



Kirkbie Kendal School



Revision Guide

Aims:

- To offer strategies for independent learning;
- To challenge attitudes towards revision;
- To ensure all pupils know how to organise themselves and prepare for their assessments and examinations.



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FIRST AND FOREMOST: STRESS AND HANDLING IT

Exams can be stressful and if you are someone who feels the pressure, you have to learn ways to cope with and handle it. Causes of stress are different for different people. For some, it is ‘the whole thing’ about exams. For others, it may be that not enough work has been done, or a fear of failure, or fear of disappointing parents. The key thing to remember is that exam pressure is something you can do something about – when you know how.

Remember that stress is catching – like a Mexican Wave - but it can be positively built upon. For example, do not concentrate on how much you have **not** done, but how much you **have done** and work from there. TALK TO SOMEONE if you feel the situation is getting on top of you. Get plenty of rest (being tired can raise your stress levels), and make sure you build in relaxation and enjoyment time into your work schedule. This is vital.

Make sure you have a copy of the exam timetable and put it in your room. You can download free apps to countdown and support you with your preparation and organisation, for example **Exam Countdown**.



In the weeks before the exam, make sure you get plenty of rest and if you find it hard to get to sleep, have a hot bath and warm drink (not caffeine). You could also play some soothing music to help you to fall asleep. Fresh air is also good: if your head feels full, take a walk outside.

DO NOT go in for INTENSE revision the night before an exam as this can lead to worrying and it doesn’t work. Instead, look over some notes to imprint on your memory. BE POSITIVE about the work you have done. Ensure that you have everything you need the night before to avoid last minute panics in the morning.

Finally, eat! You cannot concentrate fully with an empty, rumbling stomach once the nerves have subsided.



1. REVISION ADVICE

The following advice is acknowledged by schools and colleges all over the country (and world!) because it is based on lots and lots and lots of research.

- ATTEND all lessons – CATCH UP on missed work
- FOCUS in all lessons – ASK if you don't understand something
- Work in the SAME PLACE every time when revising independently
- Use a DESK or a TABLE Try working in SILENCE
- Set reasonable GOALS and REWARD yourself when you achieve them
- Draw up a REVISION TIMETABLE*
- Set up a FOLDER of revision resources for each subject
- Know your strengths and weaknesses when doing revision (prioritise weaknesses but don't neglect strengths). Checklist and traffic light everything you need to know for your exams (in each subject), so you know where your weaknesses lie. Put the traffic light page at the beginning of each subject's folder.
- Make your OWN NOTES from REVISION GUIDES
- If you can, involve your FAMILY in your revision preparation
- EAT properly – never miss breakfast, especially on exam day!
- Switch fizzy drinks to WATER
- CREATE your own quizzes and test your friends
- Meet with FRIENDS for productive revision sessions
- Group similar subjects together when you revise e.g. Maths and Physics
- Use PHYSICAL EXERCISE to boost brain activity
- Wear a WATCH and practise your TIMING with past papers
- NO TV, mobile phones or social media distractions
- NO radio**
- NO talkative friends



* see example in Appendix

** *some music may aid concentration, but be careful that you don't become distracted..*



2. PREPARATION

Two months
before

- **Create revision folders** with dividers for each subject. Put in your exam dates, dates of revision classes and your revision timetable. **Ask your subject teachers** for advice on useful revision resources. Most of the time they will have copies for you. **Create concept maps/flashcards/mnemonics/notes** and keep it safely together. Use coloured pens, images and post-it notes to help you remember key ideas. **Exercise** and **eat** properly.

The month
before

- **Don't panic!** If you panic and at the same time you cannot take in information properly so your revision is less effective. If you do tend to get worked up TELL someone you trust who will listen. **Speak** to you class teacher, your mentor, your form tutor and/or your parents.

The week
before

- Try to leave this week free to go back over essential or difficult points. If you are still unsure of something – **ask!** Exercise and eat properly. Make sure you get enough sleep. Double check the date and time of your exam(s).

The night
before

- Last minute revision before the exam is not a good idea. It can scare you. Be positive: you have worked hard and you do know the work. If you have other exams then perhaps work for them. Make sure that you have all you need for the exam ready. Have an early night. No good being fully prepared if you're too tired to concentrate properly!

The morning
of your exam

- **Eat something**, hunger does not aid concentration in an exam and once the nerves have gone away, you may not be able to think about much else. Try to feel satisfied about what you have done and about the people who believe in you.

