8.55
Tuesday			5.00– 5.25 5.30– 5.55
			6.00– 6.25 6.30– 6.55
			7.00– 7.25 7.30– 7.55
			8.00– 8.25 8.30– 8.55
Wednesday			5.00– 5.25 5.30– 5.55
			6.00– 6.25 6.30– 6.55
			7.00– 7.25 7.30– 7.55
			8.00– 8.25 8.30– 8.55
Thursday			5.00– 5.25 5.30– 5.55

			6.00– 6.25 6.30– 6.55	
			7.00– 7.25 7.30– 7.55	
			8.00– 8.25 8.30– 8.55	
Friday			5.00– 5.25 5.30– 5.55	
			6.00– 6.25 6.30– 6.55	
			7.00– 7.25 7.30– 7.55	
			8.00– 8.25 8.30– 8.55	
Saturday			2.00– 2.25 2.30– 2.55	
			3.00– 3.25 3.30– 3.55	
			7.00– 7.25 7.30– 7.55	
			8.00– 8.25 8.30– 8.55	
Sunday			2.00– 2.25 2.30– 2.55	
			3.00– 3.25 3.30– 3.55	
			7.00– 7.25 7.30– 7.55	
			8.00– 8.25 8.30– 8.55	



# Challenge 2: The revision challenge

## 2.1 Remembering things: mnemonics

## 2.2 Using Mind Maps for revision

## 2.3 How to make study/revision cards

## 2.4 How to turn a study card into a paragraph

### Aims

There are four modules in the Revision challenge. They are all aimed at helping students to build up strategies to help them with revision. They suggest only some of the strategies that students will need, and deal with a few useful, generic skills. It would be helpful if subject teachers were aware of these and built them into the other revision strategies they are working through in their subjects.

### Organisation

The modules in the Revision challenge build on modules from the Key Stage 3 Learning Challenge. In particular, they build on:

- Challenge 2: the Memory challenge;
- Challenge 3: the Revision challenge;
- Challenge 6: the Thinking challenge.

It would be helpful to run these challenges with students if they did not follow them in Key Stage 3.

The modules need to be run about a week apart to give students time to try out, and consolidate, the strategies they are being introduced to. There will also need to be a short review session after the final challenge to follow up what has been done with the final Where next? section.

Most challenges have some additional ideas for revision shown at the end. These could be developed as part of the Key Stage 4 Learning Challenge or by subject teachers as part of their planned revision programme.





# Challenge 2.1: Remembering things: mnemonics

## Objective/Target for session:

This session builds on the Key Stage 3 Memory challenge. It aims to develop skills in making different kinds of mnemonics to help students remember things.

Resources needed: Resource 1: The order of the planets  
Coloured pens

NB If students have not followed the Key Stage 3 Memory challenge, it would be worth taking them through this before beginning this module.

Please note: all timings are approximate. How long each section takes will very much depend on students' responses.

Teaching intention	Details – work with students
<p><b>Introduction</b> (1 minute)</p>	<p>Say: <i>It often helps you to remember something if you have a hook to hang the idea on. These hooks are called mnemonics and they can help you to join up new things you are learning to things you already know. In the next few sessions we are going to look at how you can use different types of mnemonics as hooks to help you remember things. Today we are going to look at the <b>Catchphrase System</b>.</i></p> <p>(It will help if you write the word 'mnemonics' on the board.)</p>
<p><b>Learning check – what are they doing now?</b> (3 minutes)</p>	<p>Say: <i>The Catchphrase System is where you remember a phrase and use the first letter of each word to remind you of the first letter of the things you want to remember.</i></p> <p>Ask: <i>Can you remember using any catchphrases to help you remember a spelling, the points on a compass, or the colours in the rainbow?</i></p> <p>They may not be able to remember, but praise them if they come up with ideas. If they do not, remind them about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• spelling 'because' – <b>Big Elephants Can't Always Use Small Exits</b>;</li> <li>• points of the compass – <b>Never Eat Shredded Wheat/Naughty Elephants Squirt Water</b>;</li> <li>• colours of the rainbow – <b>Richard Of York Gave Battle In Vain</b> (Red; Orange; Yellow; Green; Blue; Indigo; Violet).</li> </ul>

	<p>Say: <i>When you do this you use the first letter of each word to remind you of another word. We are going to use this method to make up your own catchphrases to help you remember lists of things.</i></p>
<p><b>Modelling</b> (5 minutes)</p>	<p>Say: <i>I'm going to use this system to try to remember the names and order of the planets in our Solar System as an example of making up a catchphrase. I want to remember both the names and the order of the planets. Look, I've got a list of the planets in the order they come, with the one nearest the Sun first.</i></p> <p>Use Resource 1, which has the names of the planets in the correct order. Under each planet's name write this sentence, using one word under each planet: <b>My Very Easy Method Just Speeds Up Naming Planets.</b> (My Very Early Morning Jam Sandwich Usually Nauseates People is another good one, which students may prefer as it is funny!)</p> <p>Make the first letter <b>bold</b> or write it in a different colour. Talk about this as you do it and make the point that it is easier to remember a sentence that makes some sense.</p> <p>Now show the students what you would do when you need to recall the names and order. Cover Resource 1 with a blank sheet of paper.</p> <p>Say: <i>I write down, or say to myself, the catchphrase and highlight or put a ring round the first letter of each word in the catchphrase. This reminds me of the first letter of each of the planets in the right order. (Say and write down the catchphrase, or just the first letter of each word.) Say: This gives me a much better chance of remembering both the names of the planets and the order correctly.</i></p> <p>See if the students can name the planets with you as you use each letter to trigger your memory of the name of the planet.</p> <p>Say: <i>It can be easier to remember if our catchphrase is funny, ridiculous or absurd. Now, I am going to make a funny catchphrase to help me remember the names and order of the planets. Use Resource 1 again and model a funny sentence such as Many Violet Egg Men Jumped Stupidly Under Nine Planets.</i></p> <p>Try the above again, seeing again how the first letters trigger the memory the names of the planets.</p>
<p><b>Interactive session</b> (6 minutes)</p>	<p>Say: <i>It is even better if we come up with our own catchphrases. Working in pairs, try to make a new catchphrase for the names and order of the planets.</i></p> <p>Praise students for their efforts. Now say: <i>You're getting good at this – let's see if you can do one for the days of the week.</i> Praise them again and move on.</p>

<p><b>Review</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p><i>Say: Today we have learned how to use a catchphrase mnemonic to help you remember important facts.</i></p> <p>Ask students to explain the rules of a catchphrase mnemonic, how it works and to give you an example. Look for responses that include something about using the first letter of the words in a sentence to remember other information, and about it being a kind of hook to hang other information on.</p>
<p><b>What next?</b> (1 minute)</p>	<p><i>Say: Before next time, try making a catchphrase for something you have to remember in one of your subjects during the next week. See if it helps you remember those things more easily. Next time we meet you will show us the catchphrase and tell us how it helps you remember, and what it helps you remember. We could share these with the group to help us all to remember different things.</i></p>

**Extra revision idea**

Another way to embed information is to link it to something that is very familiar, e.g. your house or a room within it, or the journey to school, etc. Link or attach each word or piece of information to be remembered to a location or object in the room/journey.



# Challenge 2.2: Using Mind Maps<sup>®</sup> for revision

## Objective/Target for session:

This session makes use of active revision strategies, such as a Mind Map, to produce written answers.

**Resources needed:** Resource 2: Mind map style diagram (which is also Resource 3 from Key Stage 3 Thinking challenge 6.5: Big picture thinking)

**NB** If students are unfamiliar with Mind Maps, or have not completed the Key Stage 3 Thinking challenge 6.5: Big picture thinking, it would be helpful to do this before beginning this module.

