



HOUSTONE  
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# GCSE & OPTIONS BOOKLET

A guide for parents/carers in supporting their child through the options process and transition to KS4

**September 2022**

**ASPIRATION, ENDEAVOUR, RESPECT**



# Climbing the Mountain to Success

Dear Pupils

As you receive this booklet, you are embarking on the next stage of what will be one of the most important periods in your educational life. Decisions taken today can keep doors open to you and help meet your aspirations – to aspire to go to university, to aspire to contribute to society, to aspire to the best of professions – and help you do justice to your potential, making your family and yourself proud.

***‘We believe that given the right circumstances, everyone can achieve extraordinary things’***

At Houstone School we believe that all pupils can achieve extraordinary things, including going to university. Those aspirations must be facilitated by a balanced curriculum – having balance ensures that you do not close doors too early. Meeting those aspirations requires hard work, focus, and dedication. It also requires that you keep your options open so that you can change your mind.

Over the next two years, you will work with commitment and we will expect great things from you, so that you grow into adults who can enjoy wonderful lives. Even if you don’t now, we want you to be able to enjoy the greatest works of literature, to appreciate the beauty of mathematics and to be fascinated by the scientific discoveries that humans have made. These are examples, but we also want you to be engrossed in the stories of history, be creative in playing and producing music or great pieces of drama, and to enjoy art galleries and modern culture and to continue to experience competitive sports. We want you to understand the world – its geography, the awe of languages and linguistics, the fascinating development of the world’s religions – and participate in it by designing and making things in design technology or computer science. We want, and I hope your parents want, the inside of your head to be an interesting place to be and we want you to be an interesting person to know. And yes, we want you to get great results and have a great life, including being secure financially

Some of the subjects referred to above are part of the ‘core curriculum’, and everyone studies them. Some of them are ‘optional’ and you have choices to make about which to study. For some pupils, you may know what you want to do in the future. You may even know which course you want to study at university. You may find choosing your options quite easy. For other pupils, you may have no idea what you want to do, or even if you want to go to university. Both of these situations are fine. In both cases, please reflect on whether, in making your options, you are ensuring doors are kept open so that when you are 16 or 18, or even later in life, you can change your mind or change direction.

Let me reassure you that your life is not mapped out from this day. Which courses you study is important, but we have designed an options process that ensures that you can maintain the balance that I am writing about here. Uniquely this year, you are joining a school that has not led you through your Key Stage 3 foundation subjects. Much work will be done to ensure you select some GCSE options that are suited to you.

Please listen to everything that is said in assemblies and by your teachers and parents. Together, we will ensure the subjects you study over the next two years are the right ones.

Best wishes,



Ms. English  
Principal, Houstone School

# The Options Process: Key Dates

## Monday 12<sup>th</sup> September 2022

### Options Process Assembly:

- Initial Year 10 welcome assembly with the options process clearly explained.
- Parents to receive this information booklet and discuss with children over the weekend.

## Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2022

Options forms returned and timetable work begins.

## Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2022

Options subjects confirmed.

**\*Due to the delayed opening of Houstone School, revised dates are shown above. We recognise that this is a short turnaround time, but will offer any support as needed to assist subject choice.**

## The options process:

*“My teachers really helped me to decide what I wanted to do. I wasn’t really sure what I should study but I found their advice really helpful.”*

Current Year 10 Pupil at BFS



# Making the Right Choices

Pupils should aim to choose a range of subjects across the different curriculum areas. This will help keep your future options and aspirations open. The following points may help your decision making:

DO choose the courses if:

- It gives you a good balance across the curriculum.
- You are passionate and enjoy the subject.
- You feel you are good at the subject and you try hard in it.
- You are aspirational and you want to keep future options open.
- You are fully informed about the subject and you know what you will be studying and how you will be examined.
- You have discussed it with your subject teachers.
- You know you will work hard across the two years in this subject.
- You want to achieve and excel in this subject.

DO NOT choose courses because:

- Your friends are choosing it – it may not be right for you.
- You like a particular teacher- you may have a different teacher next year.
- You think it will be easy.

