

Revision

Revision, Exams

<http://www.ucd.ie/artspgs/studyskills/revision.pdf>

Revision

When is the best time to start revising?

Revision

When is the best time to start revising?

The first day of the semester!

Revision

Summarize points (eg. on postcards); these can be cut down again nearer to the exam

Use **mnemonics** or acronyms

Repeat lists or processes aloud over and over again

Tape notes and play them back

Set yourself **questions** from your notes - Go over wrong answers

Explain work to a friend / parent

Get someone to **test** you

Make mind **maps** / spider diagrams; stick them on the wall

Work **past** papers

Make your notes visually **appealing** with colour and the use of subheadings

Work in a study **group**. Each member prepares a topic and some revision notes for the rest of the group and teaches it to them

Revision

Your revision involves a personal,
individual process

Revision

Your revision involves a personal,
individual process

So make all your revision techniques
about you

Revision

People start revising with different needs, strengths and weaknesses

Revision

- different sets of knowledge and understanding
- different responses to the **stress** of the revision and exam period
- different preferred (*sometimes bad*) revision techniques
- and different psychological and life contexts into which to fit the revision

Revision

Your revision will take place in
Different *Locations*,
Environments
and at different *Times*

Revision

In the library

In a café

On a bus/train journey

At home

Outside

Revision

Early-mid morning

Mid-late morning

Early-mid afternoon

Mid-late afternoon

Early-mid evening

Mid-late evening

Revision

On your own in silence

With someone else but working
independently

With someone else and working interactively

In a study group

In a revision group

Revision

Different stages of revision can fit with different contexts.

Early on you may prefer to work individually;

Early / mid-morning, in silence, at home.

Later, you may prefer to work, interactively, over a coffee.

The important thing is that you match the type of revision you are doing with the context in which you, personally, are able to do that best.

Revision

You have to decide about the *Where* and *How*

But it is important that **YOU** make the
decision

Revision

Take control!!!!

Study Skills: Time Management

Preparing a Study Timetable

sample study timetable (on-campus, full-time)

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
8-9am	GYM		GYM				
9-10am	STUDY	travel	STUDY	STUDY	travel	WORK	FOOD SHOPPING, LUNCH, CHORES
10-11		CLASSES			CLASSES		
11-12							
12-1pm	LUNCH			LUNCH	LUNCH		
1-2pm	STUDY	LUNCH	LUNCH	STUDY	CLASSES		
2-3pm		CLASSES	travel				
3-4pm			CLASSES				STUDY
4-5pm					travel		
5-6pm	CHORES, DINNER	travel		DINNER	STUDY		
6-7pm		DINNER	travel				DINNER
7-8pm			DINNER	WORK			
8-9pm	WORK		STUDY		DINNER	DINNER	STUDY
9-10pm		STUDY			STUDY		
10-11pm						GO OUT	
11-12midnight							
	6	3	6	7.5	5.5	0	6.5

TOTAL STUDY HOURS PER WEEK: 34.5

SUBJECT 1 (hardest): 12
 SUBJECT 2 (middle): 8
 SUBJECT 3 (middle): 8
 SUBJECT 4 (easiest): 6.5

- **Set goals along with your timetable**

- **Set goals along with your timetable**
- Short term
- Medium term
- Long term

- Set goals along with your timetable
- Goals help keep you focused

- Acknowledge when you have achieved your goals
- Use positive self talk

Revision

It is easy to feel overwhelmed.

You may feel that the task is too big, and that whatever you do you will not succeed.

If you are not feeling like this, then you are probably not doing it right!

Revision

It is easy to feel overwhelmed.

You may feel that the task is too big, and that whatever you do you will not succeed.

It is important to appreciate the size of the task, but it is also important to be **realistic** about what you can do in the time available.

The revision and exam period will inevitably involve **stress**.

You need to monitor this and, ideally, make it work *for you not against you*.

Revision

Be active in your revision!