**Please note:** all timings are approximate. How long each section takes will very much depend on students' responses.

Teaching intention	Details – work with students
<b>Introduction</b> (1 minute)	Remind students that they were going to try to write a catchphrase to help them remember something they have been studying in one of their subjects. Ask them to share their catchphrases with you and give them lots of praise.  <i>Say: Today we will be looking at how you can use Mind Maps to help with your revision.</i>
<b>Learning check – what are they doing now?</b> (3 minutes)	Ask the students if they have used a strategy called mind mapping before. If they have, ask them to talk about the strategy.  Ask the students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>What is a Mind Map?</i></li> <li>• <i>How is it constructed?</i></li> <li>• <i>What is it used for?</i></li> <li>• <i>How or when is it useful?</i></li> </ul> <i>Say: A Mind Map is a tool that helps us to organise ideas. It exists in your head as well as on paper. You will need to turn those ideas back into written form in an examination. A good way of revising is to practise doing this.</i>  Review Mind Maps by giving a one-minute tour of a Mind Map using Resource 2.
<b>Modelling</b> (4 minutes)	Tell the students that you are going to show them how to use a Mind Map to produce text that could be used in an examination answer.

	<p>Model writing a paragraph from the Mind Map on Resource 2, making your thinking explicit and explaining where the sentences come from.</p> <p><i>Say: On the Mind Map I can see a connection between geography, earthquakes and Kobe. This could be written as 'Geography is one of my favourite subjects. In it I learned that the city of Kobe was destroyed by a recent earthquake.'</i></p> <p>Check that the students understand where the sentences come from on the Mind Map. <i>Say: Can you see on the Mind Map where I got this sentence from?</i></p>
<p><b>Interactive session</b> (8 minutes)</p>	<p>Tell the students that they are going to try converting a Mind Map to text. Ask them to choose another section of the map on Resource 2 and use it to create a meaningful paragraph.</p> <p><i>Say: There are a number of ways to create the paragraph, so don't worry that there is only one perfect answer. The important thing is that you have used the Mind Map to create a paragraph that is meaningful to you.</i></p>
<p><b>Review</b> (4 minutes)</p>	<p>Reflect on the process. Get students to compare their paragraphs. Comment on similarities and differences. Praise them for their efforts and draw out good examples.</p> <p>Ask the students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>How did you do this task?</i></li> <li>• <i>What problems did you have?</i></li> <li>• <i>How did you get around the problem?</i></li> <li>• <i>Do you think this task makes a Mind Map a good revision tool?</i></li> <li>• <i>Do you think using a Mind Map in this way will help you to write better answers in an examination?</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Where next?</b> (1 minute)</p>	<p>Encourage the students to create a Mind Map of something they are revising.</p>



# Challenge 2.3:

## How to make study/revision cards

### Objective/Target for session:

This session will help students to make the best use of their revision time by making clear, visually stimulating revision cards.

**Resources needed:** Resource 3: What are metals and why are they so useful?  
Resource 4: Completed metals study card  
Resource 5: What do metals react with?, one per student  
Highlighter pens  
Coloured pencils  
A5 paper/card

**Please note: all timings are approximate. How long each section takes will very much depend on students' responses.**

Teaching intention	Details – work with students
<b>Introduction</b> (1 minute)	<p>Say: <i>At the end of the last session you were going to make a Mind Map of something you had to revise. Let's see how you got on.</i> Spend a few moments looking at what they have done, and encouraging them to talk about what was hard and what was easy.</p> <p>Tell students that in this session they will be looking at ways of identifying the key points in a piece of information, and then thinking of ways to present the information on a <b>study card</b>.</p>
<b>Learning check – what are they doing now?</b> (2 minutes)	Ask students what they do now to help them identify key points in information. Look for responses like highlighting or underlining important information, or writing down the key points to learn.
<b>Modelling</b> (6 minutes)	<p>Say: <i>Today we are going to learn how to make a study card, which is a good way of identifying the key things you have to remember in a topic.</i></p> <p>Show the group Resource 3. Model highlighting the key words or phrase in the first two lines. Read the line 'More than three quarters of the elements are metals' and say: <i>'Three quarters' sounds important so I'll highlight that, and the words 'elements' and 'metals'. Would you agree with that?</i></p> <p>Ask students to highlight the key words or phrases in the rest of the text. They should work in pairs, if possible.</p>

	<p>Now say: <i>This is not enough to help us remember. We need to turn this information into visually stimulating study cards. These should be enjoyable to make and revise from.</i></p> <p>Show the students Resource 4. Say: <i>Let's have a look at this card. It shows how all the key words and phrases fit into a mnemonic for the word 'metals'.</i></p> <p>Then make this important point: <i>It is often not possible to make up a word mnemonic for information, but we can always use other picture clues of lettering, images, symbols, colour, etc.</i></p> <p>Ask students how the picture clues could help them remember the information. Encourage students to name specific examples, e.g. numerals for 'three quarters' or a pie-chart shape to show the same idea, the jagged E for electricity (like a lightning bolt); the dripping M to represent melting, etc.</p> <p>Mention developing their own symbols that they could use all the time in all different subjects to represent the same ideas, e.g. a flame symbol to represent HEAT, which they always colour yellow and orange, or wavy lines for water, which they always colour blue.</p> <p>Say: <i>Remember – LOTS of colour! You can develop your own colour code, e.g. red for HOT and blue for COLD; orange for REACTIVE and grey for NON-REACTIVE, etc. Whatever makes sense for you.</i></p>
<p><b>Interactive session</b> (8 minutes)</p>	<p>Ask students to read Resource 5. Say: <i>What have we learned to do first with this information?</i></p> <p>Look for 'Highlight key words and phrases'. Say: <i>OK, use the highlighter pen and do this.</i> Give them a couple of minutes to finish.</p> <p>Now say: <i>You are going to begin to make your own study card that includes all the key words and phrases you've just highlighted. You might find that a Mind Map will work better than a catchphrase here. Start with the phrase 'Metals react with' in the centre and put your information on branches around it. Make it look good and use lots of colour so it will be exciting.</i></p> <p>Give students enough time to get started and make sure they understand what they have to do. They will not have time to finish, but this is what they should do before the next session.</p>

	<p>Ask students to identify the key features that a study card should contain. Look for, and prompt if necessary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• key words/phrases;</li> <li>• symbols;</li> <li>• pictures;</li> <li>• colour;</li> <li>• codes;</li> <li>• mnemonics if possible.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Where next?</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Say: <i>Before the next session, complete your study card for 'What do metals react with?'. We'll share them next time because we can learn from each other's ideas.</i></p> <p>Point out to students that, as well as making study cards, it is often helpful to put key facts on sticky notes and place them around their bedrooms.</p>

### Extra ideas for taking further the strategies used in study cards

- Help students to build up study cards by reading a short factual piece and allowing them to write only one word in the centre of the page to sum up what it was about. Then read it again and allow them to draw a line from the central word as in a spider diagram and add two other 'main' words or sub-headings. Repeat this by reading it again a few more times until they have what they think are enough notes to explain orally or write a short piece on that subject to include all the important facts.
- Teach students strategies for making revision notes easier to use, including some of the strategies developed in making revision cards. These strategies include:
  - abbreviations such as: e.g., &, <, >, →, ∴ for therefore, etc.;
  - number points;
  - flow charts.
- Make all revision notes memorable by using colour and other eye-catching techniques, such as:
  - red for words;
  - green for drawings/diagrams;
  - blue for signs, symbols and formulae;
  - block capitals for headings and important words;
  - underlining;
  - highlighting;
  - drawings;
  - diagrams;
  - mnemonics;
  - formulae.





# Challenge 2.4:

## How to turn a study card into a paragraph

### Objective/Target for session:

This session will help students to use study cards to write a paragraph. This will help when they have to answer questions in an examination.