## The options process:

*“You need to think really carefully before choosing your options. Don’t just do a subject because your friends want to. Choose something which you are going to really enjoy for two years”*

Current Y10 Pupil at BFS

## About the Ebacc

The English Baccalaureate (EBacc) is a performance measure for schools, which helps to provide a snapshot of how well the school is doing. It is not a qualification for pupils, but a measure of their success across a core of academic subjects. The government wants 90% of pupils to take the EBacc. This means that an increasing number of pupils, against whom BFS pupils will be competing in future, will be taking this selection of subjects.

The following subjects make up the EBacc:

- English or English Literature
- Mathematics
- Two sciences (either Combined Science or two of Physics, Chemistry, Biology and Computer Science)
- History or Geography
- A Modern Foreign Language

These subjects are those most regularly asked for by colleges and universities— worth bearing in mind when pupils are choosing which options to take. Although pupils do not need to have studied all of these to go on to higher education, having a mix of subjects geared towards the EBacc will help keep their options open. In addition, the subjects taken for GCSE will influence those studied at sixth form or college and will therefore influence the degrees which are open to you at university and potentially your future career.

The Russell Group of Universities (a collaboration of 24 leading UK universities) are not only interested in the results that pupils achieve at GCSE and A Level, they are increasingly expecting pupils to have breadth of study as well as rigour in what they study. The EBacc subjects keep options open and are helpful for access to the most selective courses and universities at 18.

For more information and guidance visit the Informed Choices website ([www.informedchoices.ac.uk](http://www.informedchoices.ac.uk)). Informed Choices is aimed at pupils aged 14 and upwards who are considering university and want information to help them choose the right subjects to study at sixth form or college. The guidance is written by admissions directors from the 24 Russell Group universities and provides information on why subject choice matters.



## Understanding GCSEs

From 2018 traditional A\*-G grades were replaced in all subjects by a numerical system that score pupils on a scale from 9-1. These GCSE courses are more challenging than ever, with all the exams set at the end of Year 11. Grade 9 is reserved for the very top tier of Y11 pupils nationally. Sometimes as low as 1-5% of pupils will achieve a Grade 9. The courses and exams ensure that young people have the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in the 21st Century. They ensure that pupils leave school better prepared for work or further study. They cover more challenging content and are designed to match standards in the strongest performing education systems elsewhere in the world.

### Key points:

1. GCSEs in England have a 9 to 1 grading scale, to better differentiate between the highest performing pupils and distinguish clearly between the new and old exams.
2. Grade 9 is the highest grade and is awarded to fewer pupils than the previous A\*.
3. The old and new GCSE grading scales do not directly compare but there are three points where they align, as the diagram shows:

The bottom of grade 7 is aligned with the bottom of grade A  
The bottom of grade 4 is aligned with the bottom of grade C  
The bottom of grade 1 is aligned with the bottom of grade G

4. The Department for Education recognises grade 4 and above as a 'standard pass'; this is the minimum level that pupils need to reach in English and Maths, otherwise they will need to continue to study these subjects as part of their post-16 education. There is no re-take requirement for other subjects.
5. Employers, universities and colleges will continue to set the GCSE grades they require for employment or further study. Minimum requirements usually include grade 4 in English and Maths.

Old grades	New grades
A*	9
A	8
B	7
C	6
	5 STRONG PASS
	4 STANDARD PASS
D	3
E	2
F	1
G	1
U	U

### More information:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcse-new-grading-scale-factsheets>  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-40826391>

# The KS4 Curriculum

The good news is that much of what you study in years 10 and 11 will not change from what you will have studied in years 7 to 9. You will still have PE and electives which means you can still do plenty of sport/exercise each week even if you don't take GCSE PE.

The Key Stage 4 curriculum is comprised of two sections: the 'core' subjects and 'optional' subjects.

## Core subjects

These subjects are compulsory and are studied by all pupils. The core curriculum should lead to you coming away with 5 good GCSEs in key subjects.

## Options subjects

In addition to the core subjects all pupils need to choose two options subjects.

You can find all the details about each course in the back of this booklet – and if you have further questions about any of them, just ask teachers in school, and they will be able to help.