Revision

Revising actively implies making a real effort to understand what you are learning, rather than simply memorizing by rote.

Even if your exams require you to remember a lot of facts, you are much more likely to retain detailed information if it is related to an underlying understanding.

Revision

Revising actively implies making a real effort to understand what you are learning, rather than simply memorizing by rote. Even if your exams require you to remember a lot of facts, you are much more likely to retain detailed information if it is related to an underlying understanding.

There are many ways to achieve this; here are some suggestions you might like to try:

Revision

Looking for underlying themes or principles.

Thinking about inter-relationships.

Revision

Looking for underlying themes or principles.

Thinking about inter-relationships.

Relating what you are learning to 'real-life' situations.

Thinking how the solution to one problem may help you solve others.

Revision

Looking for underlying themes or principles.

Thinking about inter-relationships.

Relating what you are learning to 'real-life' situations.

Thinking how the solution to one problem may help you solve others.

Organizing material into a hierarchical structure.

Creating a diagram or chart to represent a topic.

Revision

Looking for underlying themes or principles.

Thinking about inter-relationships.

Relating what you are learning to 'real-life' situations.

Thinking how the solution to one problem may help you solve others.

Organizing material into a hierarchical structure.

Creating a diagram or chart to represent a topic.

Looking for similarities or differences.

Looking for points for and against an argument.

Revision

Looking for underlying themes or principles.

Thinking about inter-relationships.

Relating what you are learning to 'real-life' situations.

Thinking how the solution to one problem may help you solve others.

Organizing material into a hierarchical structure.

Creating a diagram or chart to represent a topic.

Looking for similarities or differences.

Looking for points for and against an argument.

Critically evaluating what you are learning.

Discussing topics with a friend.

Revision

Looking for underlying themes or principles.

Thinking about inter-relationships.

Relating what you are learning to 'real-life' situations.

Thinking how the solution to one problem may help you solve others.

Organizing material into a hierarchical structure.

Creating a diagram or chart to represent a topic.

Looking for similarities or differences.

Looking for points for and against an argument.

Critically evaluating what you are learning.

Discussing topics with a friend.

Revision

Just thinking that a lot of reading or highlighting will be enough is just passive revision and totally inefficient.

Memory Technique

In addition to reading, understanding, analyzing, discussing, and making revision notes, you may feel that you need to use some specific memory techniques to remember collections of facts, or processes.

Memory Technique

In addition to reading, understanding, analyzing, discussing, and making revision notes, you may feel that you need to use some specific memory techniques to remember collections of facts, or processes.

Discover the potential of mnemonics. A mnemonic is a device by which you think of something quite easy to remember, which then prompts you to remember material that is more difficult to remember.

A famous mnemonic based on the initial letters of words is 'Richard Of York Gave Battle In Vain' for the order of the colours of the rainbow.

Memory Technique

Some disciplines have their own favourites. You can also make up your own mnemonics to help you remember lists of ideas, questions, stages in a process, dimensions etc.

Memory Technique

Concoct a funny poem or rhyme that summarises some key facts. Many people find they remember such rhymes for years afterwards!

Link information to vivid, colourful (and pleasant) images – they'll automatically become more memorable.

Mnemonics

- "Please Excuse My Dear Aunt Sally"
- to remember the order of arithmetic operations
- *Parentheses, Exponents, Multiplication, Division, Addition, Subtraction*
 - pemdas

Music Mnemonics

- How many lyrics to songs do you remember?
How did you come to remember them?

Music Mnemonics

- How many lyrics to songs do you remember?
How did you come to remember them?
- The same method you used to recall song lyrics also can work just as well in study.
- Music can be used to help you recall important details to main ideas and many learners have made **songs out of information** when a list of items must be learned.