**Resources needed:** Resource 3: What are metals and why are they so useful?  
Resource 4: Completed metals study card  
Resource 5: What do metals react with?  
The study cards that students made after the last session

**Please note:** all timings are approximate. How long each section takes will very much depend on students' responses.

Teaching intention	Details – work with students
<b>Introduction</b> (1 minute)	<i>Say: In this session we are going to use your study cards to help you write a paragraph. This will help you to use the study cards you make in your revision.</i>
<b>Learning check – what are they doing now?</b> (2 minutes)	Remind students that they were going to try to make a study card showing what metals react with. Spend a few moments talking about what they did and how they did it.
<b>Modelling</b> (5 minutes)	<p>Use Resource 4. <i>Say: You are going to use the information on the card to begin to write a paragraph.</i></p> <p><i>Say: I remember, when I did this, that I thought it was important that more than three quarters of all the elements are metals, so I will start my paragraph with that. My picture tells me that they are tough and strong, so I'll put that next. I think it matters that people who want to use metals know this, so I'll write that next. Look, I've written 'More than three quarters of all the elements are metals. Metals are tough and strong and this is important when people want to make things out of metal.'</i></p> <p>Spend a minute talking about how the pictures and words on the card helped to jog your memory and then say: <i>I could go on until I'd written something about all the points, but there isn't time.</i></p>
<b>Interactive session</b> (8 minutes)	<p>Now say: <i>Now we're going to look at how to use the cards you made to write a paragraph. Tell me how you'll start.</i></p> <p>Look for responses such as 'This part here is important so I'll start with that', or 'This part really jogs my memory, so I'll write something about that'.</p>

	If students have not managed to make a card, or find it hard to get started, you could get them to finish the paragraph you've started. Some students will need more guidance through the process than others.
<b>Review</b> (2 minutes)	Remind students that they made the study cards in the first place by using the information in Resources 3 and 5. <i>Say: When you write a paragraph from the study card, you are using the card as a kind of memory jogger to help you remember the information you used to make it. That's why it helps to use colour and symbols and sometimes mnemonics.</i>
<b>Where next?</b> (1 minute)	<i>Say: Now you know how to make study cards and use them to help you to remember information. Practise making them for things you have to remember when you are revising. The more you practise, the better you'll get.</i>

### Organising study cards

Once they have made study cards, students will need to organise them so they can make the best use of them.

Using a small box file for postcard-sized revision cards is a good way to keep them all together. The cards can be sorted into topics or subjects, which can replace poorly written notes from exercise books. They can also be used to condense revision notes from published revision books.

You will need to set up a review session to check what they have done and support them in doing it again.

### Extra ideas for active revision strategies that supplement those in the challenges

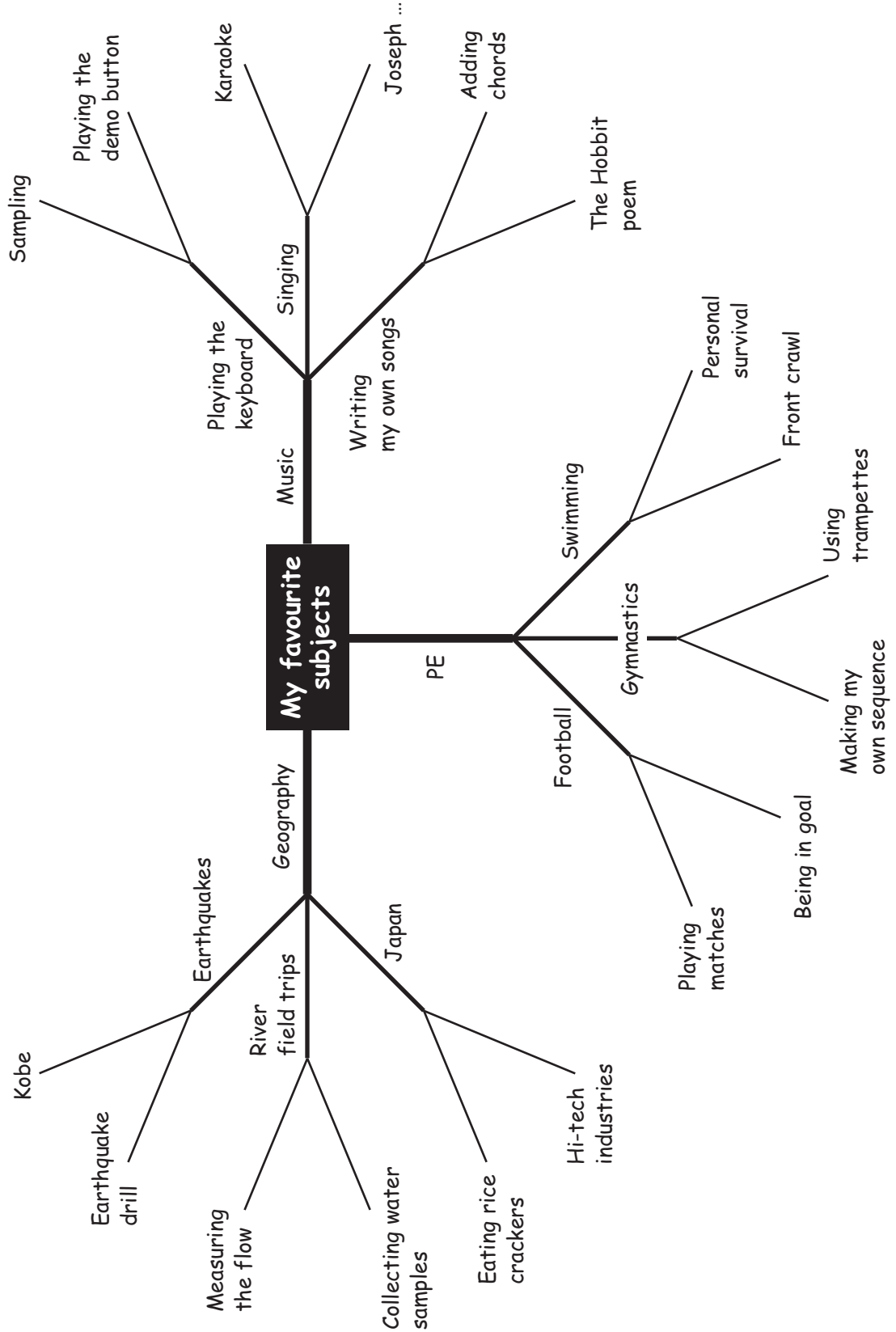
- In a small group, students should revise a page of a topic they are all studying. They should then attempt to teach the rest of the group using the whiteboard. They will need to consider using interesting and different ways of presenting the material. Students usually like 'being the teacher'. Tell them that one of the best ways of learning something is to teach others because it allows you to see what you really do or don't understand.
- Prepare two sets of cards. One set has a question written on each card and the other has the answers to the questions. Distribute the cards to the group, making sure that nobody has the answer to their question. The first person reads a question and everyone looks to see if they have the answer. The person who thinks they have the correct answer reads it out and then, if everyone agrees that it is correct, that person reads out their question card, and so it goes on around the class. Lower-attaining students like this 'game' and do not see it as boring revision.