If you have not studied Spanish from year 7 to year 9, you will not be able to choose it as a GCSE option as you will not have the requisite knowledge to access the course. It is not an introductory course, but one built on three years of study.

## Core subjects:

English Language  
English Literature  
Mathematics  
Combined Science  
Core PE  
Electives

## Options subjects:

Art  
IT  
Drama  
Geography  
History  
GCSE PE  
Spanish





## The KS4 Curriculum

We believe that an academic, knowledge-rich curriculum is an entitlement for all our pupils. We have allocated considerable time and resources to ensure pupils achieve well across the core and options subjects. Additional time has also been allocated to PE and the electives. We know pupils and families value these important enrichment opportunities. The table below outlines current allocations for each subject:

Subject	Number of periods per week
<b>Core Curriculum</b>	
English	6
Maths	6
Science (Combined)	6
PE	2
Electives	1 *extended
<b>Options subjects</b>	
All options subjects	3

### What is Combined Science?

Combined Science is really two GCSEs rolled into one qualification. Pupils will study Biology, Chemistry and Physics but they won't cover as much content as those pupils sitting separate (triple) sciences. Combined Science pupils will get an award consisting of two equal or adjacent grades from 9 to 1 (e.g. 9-9, 9-8, 8-8 through to 1-1), and it will count as two GCSEs when pupils apply for jobs, sixth form, or to university.

### How has languages changed?

In line with many of the new GCSEs, these new qualifications have much less non-exam assessment. Previously there was 60%, which covered speaking and writing. In the new qualifications, non-exam assessment makes up only 25% of the overall assessment, for the assessment of speaking. The remaining 75% will be by exams, assessing separately the skills of listening, reading and writing. So each skill area contributes equally to the overall grade. The new qualifications are still tiered, but there are some differences in the grades available on each tier. Higher tier pupils will access grades from 9-4, whilst foundation pupils will be graded from 5-1.







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# The Core Curriculum

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## English (Language)

### What will I study?

You will investigate and analyse language, experiment and use language creatively and learn functional English to communicate effectively.

You will study the following:

- Paper 1 – Explorations in Creating Reading and Writing.
- Paper 2 – Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives.

### How will I be assessed?

Exams are 1hr 45m long. There is no Controlled Assessment. In addition, you will be assessed on the quality of your speaking and listening, now referred to as 'Spoken Language'. This will not contribute to your final grade, but will appear on your certificates.

### What will I learn?

You will be able to: communicate effectively and confidently, read and write non-fiction, read and explore some modern and heritage texts and learn about the way you speak. The skills gained during the course such as analysing and writing, speaking and listening techniques, organisation skills, developing ideas, evaluation, self-expression and critical awareness, are relevant to all subject areas and future employment.

### How will this course help me after my GCSEs?

This course offers excellent preparation for A Level English Language and Literature and can lead to a range of careers and college or university courses. The course is also mandatory for all post-16 courses.