Name Mnemonics

- In a **Name Mnemonic**, the 1st letter of each word in a list of items is used to make a name of a person or thing. Sometimes, the items can be rearranged to form a more memorable name mnemonic
- **ROY G. BIV** = colors of the spectrum (**R**ed, **O**range, **Y**ellow, **G**reen, **B**lue, **I**ndigo, **V**iolet)

Expression Mnemonic

- The categories in the classification of life are:
Kingdom, Phylum, Class, Orders, Family, Genus,
Species, Variety
- **Kings Play Cards On Fairly Good Soft Velvet**
- **King Philip Could Only Find Green Socks**

Expression Mnemonic

- **P**eanut **B**utter **W**ith **B**read
- Phlegm, Blood, Water, and Bile
- **I** Value **X**ylophones **L**ike **C**ows **D**ig **M**ilk
I V X L C D M
1 5 10 50 100 500 1000

Expression Mnemonic

- Mnemonics work on the material you want to recall

Rhymes

- Making rhymes to remember things is useful
- It was how you learned as a child!

Rhymes

Thirty days has September,
April, June, and November;
All the rest have thirty-one
Excepting February alone:
Which has twenty-eight, that's fine,
Till leap year gives it twenty-nine.

Memory Technique

Similar to a mnemonic is the amazingly useful list of simple questions that you can use to practice lateral thinking around a topic: what? how? where? when? who? why? so what?

This list can be useful within the exam to help you think around possible answers to a question, or possible essay plans to use.

When memorizing a lot of material you will need to find a range of methods that suit you. Typical advice is to use associations, diagrams, mind maps, narratives, colours, places and so on, to link course content to memorable images or experiences.

Obscenity

- And finally, what might be the best mnemonic trick there is. Make your mnemonics as offensive, disgusting or shocking as possible and you're guaranteed to remember them.
- There's no need to tell anyone else what they are, so get creative and think up something really weird and sick.

Self testing

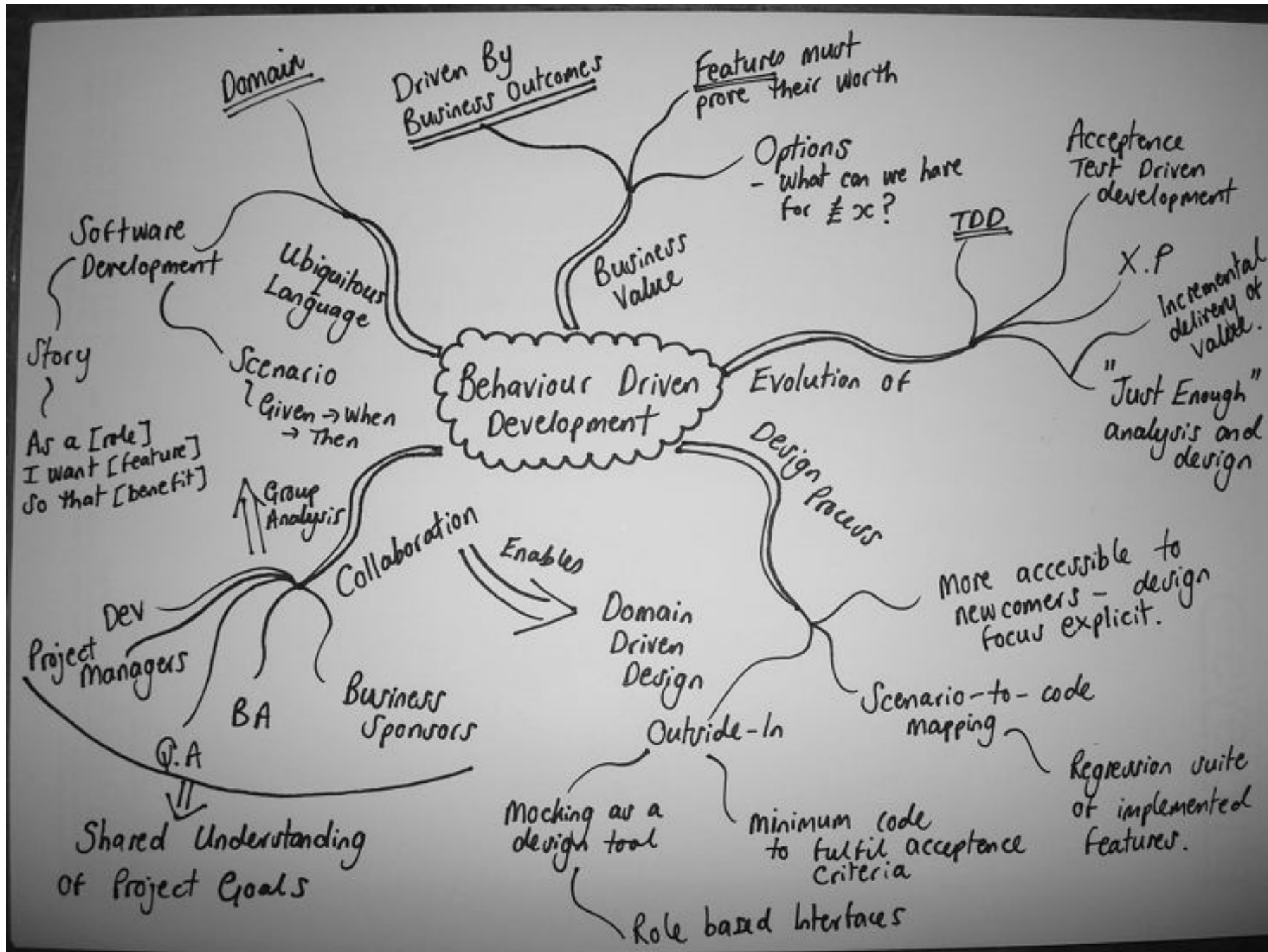
As you revise you could create a list of questions relating to what you've just revised. When you come back to that topic you could start by seeing how you do with those questions. This will highlight where you need to pay particular attention.