# Resource 1: The order of the planets

**Mercury**   **Venus**   **Earth**   **Mars**   **Jupiter**   **Saturn**   **Uranus**   **Neptune**   **Pluto**

# Resource 2: Mind Map style diagram





## **Resource 3:**

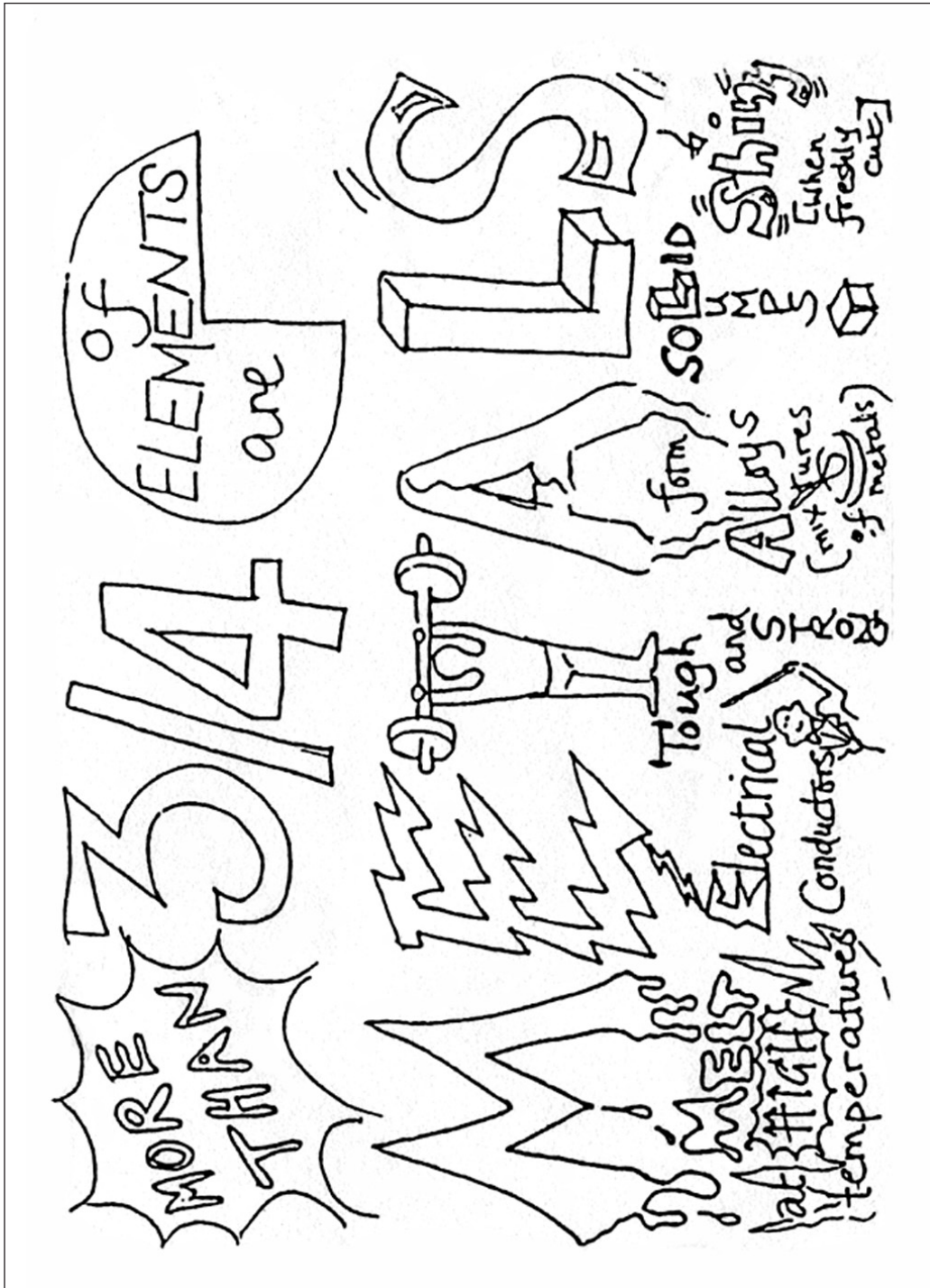
# **What are metals and why are they so useful?**

More than three quarters of the elements are metals. The elements we call metals have properties that non-metal elements do not have. It is because of these properties that metals are very useful for some purposes but unsuitable for others.

Metals:

- are all solids at room temperature – except mercury;
- have a high melting point;
- are shiny when freshly cut;
- form alloys that are mixtures of metals;
- are mostly tough, strong and can easily be hammered or bent into shape;
- are good conductors of heat and electricity when solid or liquid.

# Resource 4: Completed metals study card





# Resource 5:

## What do metals react with?

Different metals react with other chemicals to produce different compounds.

Metals react with:

- air to produce metal oxides;
- water (cold, hot or as steam) to produce metal hydroxides (or oxides) and hydrogen;
- dilute acids to produce metal salts and hydrogen.



# Challenge 3: The examination challenge

## 3.1 and 3.2 Before answering the questions

## 3.3–3.5 Answering the questions

## 3.6 and 3.7 The end of an examination

### Aims

This challenge is aimed at helping students to improve how they prepare for examinations. It should improve their understanding of what is required in different examination questions, and help them use their time better during examinations.

The modules in this challenge will supplement the notes in the *GCSE booster pack* *Doing better at GCSE: advice for students*. This challenge will help students break down into small bites advice they are given for preparing for and sitting examinations.

### Organisation

This challenge falls into three main sections:

- **Before answering the questions** – deals with preparation before the examination and the need to read the instructions given on the examination paper.
- **Answering the questions** – will help students understand what questions require and how they should approach answering them.
- **The end of an examination** – deals with what to do when they run out of time, and with the need to leave time to check their answers.

As with the other Key Stage 4 Learning Challenges, the work that students do in the Examination challenge will have greater impact if subject teachers are aware of what is being done, so that they can reinforce it in a subject-specific context.





# Challenge 3.1: Getting ready for examinations

## Objective/Target for session:

This session will help students develop an awareness of how to plan effectively for examinations. They will examine, organise and prioritise a range of strategies for effective examination preparation as a paired activity.

By the end of the session each student will have recorded the strategies that are most useful to them as individuals.

**Resources needed:** Resource 1: Card sort, with cards cut up, one per two students  
 Resource 2: Organisation sheet, enlarged to A3, one per two students  
 Resource 3: Summary sheet, one per student  
 Glue

Please note: all timings are approximate. How long each section takes will very much depend on students' responses.

Teaching intention	Details – work with students
<b>Introduction</b> (1 minute)	<p>Explain the objective for the session. Say: <i>We are going to look at how you plan effectively for examinations.</i></p> <p>Ask students why they think they need to start thinking about examinations now, when they are some time away.</p> <p>You might get responses like: 'Because you need to prepare for examinations before the examination starts', and 'Because you need to do different things at different times in examinations'.</p> <p>Ask students how planning might help them.</p>
<b>Learning check – what are they doing now?</b> (2 minutes)	<p>Ask students what they have done to prepare for tests and examinations in the past. Look for answers that are about revising for the examination or making sure they have all the equipment they need for each examination.</p>
<b>Modelling</b> (2 minutes)	<p>Say: <i>When I have had to take examinations in the past, something I found useful was making sure I had enough sleep the night before, because then I was alert and not tired. Then I made sure I spent the first few minutes reading the instructions on the front page of the paper. Then I would try to split up the time so I didn't spend too long on each question. Oh yes, and I always tried to leave time to check through my answers carefully.</i></p>

<p><b>Interactive session</b> (10 minutes)</p>	<p><i>Say: Now we are going to look at some of the things that other people do when they are preparing for examinations. There are some things here that I used to do and I expect there are some things that you do already.</i></p> <p>Arrange the students to work in pairs. Give each pair the cards (from Resource 1) and ask them to sort them onto the organisation sheet (Resource 2). Give them approximately five minutes to do this. Note that some cards can be placed in more than one category. After five minutes ask students to say where they have placed these cards and why. Allow them a few minutes to talk about this.</p> <p>After this discussion students should select one tip from each category they haven't used before that they think they will try. Students should then discuss in their pairs how their chosen strategies will help them and record these in their planner.</p>
<p><b>Review</b> (3 minutes)</p>	<p><i>Say: We've looked at a number of things you can do to help you when you are doing examinations. Let's see if we can identify the one thing that you think will help you most.</i></p> <p>Invite students to explain to you or to the group one of their important tips. Encourage them to explain why they think this tip is important for them.</p>
<p><b>What next?</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Give out Resource 3 and get students to stick this in their planners/diaries. <i>Say: Look through this list and highlight the ideas that you chose during this activity. Before the next session, go through the list again and highlight any other points that you think are important for you. You can add ideas of your own to the list.</i></p>



# Challenge 3.2: The first 10 minutes of an examination

## Objective/Target for session:

This session will help students to make sure they understand what to do in the first 10–15 minutes of an examination. They will practise using effective techniques on a mock examination paper.