In the exam
hall

- Read through the instructions on the front of the exam paper. Read each question carefully and look how many marks are available. When you think you're finished, make sure you haven't missed out any questions or misread the instructions.



Do you have a **Fixed** or **Growth** mind-set?

Growth mind-sets are conducive to good revision. Your mind-set drives your success.

...fixed	GROWTH!
	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I avoid challenges • I give up easily when it gets tough • What's the point in putting in too much effort? • I don't want to look silly in front of others • Other people are much better at it than me anyway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I enjoy challenges • I keep going even when it gets hard • The more effort you put in, the better you become. • I don't worry too much about what others think • I like to get help from others and learn from them



**'Challenges are what make life interesting.
Overcoming them is what makes life meaningful.'**

Joshua J Marine



3. REVISION TECHNIQUES

There are many types of revision techniques and you will find that you need more than one to cover all aspects of your revision. Here are a few common techniques. Some of the revision ideas could be done at the end of a topic and stored until revision for exams. Remember, put your resources in a REVISION FOLDER.

1. CONCEPT MAPS

Concept maps are a great way of condensing lots of information into bite size chunks that are easy to handle, organise and digest. They can be carried and used during spare moments, or used as a memory aid that can be studied and then written out again without looking at the original to test memory.

To create a concept map (sometimes called a mind map), write your main topic in the centre of the page with key points branching off around it. You can branch your subtopics off from these. Use diagrams and colours to help you remember. You don't need to be good at Art to do this!



Turn to the Appendix for a basic template or make your own. Use colour and images to help you remember; buy index cards or create your own. MS PowerPoint can be used to create detailed slides that can then be easily printed out as handouts, cut up and laminated. If you create something useful why not share it with the class?

2. FLASH CARDS

Flashcards are a great way of training your memory. They train you to **actively recall** information.

You write key topics/prompts on one side and all the information you need for that topic on the other. It is essentially like writing your own revision guide! When you reveal the answer side of a flashcard to

assess your correctness, you are essentially asking yourself “How did my answer compare to this correct answer?” and “How well did I know (or not know) it?” This act of reflection is known as **metacognition** and **metacognition** deepens knowledge. Fact.



Flashcards will support you to feel confident about a topic and because flashcards exist loosely, rather than tied to a book or document, you are able to separate them into piles based on whether (or how often) you need to study them again.





3. NOTE TAKING

Just reading over old work can support you to actively remember information. Note taking enables you to extract concise information from revision lessons or large pieces of written work. You can then use the notes at a later date to revise from. There is no right or wrong way to structure information. Use post-its, coloured highlighters and bullet points to summarise key information.

Remember to make your notes as neatly as you can, so that you will be able to read your writing at a later date!

4. MNEMONICS

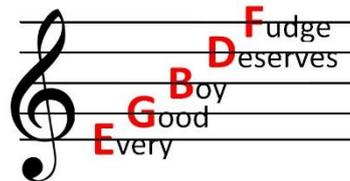
Mnemonics are **memory devices** that help learners recall larger pieces of information, especially in the form of lists like characteristics, steps, stages, parts, phases, etc. The word comes from the Greek **mnemonikós**, which refers to *the mind*.

It has been regularly proven since the 1960s that **mnemonics increase recall by up to 77%!**

Many types of mnemonics exist and which type works best is limited only by the imagination of each **individual learner**. Some examples of mnemonics include **Song, Expression, Spelling and Rhyme**.

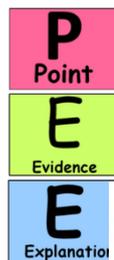
You will already be aware of many mnemonics, but **creating your own** is a great way to train your memory...

- a) They can help you to remember order or structure:



Brackets
Indices
Division
Multiplication
Addition
Subtraction

- b) Or to develop your answers into detailed paragraphs



– or even essays:

- c) They can help you to remember key features or aspects of a topic:

MOVEMENT
RESPIRATION
SENSITIVITY

GROWTH
REPRODUCTION
EXCRETION
NUTRITION

	Mercury	My
	Venus	Very
	Earth	Easy
	Mars	Method
	Jupiter	Just
	Saturn	Speeds
	Uranus	Up
	Neptune	Naming
	Pluto*	Planets