### Will there be any extra-curricular opportunities?

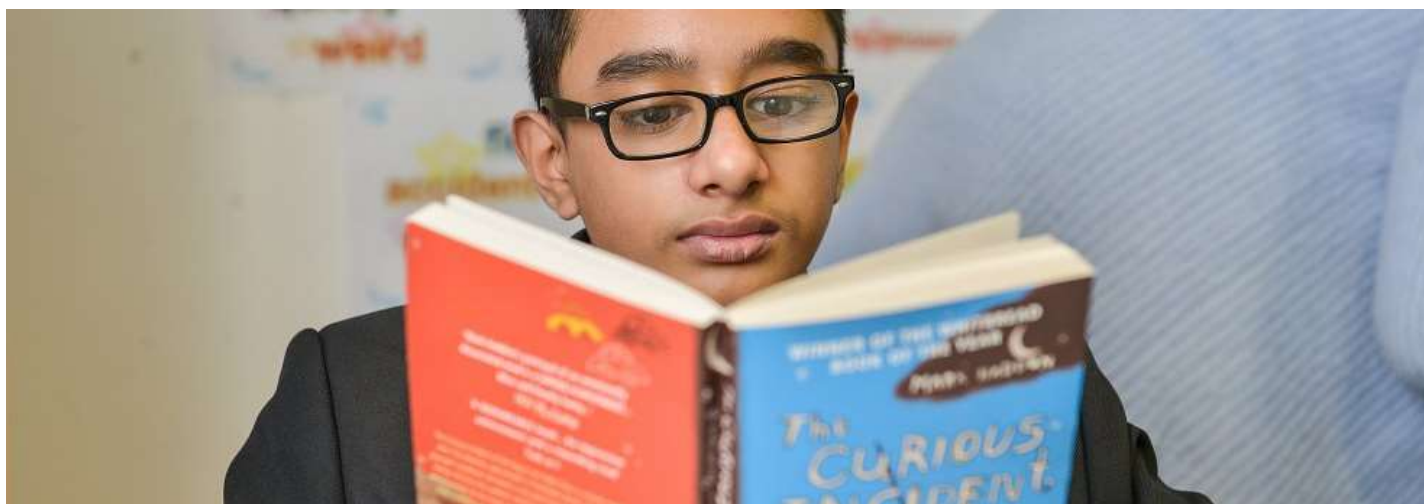
There may be opportunities for visits to poetry readings, the theatre (modern and Shakespeare) and for external speakers to come in and talk about the texts studied.

## Why should I study this course?

*Everybody completes English Language. You will learn how to communicate effectively in both reading and writing. This course will teach you the skills and abilities to take an active and responsible role in your community, in your everyday life, workplace or educational setting.*

## Where can I find out more?

*Talk to your English teacher or Mr Hetherington*



## Why should I study this course?

*Literature is part of our cultural heritage which is freely available to everyone, and which can enrich our lives in all kinds of ways. Once we have broken the barriers that make studying literature seem daunting, we find that literature can be entertaining, beautiful, funny, or tragic. It can convey profundity of thought, richness of emotion, and insight into character. It takes us beyond our limited experience of life to show us the lives of other people at other times. It stirs us intellectually and emotionally, and deepens our understanding of our history, our society, and our own individual lives.*

## English (Literature)

### What will I study?

You will read and explore a range of literature with a wide variety of appeal drawn from contemporary and modern texts, texts from across the globe and texts which have had a significant influence on English literary and cultural heritage. You will study the following:

- Paper 1 – Shakespeare and the 19<sup>th</sup> Century novel (40% of the final grade).
- Paper 2 – Modern texts and poetry (60% of the final grade).

### How will I be assessed?

Two examinations

### What will I learn?

You will be able to appreciate literature in a sensitive and confident manner. More specifically, you will be able to identify language devices and explore their emotional power, expand your vocabulary, and challenge yourself and your thinking.

### How will this course help me after my GCSEs?

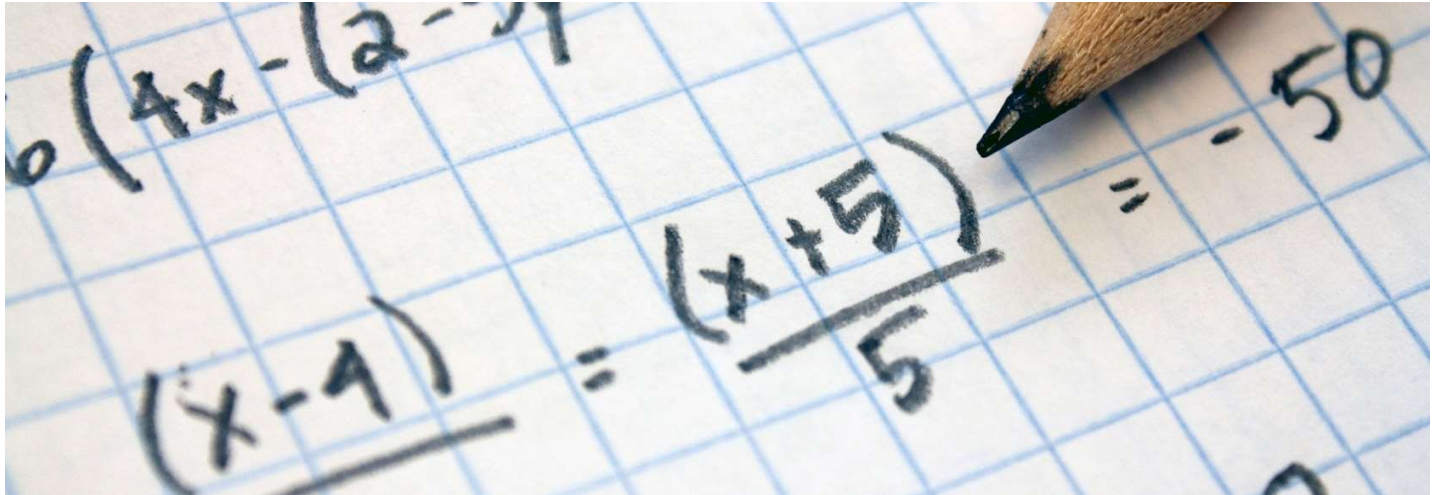
English Literature is highly respected and offers excellent preparation for A Level English Literature and can lead to a range of careers and college or university courses.