Self testing

It's always a good idea to see how much you can remember about a topic before you look at your notes again. You could try allowing yourself time to think through as much as you can before returning to your notes. Thinking hard through a topic like this means that, when you finally check out your notes, you can quickly identify which elements you had forgotten about, and be ready to slot them firmly into your memory.

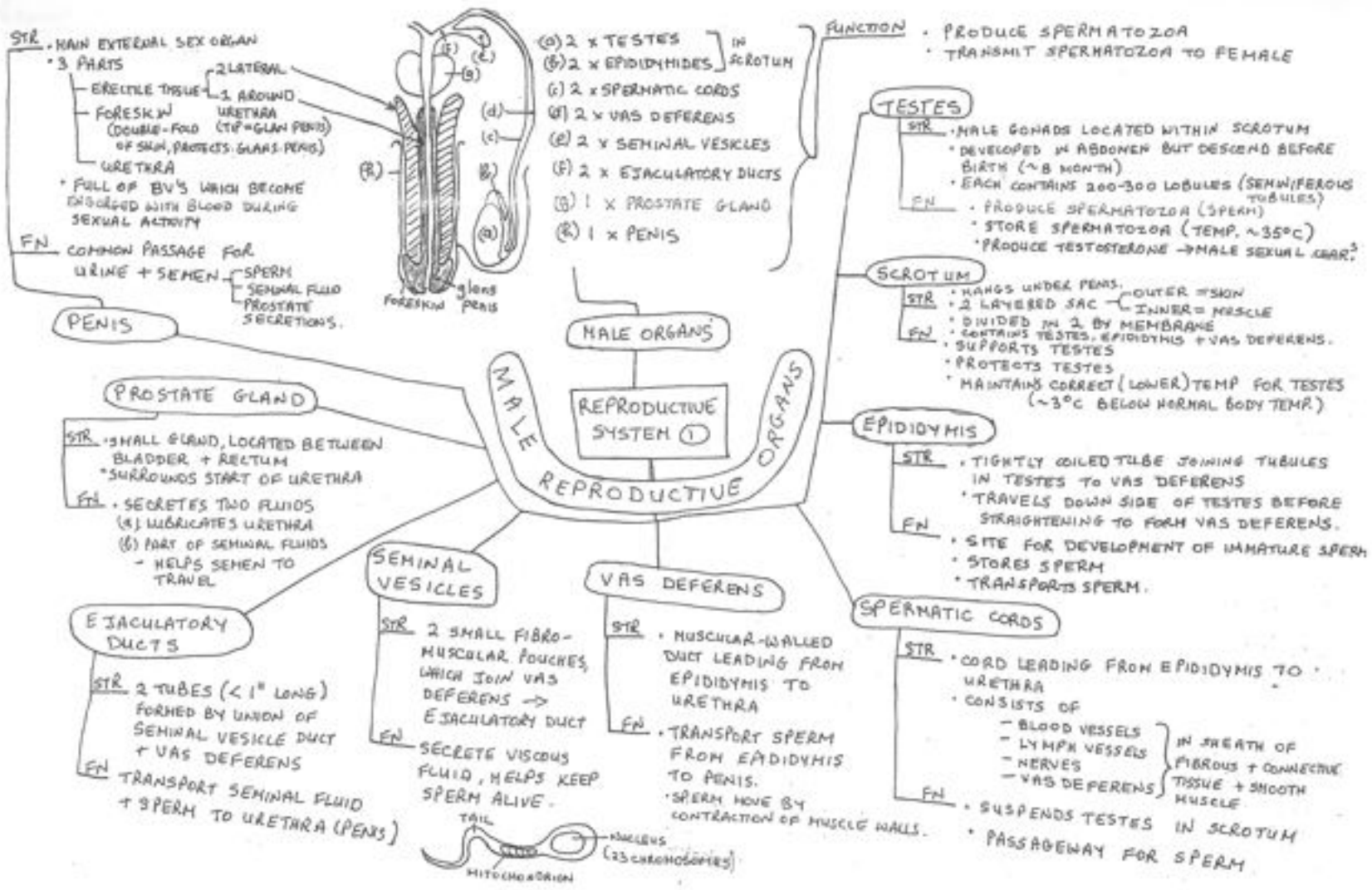
Self testing

'Mind maps' or 'thought maps' are useful if you want to find out how much you can remember on a topic. After you have written down everything you can remember, try to extend the map by adding more to each branch e.g.: a link, an idea, a query, extra description, references, a debate point, or a conclusion.



Weather Topic Web





Self testing: Explaining

A particularly effective way of engaging actively with what you are revising is to learn about a topic then to try to explain it in your own words.

You don't necessarily need any audience except yourself. By trying to explain a topic you quickly discover which aspects you understand and remember well, and which you need to investigate and revise further.

Be prepared to have a good go at the explanation before reaching for the answers.

Self testing

If essays are required, however, it is not best use of your time to practise writing full essay responses to exam questions. It may be useful to do this once or twice if you want to, to get an idea of the timing,

but writing lots of essays is probably not the most efficient or effective way of using your revision time.

Self testing

More useful than practising writing full essays is to practise creating essay plans, or 'skeleton essays'. These are a bit like a site map for a website: they will include the main headings relating to the planned structure of your essay, and the associated sub-headings of examples, arguments, and references, etc, but the full content would not appear unless you wrote the full essay.

Self testing

Allow yourself ten minutes to prepare a detailed plan for your essay, so that writing it would then be straightforward.

You will thus have practised the hard part of remembering and selecting information, and creating the best structure for its presentation, but will have taken only ten minutes.

Self testing

Remember that there may be several ways to answer to a question, and you need to identify the most effective approach to take.

Practise identifying the biggest turning point / the information of most consequence / the best examples / the most powerful evidence.