**Resources needed:** Resource 3 from last session

**Resource 4: Things to do in the first few minutes of an examination – cut up before the session**

**A past examination paper – English and science are suggested, one per student**

**Highlighter pens**

**Preparation:** you will also need to find an old examination paper – the heads of department for English and science will be able to help you. You will need to photocopy the instruction page of the examination paper so that all students in the group can have one each.

**Please note:** all timings are approximate. How long each section takes will very much depend on students' responses.

Teaching intention	Details – work with students
<b>Introduction</b> (1 minute)	Explain the objective for the session. Say: <i>In the last session we looked at some things you can do to help you prepare for examinations. In this session we are going to concentrate on the first 10–15 minutes of the examination.</i>
<b>Learning check – what are they doing now?</b> (2 minutes)	Ask each student to choose one of the tips they identified in the last session that they thought was most important for their examination success. Give them a few moments to talk about this, explaining why they think that this will help them.  Say: <i>We are now going to think about the most important things to do at the beginning of an examination. Take a few suggestions and write them on the board or a flipchart.</i>  Look back at Resource 3 and identify which items relate to the first 10–15 minutes of an examination. Compare these with the ones that have been written on the board. Praise students for their contributions.

<p><b>Modelling</b> (4 minutes)</p>	<p>Look together at the examination paper and say: <i>The first thing I do when I am in an examination is read through the front cover and highlight any important information. Let's do that together.</i></p> <p>Read through the front cover and mark important information with a highlighter pen. This may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• total time for the examination;</li> <li>• which/how many questions to answer;</li> <li>• guidance on how much time to spend on each question;</li> <li>• where to answer the questions.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Interactive session</b> (10 minutes)</p>	<p>Now give out the examination paper that you have used in the modelling section. Students will be marking up the paper in the same way as you have marked up the title page.</p> <p>Say: <i>Now we are going to look at the things you should do in the first 10–15 minutes of an examination and use this paper to help us. Look, we've highlighted important sections of this paper. Let's see how we can use the cards we had last time to help us organise the first few minutes.</i></p> <p>Give out the cards from Resource 4 and say: <i>We are now going to complete just what these cards say with this examination paper. So, what are you going to do?</i></p> <p>Look for comments that show that students know they must circle questions to be answered, underline key words in the questions, look at the marks to establish the level of detail required in each answer, and plan how they will organise their time to do so.</p>
<p><b>Review</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Say: <i>Now share what you have done. How are they similar and how are they different?</i> Give them a few moments to compare and then say: <i>How will this help you?</i> Take a few comments and praise students for those that are about making sure you know exactly what to do before you start so that time is not wasted doing the wrong thing.</p>
<p><b>What next?</b> (1 minute)</p>	<p>Ask students to describe at least one thing they are going to do differently in the future to help them in examination situations.</p>



# Resource 1:

## Card sort

<p><b>1</b> Always read the instructions carefully.</p>	<p><b>2</b> As you read through the examination paper, circle the questions you want to answer or have to answer. Don't be afraid to write on the examination paper.</p>	<p><b>3</b> Do the question you feel most confident about first.</p>	<p><b>4</b> Arrive in good time for the start of the examination.</p>
<p><b>5</b> Make sure you try to answer all the questions you need to.</p>	<p><b>6</b> Make sure you read through the whole paper before you start to write.</p>	<p><b>7</b> Check how many marks are given for each question. This gives important information about how much detail is required.</p>	<p><b>8</b> It is useful to plan a question before you begin to write. You may even get extra marks for this as it shows your thinking.</p>
<p><b>9</b> Underline key words in a question. This can help you organise your answer.</p>	<p><b>10</b> Read through your answer afterwards and check you have answered all parts of the question.</p>	<p><b>11</b> Make sure you are dressed comfortably so that you are warm/cool enough in the examination room.</p>	<p><b>12</b> Stay calm, don't panic. Counting to ten or breathing deeply may help if your mind goes blank.</p>
<p><b>13</b> Go to bed early the night before the examination.</p>	<p><b>14</b> Leave some time at the end of the examination to check through your work. At least ten minutes is useful.</p>	<p><b>15</b> Before you start writing, work out how much time you have for each question. Don't spend too long on one question!</p>	<p><b>16</b> Read the question carefully and answer it directly. Repeating yourself is a waste of time and you will not get extra marks.</p>
<p><b>17</b> Think and organise your time positively. Do not leave things to the last minute.</p>	<p><b>18</b> If it helps you work better, remember to take a bottle of water and/or some sweets. But don't let these become a distraction.</p>	<p><b>19</b> Get your bag ready with all the equipment you might need the night before. Always have a spare pen. Check whether you need any resources such as calculators, anthologies or dictionaries.</p>	<p><b>20</b> If you are running out of time, show what you would have written in note form, e.g. as a list, bullet points or a Mind Map. Showing your thinking can get you marks!</p>



# Resource 2: Organisation sheet

<b>The last 10–15 minutes of the examination</b>	
<b>After the first 15 minutes of the examination</b>	
<b>During the first 10–15 minutes of the examination</b>	
<b>Before the examination</b>	



# Resource 3: Summary sheet

- 1 Always read the instructions carefully.
- 2 As you read through the examination paper, circle the questions you want to answer or have to answer. Don't be afraid to write on the examination paper.
- 3 Do the question you feel most confident about first.
- 4 Arrive in good time for the start of the examination.
- 5 Make sure you try to answer all the questions you need to.
- 6 Make sure you read through the whole paper before you start to write.
- 7 Check how many marks are given for each question. This gives important information about how much detail is required.
- 8 It is useful to plan a question before you begin to write. You may even get extra marks for this as it shows your thinking.
- 9 Underline key words in a question. This can help you organise your answer.
- 10 Read through your answer afterwards and check you have answered all parts of the question.
- 11 Make sure you are dressed comfortably so that you are warm/cool enough in the examination room.
- 12 Stay calm, don't panic. Counting to ten or breathing deeply may help if your mind goes blank.
- 13 Go to bed early the night before the examination.
- 14 Leave some time at the end of the examination to check through your work. At least ten minutes is useful.
- 15 Before you start writing, work out how much time you have for each question. Don't spend too long on one question!
- 16 Read the question carefully and answer it directly. Repeating yourself is a waste of time and you will not get extra marks.
- 17 Think and organise your time positively. Do not leave things to the last minute.
- 18 If it helps you work better, remember to take a bottle of water and/or some sweets. But don't let these become a distraction.
- 19 Get your bag ready with all the equipment you might need the night before. Always have a spare pen. Check whether you need any resources such as calculators, anthologies or dictionaries.
- 20 If you are running out of time, show what you would have written in note form, e.g. as a list, bullet points or a Mind Map. Showing your thinking can get you marks!



## Resource 4: Things to do in the first few minutes of an examination

<b>1</b> Always read the instructions carefully.	<b>9</b> Underline key words in a question. This can help you organise your answer.
<b>2</b> As you read through the examination paper, circle the questions you want to answer.	<b>12</b> Stay calm, don't panic. Counting to ten or breathing deeply may help if your mind goes blank.
<b>6</b> Make sure you read through the whole paper before you start to write.	<b>15</b> Before you start writing, work out how much time you have for each question. Don't spend too long on one question!
<b>7</b> Check how many marks are given for each question. This gives important information about how much detail is required.	