Richard
Of
York
Gave
Battle
In
Vain



ACTIVE REVISION techniques

PRECIS	This involves summarising your notes but keeping all the main points
RHYMES	This involves making up a word or rhyme that helps you remember key events or the order of things e.g. the planets, music notes, irregular verbs, etc.
MNEMONICS	Mnemonics use the first letters from the words you are trying to remember, for example: S.P.O.R.T. which is used to remember the 5 principles of training: Specificity, Progression, Overload, Reversibility, Tendons.
PODCASTS/ VIDEO	Record yourself reading your notes aloud and listen regularly. Look for useful podcasts and videos online which on subjects you need support with.
MEMORY HOOKS	Another type of memory hook is to take the first letter of a list of words and make a sentence with them for instance the directions of the compass – North, East, South, West, can be recalled as N aughty E lephants, S quirt W ater.
CONCEPT MAPS (MINDMAPS)	These could be stuck on your wall. Use other techniques such as mnemonics to condense information. See Appendix for a blank template.
FLOW DIAGRAMS	To show the sequence of events in a logical list. See Appendix for a blank template.
PRACTICE QUESTIONS	Past exam papers, These can be obtained from your class teachers, the VLE or the exam board website for your subject.
ANNOTATE	Underline important terms, circle definitions and meanings; write key words and definitions in the margin. Signal where important information can be found with key words or symbols in the margin. Write short summaries in the margin at the end of sub-units. Write the questions in the margin next to the section where the answer is found. Indicate steps in a process by using numbers in the margin. Draw pictures to represent key ideas.





4. YOUR LESSONS

SEVEN RULES FOR MAKING THE MOST OUT OF LISTENING IN LESSONS

1. Prepare yourself before you go into class. **Review what was done in lessons and what will be covered in the coming lessons.** This way you are up to date with the learning and can ask questions on anything you do not yet understand.
2. For memory purposes (as described in the previous section) it is also good to **review in the evening what was done in class that day.**
3. **Attend all classes** and catch up on ANY work you miss through absence.
4. **Take notes even if your teacher hasn't specifically told you to.** Make a mental note of their voice or body language that emphasises that what is being said is important and needs to be taken down. Use coloured pens to highlight key ideas.
5. As you listen to what is being said, try to **associate it with what you already know. Formulate questions and offer answers** to yourself about it. If you do not have an answer, do not be afraid to ask the teacher. The chances are that a number of people in the room will also want the same information. Think of answers to the questions your classmates ask, see if you're right when the teacher responds.
6. Learn to **summarise the main** points of what is important and what is not. Do this in your listening, reading and note taking.
7. Finally, **immediately after class** (if possible), **review** your notes of the lesson you have just had. If you have missed some points, try to fill the gaps by asking others. The more you review now, the more you will remember later.





5. THE EXAM

- **When you get the exam paper, look over it, reading the instructions carefully.**
- **How many sections are there?**
- **How many questions are there?**
- **Which ones will you answer confidently?**
- **How many marks is each question worth and how much time do you have for each one?**
- **Work out a plan of attack.**

1. **Look over the longer essay questions. Then on a spare sheet of paper, write or sketch any planned information that you have memorised for them.** Keep returning to this sheet during the exam as you recall more information. Sometimes, a multi-choice question can trigger something you want to write in the essay.
2. **Remember to write clearly and make sure each sentence makes sense.** The examiner has never met you so make sure they understand YOU.
3. **Always read over your answer and double check the question** to make absolute sure you've answered to the best of your ability.
4. **Start with multiple-choice** (if there are any), doing only those that you can answer easily. Come back to the others later.
5. **Check your time constantly.** Are you on time?
6. **Finally, write your essays from the material that you have placed on your memorised exam sheet.** As this is the last section. Be particularly aware of the time you have remaining.

TIMING IS CRUCIAL

Time management is crucial at this stage. Keep checking your time against the percentage value of each exam question. Write the time you need to finish a question on a piece of paper so you know when to stop and move on.





6. EXTRA-CURRICULAR/REVISION TIMETABLE – write down the revision sessions that are available to you on this page.



7. EXAM TIMETABLE

Stick a copy of your exam timetable to this page



APPENDIX

- KEY TERMS GLOSSARY

COMPARE	Are the things alike or are there important differences? Which do you think is best and explain why?
CONTRAST	look for the differences and similarities
EXPLAIN	make yourself clear, use detail (and quotations where appropriate), relevant facts and any extra information you can
ILLUSTRATE	explain, using examples
DEFINE	give meaning
DESCRIBE	write in detail
DISCUSS	talk or write about a topic in detail, consider different issues or ideas
DISTINGUISH	explain the difference
EVALUATE	explain, in detail, the positives and negative
STATE	write briefly the main points
SUMMARISE	bring the main points together
A NUMBER QUESTION IN SCIENCE	Make sure that you show working out and put the correct units on your answers.