### Will there be any extra-curricular opportunities?

There will be opportunities for visits to the theatre and for external speakers to come in and talk about the texts studied.

## Where can I find out more?

*Talk to your English teacher or Mr Hetherington, Head of English.*



# Maths

## What will I study?

**Number** – 22-28% in Foundation, 12-18% in Higher

**Algebra** – 17-23% in Foundation, 27-33% in Higher

**Ratio & proportion** – 22-28% in Foundation, 17-23% in Higher

**Geometry and measures** – 12-18% in Foundation, 17-23% in Higher

**Statistics & Probability** – 12-18% in both Foundation and Higher

## How will I be assessed?

The qualification consists of **three equally-weighted written examination papers** at either Foundation tier or Higher tier. All three papers must be at the same tier of entry and must be completed in the same assessment series. Paper 1 is a non-calculator assessment and a calculator is allowed for Paper 2 and Paper 3. Each paper is 1 hour and 30 minutes long and has a total of 80 marks.

## What will I learn?

- Problem-solving strategies
- How to select and apply mathematical techniques and methods in mathematical, every day and real-world situations ('functional mathematics')
- How to reason mathematically, make deductions and inferences and draw conclusions
- How to interpret and communicate mathematical information in a variety of forms appropriate to the information and context
- How to use your knowledge and understanding to make connections between mathematical concepts.

## Additional information:

You will need to be fully equipped with a geometry set and a scientific calculator. You also have the option to purchase a revision guide and work book to supplement what you learn in school.

## Why should I study this course?

*Studying Maths will equip you for success as a creative problem solver, with mathematical competency and logical thinking skills. You will gain confidence in being able to use the mathematics you learn outside the classroom. You will learn to use logical thinking skills to break down a problem and create a solution.*

## Where can I find out more?

*Talk to your Maths teacher, or Ms Webb, Head of Maths*



## Why should I study this course?

*Science is important because it is useful for everyday life as well as being a compulsory requirement for many courses. Science helps to explain the wonders of the world and also develops problem solving and thinking skills. Many careers require Science such as Medicine, Marine Biology, Sports Science and Physiotherapy.*

## Where can I find out more?

*Talk to your Science teacher or Mr Cunningham, Head of Science*

# Science (Combined)

## What will I study & learn?

Combined science is made up of a combination of Biology, Physics and Chemistry modules:

- Natural Selection and Genetic Modification
- Health, Disease and the Development of Diseases
- Plant Structures and their Functions
- Ionic Bonding, Covalent Bonding and Types of Substances
- Acids and Alkalis
- Calculations Involving Masses
- Motion
- Forces and Motion
- Conservation of Energy
- Waves
- Animal Coordination, Control and Homeostasis
- Exchange and Transport in Animals
- Ecosystems and Material Cycles
- Electrolytic Processes, Obtaining Useful Materials, Reversible Reactions
- Groups in the Periodic Table, Rates of Reaction, Heat Energy Changes
- Fuels, Earth and Atmospheric Science
- Light and the electromagnetic Spectrum
- Radioactivity
- Energy – Forces Doing Work, Forces and Their Effects
- Electricity and Circuits
- Magnetism and the Motor Effect
- Particle Model, Forces and Matter

## How will I be assessed?

Pupils will study all three sciences and will be awarded two GCSEs at the end of the course. All exams will be sat at the end of the course and pupils will sit a total of six, 1hr 10min exams. As part of the new structure of GCSE Science a percentage of the questions in the exams will be based on the 18 core practical experiments that will be carried out in lessons throughout the remaining two years of study.