# Challenge 3.3: Command words

## Objective/Target for session:

This session will help students to understand the differences in meanings between some of the command words that they will meet in examination questions.

**Resources needed:** Resource 5: Command words card sort, cut into cards  
Resource 6: Command words and meanings, one per student  
Glue

**Please note:** all timings are approximate. How long each section takes will very much depend on students' responses.

Teaching intention	Details – work with students
<b>Introduction</b> (1 minute)	<p>Say: <i>We are going to look at some of the words that you will meet in examination questions. We need to discuss what they mean and what kind of answers you should write when you meet these words.</i></p>
<b>Learning check – what are they doing now?</b> (2 minutes)	<p>Say: <i>What kinds of words do you find in examination questions? Look for responses like ‘Describe’, or ‘Explain’, which show that students know the words are important in giving instructions about what is required in the answer.</i></p>
<b>Modelling</b> (3 minutes)	<p>Say: <i>Well done. Words like ‘describe’ and ‘explain’ in examination questions are called <b>command</b> words because they tell you what kind of answer is needed for the question. We are now going to do an activity to help you understand the different meanings of some of these command words. We have two sets of cards, one with command words and one with their meanings. We are going to match the pairs.</i></p> <p>Next, model what you want them to do. Start by picking up the definition ‘Say how things are the same and... different’ and say: <i>Which of the command words goes with this? Is it contrast? (pick up the contrast card) I think that contrast only says about how things are different. No, I think it is compare (pick up the compare card) because it is asking about how things are the same as well as different. OK, now it is your turn.</i></p> <p>You will find it useful to involve students in the discussion of which card to choose to give the meaning.</p>

<p><b>Interactive session</b> (10 minutes)</p>	<p>While the students are matching the cards, encourage them to start with the pairs they are sure of before looking at those they are less sure about.</p>
<p><b>Review</b> (3 minutes)</p>	<p>Ask the students to explain which cards they found difficult and why they had problems. Use their comments to clear up any misunderstandings. Give each student a copy of Resource 6 to take away and stick into their planner/diary.</p>
<p><b>What next?</b> (1 minute)</p>	<p>Say: <i>Before the next session, see if you can collect some examples of examination questions with these command words. Think about what the question is asking you to do.</i></p>



# Challenge 3.4: Unpicking the questions

## Objective/Target for session:

This session will help students identify what the examination question is asking them to do.

**Resources needed:** Resource 7: Examination questions (a)  
Resource 8: Examination questions (b)  
Highlighters

**Please note:** all timings are approximate. How long each section takes will very much depend on students' responses.

Teaching intention	Details – work with students
<b>Introduction</b> (1 minute)	Remind the students what you covered in the last session by saying: <i>Remember last time we looked at some different command words. We tried to find ways of helping you understand the differences in meanings between some of the command words that you will meet in examination questions.</i>
<b>Learning check – what are they doing now?</b> (2 minutes)	Ask the students to share any examples of command words they collected and praise them for doing so.  <i>Say: Today we are going to look at how you can unpick what a question is asking you to do.</i>
<b>Modelling</b> (4 minutes)	<i>Say: I am going to show you exactly what I mean by doing an example.</i>  Work through the question from an examination in the imaginary subject of donkeyology (Resource 7) so that students can see what you are doing. Think aloud about the question and gradually bring the students into the process as you are doing it.  <i>Say: First of all I am going to read the question through. (read out question) Now what is the command word? I am going to highlight this.</i>  <i>What other important information is there? I am going to circle this. What do you think?</i>  <i>Is there any information I don't need? I am going to cross this out (lightly in case I change my mind). What do you think I should do here? NB You should cross out the last sentence of the donkeyology question – 'All the donkeys are grey.' – as it isn't necessary to the answer.</i>

<p><b>Interactive session</b> (8 minutes)</p>	<p>Say: <i>And now we'll try another one.</i> Get students to follow the same procedure with the example from the mathematics paper (Resource 8). You may need to provide some support by asking key questions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>What do we do first?</i></li> <li>• <i>And now?</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Review</b> (4 minutes)</p>	<p>Say: <i>What we have done today is something you could try whenever you have to unpick an examination question. We broke each one down into a series of easy steps. I would like you to write an easy-to-follow guide of no more than five steps to share with someone else in your tutor group. Write down your five bullet points in your planner.</i></p> <p>Give students time to do this.</p>
<p><b>What next?</b> (1 minute)</p>	<p>Say: <i>Between now and next time I want you to share your guide with three people in your year group and ask them for comments on how useful it is.</i></p>



# Challenge 3.5: Working out what is needed for the answer

## Objective/Target for session:

This session will help students to plan out their answer to an examination question.

**Resources needed:** Resource 9: WILT, blown up to A3 size  
 Resource 10: WILT grid, one per student  
 Resource 11: Using WILT to plan an answer, one per student  
 Resource 12: Using WILT to plan an answer – completed version, one per student  
 Glue

**Please note:** all timings are approximate. How long each section takes will very much depend on students' responses.

Teaching intention	Details – work with students
<b>Introduction</b> (1 minute)	<i>Say: Last time you took away something to try when answering a question. Tell me what you did and whether it helped you. Allow a few minutes for them to talk about what they did. Praise them for doing it. Now say: We are going to learn how to plan out a good answer to an examination question.</i>
<b>Learning check – what are they doing now?</b> (2 minutes)	<p>Ask the students to quickly suggest some ideas of how to plan an answer.</p> <p><i>Say: I have a really useful tip that I use when planning an answer to an examination question. It is <b>WILT</b>. This comes from the first letters of the words that are important in helping you to answer an examination question.</i></p> <p>Show them Resource 9 and say: <i>How do we know –</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is <b>W</b>anted?</li> <li>• What should it <b>I</b>nclude?</li> <li>• How <b>L</b>ong should the answer be?</li> <li>• What <b>T</b>ype of answer is needed?</li> </ul> <p>Take brief responses from students.</p>
<b>Modelling</b> (5 minutes)	<i>Say: I am going to show you how to use this idea when answering an examination question.</i>

	<p>Model the approach by talking aloud your thought processes as you complete Resource 9. Say:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is <b>W</b>anted? The command word is... which means...? What other key information is there?</li> <li>• What should it <b>I</b>nclude? I need to think about what is really needed for the answer.</li> <li>• How <b>L</b>ong should the answer be? How many marks is this question worth? (It is only worth two marks so I only need to make two points.)</li> <li>• What <b>T</b>ype of answer is needed? Do I need to put my answer into the form of a letter, diagram, explanation?</li> </ul> <p>Give out Resource 10 and say: Now stick this into your planner so you won't forget what we've done and you'll be able to refer to it again.</p>
<p><b>Interactive session</b> (10 minutes)</p>	<p>Say: We are now going to look at an examination question and try to follow the <b>WILT</b> system to help prepare the answer. The question comes from the imaginary subject of donkeyology.</p> <p>The question is: 'Describe and explain how the behaviour of the donkeys on Blackpool beach makes a difference to children on holiday in Blackpool.' There are 10 marks out of 100 for the question.</p> <p>Give out Resource 11 and ask students to use it to plan out how they would answer the question.</p> <p>When they have done this, talk about what they have done and whether it helped them to plan their answer.</p> <p>Show them Resource 12 to demonstrate how the <b>WILT</b> system could help plan the answer for the question.</p>
<p><b>Review</b> (1 minute)</p>	<p>Remind students that you have been using a system to help plan answers to questions. Remind them that they did not really know anything about the subject for which they planned the answer. Say: <i>If you can use this system to plan an answer for a subject that you don't know anything about, think how useful it would be for a subject you do know something about.</i></p>
<p><b>What next?</b> (1 minute)</p>	<p>Say: <i>You can use the <b>WILT</b> system to help you plan any answer. It doesn't have to be only in an examination. Before we meet again I want you to plan out the answer to a piece of homework using <b>WILT</b> and we'll look at it together.</i></p>

You will need to arrange a checking session to review what they have done.