Self testing

When you practise creating essay plans for exam questions, a four-stage approach can be useful:

- Squeeze everything you can out of the essay **title** to make sure that you fully understand it and that you are addressing **each element** of it.
- Brainstorm all relevant ideas onto paper, including references, examples, arguments, queries, links...
- Match up ideas to aspects of the title and organize them into the most powerful order.
- Squeeze out more ideas using a systematic approach of, for example, asking *why, where, who, what, where, when*.

Make your revision **active** - ask questions when you are reading.

Passive revision is no revision

Exams

Make sure that you make as good an attempt as you can for ALL of your responses. In general it is considerably easier to get the first 50% of marks for each question than it is to get the second 50%.

Exams

- So, for example, make sure that you make a significant effort for each essay rather than using too much extra time on your favourite ones.
- With an essay-based exam it can be useful to begin with the question for which you can think of the most material. This can boost your confidence and get your thoughts flowing.

Exams

- In a paper with no choice of questions, it can be most productive to go through the paper answering all of the questions that you are sure of.
- This will stimulate your thoughts and help you recall information, putting you in a more active frame of mind for when you go back to the start and give more thought to the remaining questions.

Exams

- Begin by checking very carefully the instructions of the exam paper. Highlight or underline the key instructions.
- Note down (and check) any timings plan you have prepared, so you have it to refer to, and to stop you spending too much or too little time on one question.
- Where there is a choice of tasks or essays, check out the potential of all of the options before making your decision.
- For an essay-based paper, it can be helpful to begin with the title for which you have the most to write. This can boost your confidence, and get you into the swing of planning and writing exam essays.
- Do not be rushed into starting to write your first essay. Remember to take adequate time to prepare a strong essay plan first.
- Even if you have already written a similar essay before, try to bring fresh energy on this occasion.

Exams

- Don't waste energy judging a question. You may think it's irrelevant, or boring, or badly phrased, but put those feelings to one side. Re-read the question to check if there was anything you missed.
- Respect the question. Take time to 'listen' to the question before thinking of the answer, rather than assuming that you know what the question will be. It may be slightly different from what you expect.
- Read all parts of a question before beginning to answer. In that way you can see how the examiner has divided the knowledge between the different parts of the question, so you can be sure to focus on the specific response needed for each part.
- If there is a question you cannot answer, leave it and continue with the rest of the paper. Come back later to make your best effort with the question(s) you left out.

Know your exam paper

- How many questions are there?
- How many questions are you required to answer?
- How much time do you have to answer the questions?

- Is the paper divided into sections?
- Are some questions compulsory?
- Do you have to answer questions from each section?

Allocate time

- Reading the paper
- Deciding which questions you are going to answer
- Checking your answers.

- Yep!
- The bleedin' obvious

Before the exam

- Try and reduce any uncertainties you may have by preparing in advance:
- When is the exam?
- Where is the exam?
- What time does it start?
- What will you need to take into the exam hall
- What are you allowed to take into the exam hall?

During the exam

- Write clearly and legibly
- Listen to any instructions given
- Read the instructions on the paper
- Read through the paper carefully
- Decide which questions you are going to answer and in what order

After the exam

- Avoid a prolonged post-mortem outside of the exam hall. It is too easy to convince yourself that, from the evidence of others, you have done badly. Remember that there is always more than one way to answer each question! You should, however, review your exam technique. Use each exam to learn about how you performed and to identify what preparation you may need to do for future exams, for example:
 - Had you revised efficiently?
 - Did you learn the key topics in such a way that they were easy to recall?
 - Were you clear about the exam procedure?
 - Did you run out of time?
 - Did you fulfill all of the exam's requirements?

Self Talk

Unsuccessful test result

Negative self-talk

- I'm a failure,
- I should have done better than that. It's because the teacher doesn't like me because I don't do my preparation well.
- Feeling cheated, angry and disappointed or depressed.
- Why bother trying ?- I'll just fail again!

Positive self-talk

- I'm disappointed, but I understand more about my performance now and overall strengths and weaknesses.
- Determination to do better next time. I will ask the lecturers/tutors for help.
- Revise twice as hard as before - I need this grade.