- CHECKLIST FOR REVISION FOLDER

- School Timetable
- Revision Timetable
- Extra-Curricular Revision Timetable
- Exam Timetable
- List of topics to be covered (highlight red, amber and green)
- Key information for each topic
- Dividers for different topics
- Plastic wallets
- Post-its and index cards
- Concept maps or flow diagrams for topics



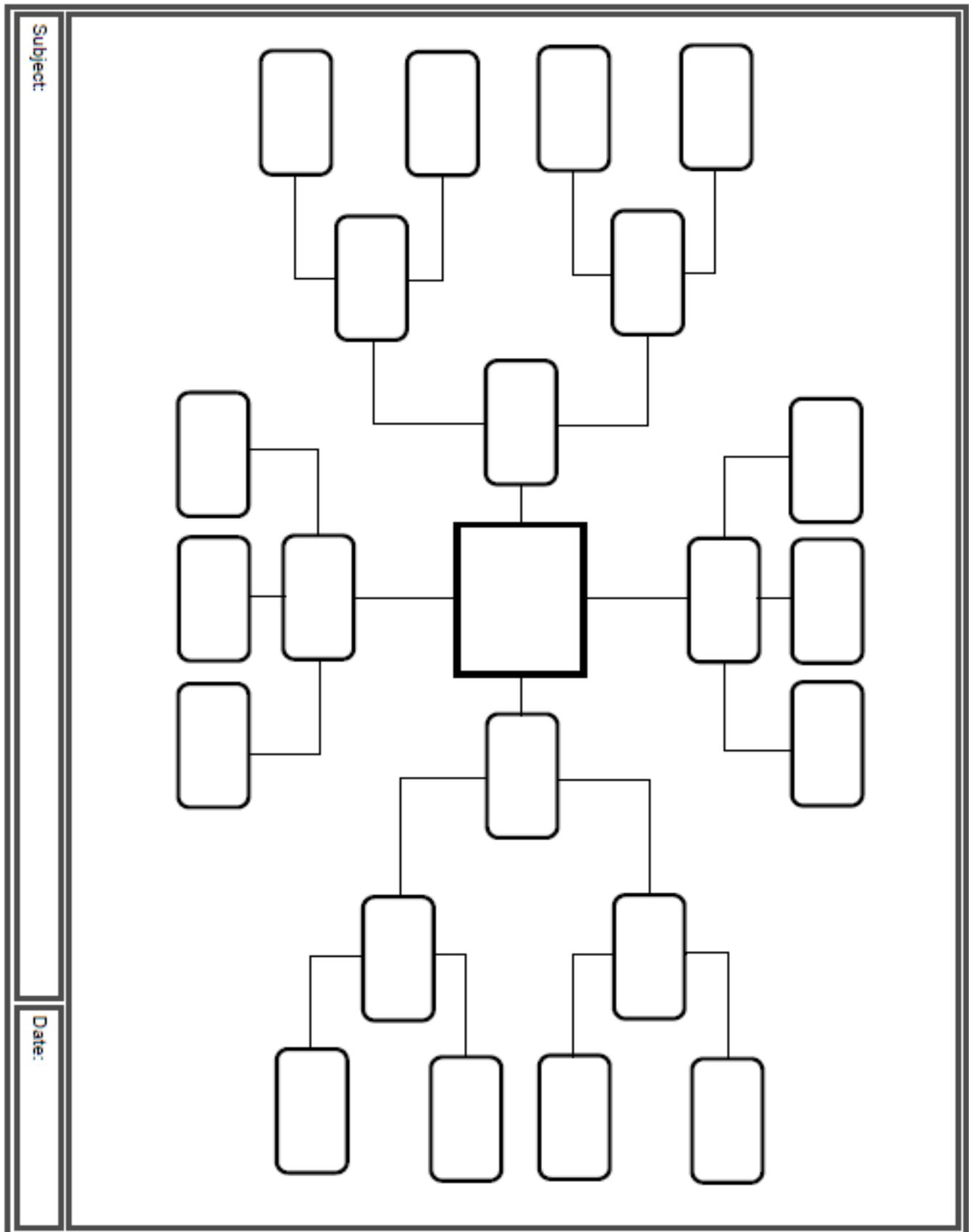


- REVISION TIMETABLE TEMPLATE

	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
4pm							
5pm							
6pm							
7pm							