# Resource 5: Command words card sort

<b>Analyse</b>	Give your opinions or point of view, with reasons
<b>Comment on</b>	Explain the meaning in your own words
<b>Compare</b>	Say how things are different
<b>Contrast</b>	Look very closely at the detail
<b>Describe</b>	Give the main reasons for and against, come to a conclusion
<b>Discuss</b>	Give only the most important details
<b>Estimate</b>	Give reasons for
<b>Explain</b>	Say how things are the same and how things are different
<b>Illustrate</b>	Give a rough idea, with evidence
<b>Interpret</b>	Bring together the main points
<b>Justify</b>	Give examples that make the point clear – it can include diagrams, figures or drawings
<b>Outline</b>	Write briefly the main point
<b>State</b>	Give reasons to support an argument or action
<b>Summarise</b>	Write about in detail



# Resource 6: Command words and meanings

<b>Analyse</b>	Look very closely at the detail
<b>Comment on</b>	Give your opinions or point of view, with reasons
<b>Compare</b>	Say how things are the same and how things are different
<b>Contrast</b>	Say how things are different
<b>Describe</b>	Write about in detail
<b>Discuss</b>	Give the main reasons for and against, come to a conclusion
<b>Estimate</b>	Give a rough idea, with evidence
<b>Explain</b>	Give reasons for
<b>Illustrate</b>	Give examples that make the point clear – it can include diagrams, figures or drawings
<b>Interpret</b>	Explain the meaning in your own words
<b>Justify</b>	Give reasons to support an argument or action
<b>Outline</b>	Give only the most important details
<b>State</b>	Write briefly the main point
<b>Summarise</b>	Bring together the main points





# Resource 7: Examination questions (a)

Donkeyology GCSE examination

Question 4

Describe and explain how the behaviour of donkeys on Blackpool beach makes a difference to children on holiday. All the donkeys are grey.

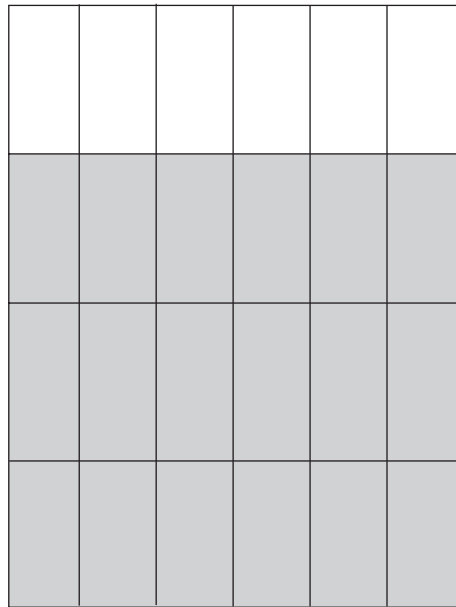
10 marks



# Resource 8: Examination questions (b)

(Edexcel GCSE Mathematics A – 1387 2003)

**3(a)** Write down the fraction of this shape that is shaded.



Write your fraction in its simplest form. ....

(2 marks)



# Resource 9: WILT

<b>W</b>	What is <b>W</b> anted?		
<b>I</b>	What should I <b>I</b> nclude?		
<b>L</b>	How <b>L</b> ong should the answer be? How <b>L</b> ong should I spend on it?		
<b>T</b>	What <b>T</b> ype of answer is needed?		



# Resource 10: WILT grid

<b>W</b>	What is <b>W</b> anted?	Look at the command words – what do they mean? What other key information is there in the question?
<b>I</b>	What should it <b>I</b> nclude?	What is really needed for the answer?
<b>L</b>	How <b>L</b> ong should I spend on it? How <b>L</b> ong should the answer be?	Look at the number of marks awarded – if it's only a few, the answer does not need to be very long.
<b>T</b>	What <b>T</b> ype of answer is needed?	What form should it take? Should it be a letter, diagram, explanation, essay, etc.?



# Resource 11: Using WILT to plan an answer

**Question: Describe and explain how the behaviour of the donkeys on Blackpool beach makes a difference to children on holiday in Blackpool. There are 10 marks out of 100 for this question.**

What is **W**anted?  
(command words)

What should it **I**nclude?  
(what is really needed?)

How **L**ong should  
the answer be?  
(how many marks?)

What **T**ype of answer  
is needed? (essay?  
diagram? letter?  
explanation?)



# Resource 12: Using WILT to plan an answer – completed version

<b>Question: Describe and explain how the behaviour of the donkeys on Blackpool beach makes a difference to children on holiday in Blackpool. There are 10 marks out of 100 for this question.</b>	
What is <b>W</b> anted? (command words)	Describe: Say <b>what</b> the donkeys do. Explain: Say <b>how</b> what they do makes a difference to children on holiday.
What should it <b>I</b> nclude? (what is really needed?)	What do donkeys do? Good things: Rides on the beach; races; giving donkeys carrots; patting the donkeys. Bad things: Donkeys can kick and bite; donkeys make a mess on the beach; donkeys may frighten small children.
How <b>L</b> ong should the answer be? (how many marks?)	It is worth only 10 marks out of 100, so should not be very long. Make one important point – such as not everything about the donkeys is perfect – and use this as the basis of your answer.
What <b>T</b> ype of answer is needed? (essay? diagram? letter? explanation?)	<b>Describe</b> and <b>explain</b> are easier to do in writing, so a short essay or letter might be best. It will need an introduction (describing); a development section (explaining) saying what the good and bad things are; and a conclusion, explaining the difference the donkeys might make to children on holiday.



# Challenge 3.6:

## What to do when you are running out of time

### Objective/Target for session:

This session will help students develop strategies for coping if they begin to run out of time in examination situations.

**Resources needed: Resource 13: A question to try, one per student  
Paper and pens**

**Please note: all timings are approximate. How long each section takes will very much depend on students' responses.**

Teaching intention	Details – work with students
<b>Introduction</b> (1 minute)	Explain the objective for the session. Say: <i>In most examination situations where you have planned your time carefully you will have plenty of time to answer each question fully and check your answers before the end of the examination. However, sometimes we all run out of time. In this session we are going to learn how to cope when this happens.</i>
<b>Learning check – what are they doing now?</b> (2 minutes)	Ask the students: <i>If you were halfway through the examination and you realised that you had only answered one out of four questions, what could you do?</i>  Look for responses such as planning time for the rest of the questions, using notes, using bullet points.
<b>Modelling</b> (3 minutes)	Tell the students about a time when you had to complete a question in a short space of time. Tell them about the activities you used. For example, say: <i>When I was writing my GCSE English examination I ran out of time and decided to finish my answer with a bullet-pointed list of key points that I would have explained more fully if I had had time. Can anyone else think of other techniques that could be used?</i>  Some responses might include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• short notes;</li> <li>• Mind Map;</li> <li>• labelled diagram.</li> </ul>
<b>Interactive session</b> (10 minutes)	Say: <i>Now you are going to have a go at answering and imagining you only have ten minutes left in an examination. You should use one of the methods we have just talked about.</i>

	Give out Resource 13. If you are working with a small group, encourage each student to try a different strategy.
<b>Review</b> (3 minutes)	If you are working with a small group, encourage students to exchange answers and examine each other's strategies. If you are working with one student, talk about the effectiveness of the different strategies.
<b>What next?</b> (1 minute)	<i>Say: Before the next session I want you to try out one of the things we have done today to plan the answer to a question you have been set for homework. You can then use what you have done to help you write your answer in full. Bring this with you next time.</i>





# Challenge 3.7: Checking your answers

## Objective/Target for session:

This session will help students to use the last 10–15 minutes of an examination effectively, to proofread and check for errors.