- CONCEPT MAP TEMPLATE



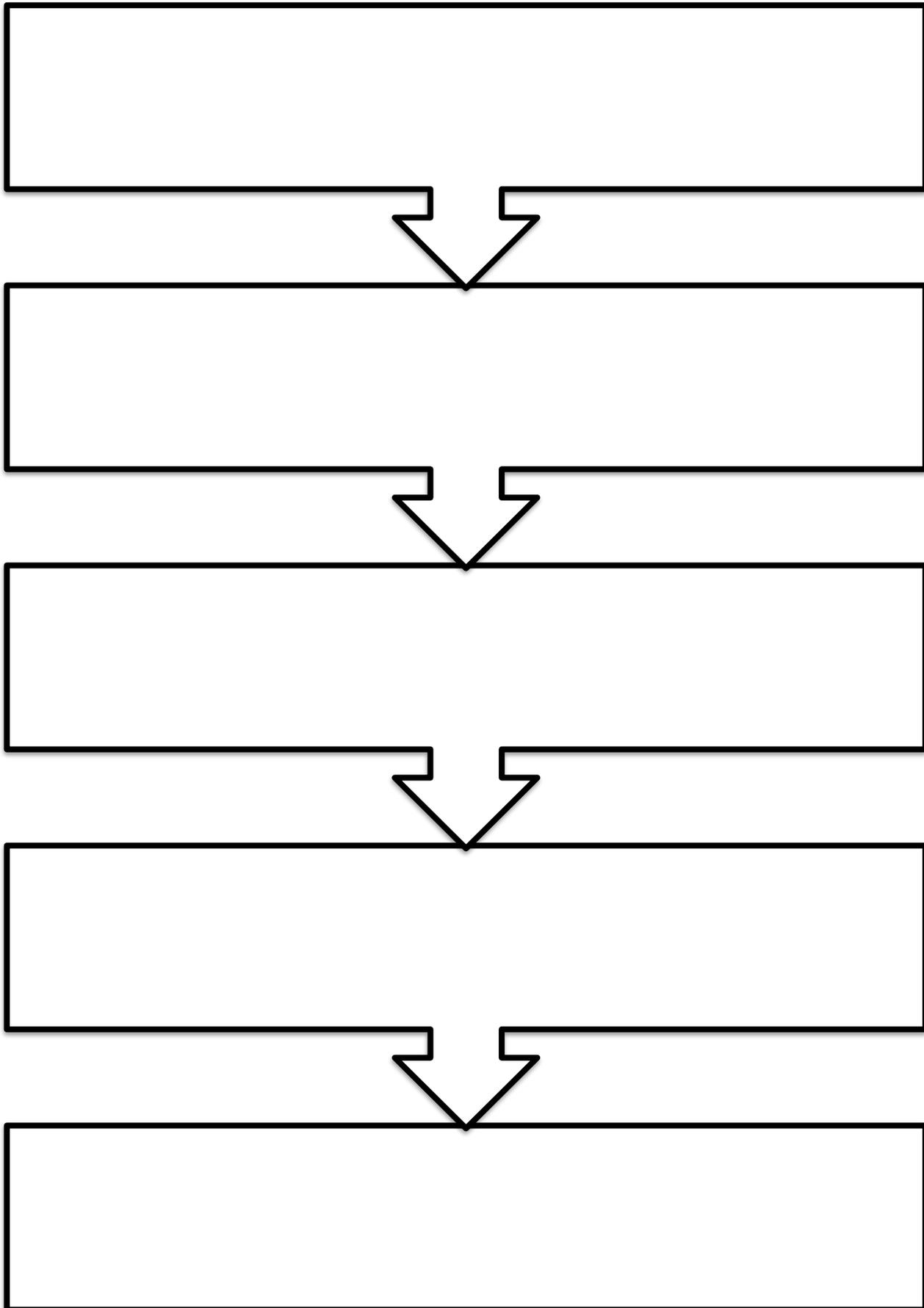
<https://www.text2mindmap.com/> (Online concept map creator tool)

OR, download the free iMindMap app -





- FLOW DIAGRAM TEMPLATE





- REVISION IN PROGRESS SIGN

PLEASE DO NOT DISTURB

REVISION IN PROGRESS

You can support my success by:

- Making sure I am eating healthily and sleeping properly
- Making sure my attendance and punctuality is the best it can be
- Looking after my distracting electronic devices while I revise
- Asking me about what I learned in lessons today
- Reminding me about the importance of after school revision classes
- Helping me to set up folders of revision resources for each subject
- Using Flashcards with me to test me
- Helping me stick to my revision timetable
- Reading the same book I am studying for English Literature – and talking to me about it
- Checking my spelling, punctuation and grammar
- Praising me when I have met revision goals