**Resources needed: Homework completed after last session using planning strategies**

**Resource 14: Checklist for proofreading an examination question, one per student**

**Please note: all timings are approximate. How long each section takes will vary much depend on students' responses.**

Teaching intention	Details – work with students
<b>Introduction</b> (1 minute)	Explain the objective for the session. Say: <i>We are going to proofread your homework to practise checking for errors as you would do in the last 10–15 minutes of an examination.</i>
<b>Learning check – what are they doing now?</b> (2 minutes)	In pairs, students explain to their partner what the homework was and how the planning they did made it easier to write a full answer.
<b>Modelling</b> (3 minutes)	<p>Say: <i>You are going to proofread your own homework using the checklist provided. This will show you how quickly you can check through your work and how to make improvements if needed.</i></p> <p>Say: <i>When I wrote a letter to my friend, after I had signed my name I reread it and realised that I had forgotten to include an important piece of information. I therefore included this in a PS at the end. What are the advantages of reading through your answers in an examination during the last 15 minutes?</i></p> <p>Collect answers, then go through Resource 14 together. Praise students for any suggestions they made in the discussion.</p>
<b>Interactive session</b> (10 minutes)	Ask students to read through their homework, marking where improvements could be made using the checklist as a support. Stop them after 10 minutes. They are unlikely to finish the whole piece of work, but they should have done enough to see the point. Give lots of praise when they have finished the task.
<b>Review</b> (3 minutes)	Students should then share where and how they would make improvements to their homework if they had five minutes – as if it were an examination question.
<b>What next?</b> (1 minute)	Say: <i>Take your checklist home and stick it above your desk to help you when practising answers.</i>



# Resource 13: A question to try

**Write a letter to a friend explaining your top ten tips for how to succeed in examinations.**

You find you have run out of time to answer this question and have only ten minutes left. What will you do?



# Resource 14:

## Checklist for proofreading an examination question

- Have I answered the question correctly?
- Have I included the main points in my answer?
- Have I followed the instructions, e.g. have I described/analysed/compared, etc.?
- Have I answered in sufficient detail?
- Have I answered all parts of the question?
- Have I avoided repetition?
- Are diagrams labelled clearly?
- Have I included an introduction, development and a conclusion?
- Have I used key words?
- Are my points ordered in a logical way?

# *Part* **3**

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## Appendices

## Appendix 1: Identifying students for the Key Stage 4 Learning Challenge



Name of student:		Year group:			Tutor group:	
Characteristic	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Student self-assessment	
Forgets books and equipment						
Forgets homework						
Doesn't finish homework						
Doesn't record homework in enough detail						
Has difficulty organising coursework						
Has difficulty organising time for school work outside lessons						
Doesn't finish classwork						
Lacks motivation						
Forgets information/ vocabulary						
Has limited support outside lessons						
Gives up quickly when working on their own						
Finds working in a group difficult						
Has erratic attendance						
Works well in a one-to-one situation						
Lacks confidence						
Has poor revision skills						
Does not perform well in tests and exams						

## Appendix 2: Student self-assessment



Name:

Tutor group:

Date:

You should try to complete the following as honestly as possible.

### Classwork

I always try hard in:	Yes	Nearly always	No
English			
Mathematics			
Science			
ICT			
History			
Geography			
RE			
Design and technology			
PE			
Music			
Art and design			
French/Spanish/ German			
Other			

When I don't try hard in class it is because:

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# Homework

<b>I always do my homework and hand it in on time for:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Nearly always</b>	<b>No</b>
English			
Mathematics			
Science			
ICT			
History			
Geography			
RE			
Design and technology			
PE			
Music			
Art and design			
French/Spanish/ German			
Other			

When I don't do my homework it is because:

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# Coursework

I am up to date with coursework in:	Yes	Nearly always	No
English			
Mathematics			
Science			
ICT			
History			
Geography			
RE			
Design and technology			
PE			
Music			
Art and design			
French/Spanish/ German			
Other			

I find coursework difficult because:

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# Revision

I find revision easy in:	Yes	Nearly always	No
English			
Mathematics			
Science			
ICT			
History			
Geography			
RE			
Design and technology			
PE			
Music			
Art and design			
French/Spanish/ German			
Other			
I plan my revision ahead of time and make a revision timetable.			

When I don't find revision easy it is because:

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## In tests and examinations

When I do a test or exam:	Yes	Nearly always	No
I read and understand the instructions on the paper.			
I read each question carefully before I answer it.			
I understand what the question wants me to do.			
I plan out how much time I need to spend on each answer.			
I look at the marks for each question to help me plan.			
I have enough time to answer the questions.			
I check my answers over before I hand the paper in.			
I remember the information I need to answer the question.			
I feel confident.			
I feel well prepared.			

When I have difficulties in an examination it is because:

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## Appendix 3: The Key Stage 4 Learning Challenge: Profile sheet



Student's name: \_\_\_\_\_

1 Planning for coursework and revision: the planning challenge	
Strengths in this area	Points for development in this area

2 Improving revision skills: the revision challenge	
Strengths in this area	Points for development in this area

3 Preparing for examinations: the examination challenge	
Strengths in this area	Points for development in this area

<b>Student's name:</b>	
<b>Key Stage 4 Learning Challenge module:</b>	
<b>Targets:</b>	<b>Successes:</b>

## Appendix 4: The Key Stage 4 Learning Challenge: Information for coaches



School organiser: \_\_\_\_\_

Coach: \_\_\_\_\_

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Year group and tutor group: \_\_\_\_\_

**Module:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Target:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Timetable:**

Day and dates: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Place: \_\_\_\_\_

**Notes:** \_\_\_\_\_

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## Appendix 5: The Key Stage 4 Learning Challenge: Coach's record form



Please complete this form and return it to: \_\_\_\_\_

Coach: \_\_\_\_\_

Students: \_\_\_\_\_

Year group and tutor group: \_\_\_\_\_

**Module:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Target:** \_\_\_\_\_

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### **Comments:**

Comments should include information about the extent to which the student has hit the target; their perseverance; their attendance at sessions; their engagement with the work; whether they tried things out between sessions.

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### **Indication of next Learning Challenge module for the student:**

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**The Learning Challenge**

***Certificate of Achievement***

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**You have succeeded in your challenge**

**Excellent Progress**

Signed

**Challenge Leader**



**The Learning Challenge**

***Certificate of Achievement***

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**You have succeeded in your challenge**

**Good Progress**

Signed

**Challenge Leader**



## Appendix 7: Letter to parents or guardians



Dear (insert name of parent/guardian)

The Key Stage 4 Learning Challenge

I am pleased to inform you that (insert name of student) has been chosen to take part in a scheme called the Key Stage 4 Learning Challenge. The scheme is designed to boost (student's name)'s preparation for examinations and to help improve the way that (he/she) approaches examinations through one-to-one or small-group coaching.

At the start of the scheme, I will assess (insert student name)'s current skills in these areas and set (him/her) a target. (Insert student name) will then meet regularly with (his/her) coach for coaching sessions that last up to twenty minutes. The coaching is focused by the target and will be provided by a (teaching assistant/mentor/senior student) who has been trained specially to undertake this role. Towards the end of term I shall assess progress towards the target and inform you of the results.

I hope you will agree to let (insert student's name) take part in the scheme and that you will support the Key Stage 4 Learning Challenge by encouraging your (son/daughter) to complete any tasks that are set. Please contact me if you need further details or have any questions.

Please return the permission slip below as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

Learning Challenge organiser

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I give permission for my (son/daughter) \_\_\_\_\_  
to take part in the Key Stage 4 Learning Challenge.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/guardian

(insert date)