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# Options Subjects

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## Why should I study this course?

*Art will help you to develop your own way of looking at and interpreting the world around you. You will learn how to communicate ideas visually, verbally and in writing. You will learn how to independently research and analyse artists and contextual sources and use these to develop your own work. You will improve your practical skills through observational drawing using a range of media including paint, photography and clay.*

## Where can I find out more?

*Talk to Ms Holmes, Head of Department*

## Art

### **Term One: Formal Elements (six weeks)**

A skills-based course focusing on using the Formal Elements of art to create visually pleasing imagery. You will build your observational drawing skills in a range of mainly dry media and challenge previous ideas about the key skills needed to create an artwork.

*Y10 Portfolio theme: I/Me/Mine*

### **Local Landscape (six weeks)**

Using the work of 2D artists such as Ian Murphy and John Piper to explore surface, depth and perspective in response to local architecture.

### **Term Two: Portraits (six weeks)**

Exploring self and indirect portraiture, this unit will teach you how to use the photography equipment to shoot studio portraits and mix and apply colour to convey emotion in paint.

### **Objects (six weeks)**

This 3D unit will teach you how to sculpt using clay, creating physical textures and using ceramic processes.

### **Term Three (whole term)**

You will choose one of the above approaches to develop your practical portfolio, learning how to interpret a previous exam board theme to produce artwork that is personal and meaningful to you. This will support your development as you progress in to Year 11.





# BTEC : Digital Information Technology

## What will I study?

- Exploring User Interface Design Principles and Project Planning Techniques
  - Collecting, Presenting and Interpreting Data
- Effective Digital working practices

## How will I be assessed?

- External exam
- Internal coursework exam

## What will I learn?

- Learn more about how computers work, including hardware
- Understand computer networks, including the internet
- How to use data manipulation tools
- The impact of computer science on society and the environment
- Ethics and the law relating to computer systems

## How will this course help me after my GCSEs?

The digital sector is a major source of employment in the UK. Despite a turbulent economy in 2020 the Digital sector in the UK advertised 90,000 jobs per week during. Digital skills span all industries, and almost all jobs in the UK today require employees to have a good level of digital literacy.

## Why should I study this course?

*Information Technology has become a very high-profile subject over the last few years. The ability to program computers is a very valuable skill. Computing is of enormous importance to the economy, and the role of Computer Science as a discipline itself and as an 'underpinning' subject across Science and Engineering is growing rapidly.*

## Where can I find out more?

*Talk to Mr Rowe or Ms English*



## Drama

### What will I study?

- Acting
- Script study
- Practitioners
- A variety of styles and genres of theatre
- Devising
- Improvisation
- Playwrights

### How will I be assessed?

- Devised Practical Performance (40%)
- Performance from a Text (20%)
- Written Examination (40%)

### What will I learn?

- expressing yourself in an active and exciting way
- working in a group
- contributing your ideas and taking on board those of others
- playing many parts in different imaginary situations
- creating your own drama work
- develop a personal interest in why Drama matters and be inspired, moved and changed by studying a broad, coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study

### How will this course help me after my GCSEs?

The skills gained during the course such as presentation techniques, organisation skills, developing ideas, evaluation, self-expression, and critical awareness, are relevant to all subject areas and future employment.

## Why should I study this course?

*If you have an interest in the performing arts. You may be enthusiastic about Drama and have some interest in the others arts. You do not have to have taken part in much outside school in the field of Drama (although that might help), but you do have to be prepared to work as a team and to be part of performances throughout the course*

## Where can I find out more?

*Talk to your Ms Read,  
Drama Teacher*



# Geography

## What will I study?

The course focuses on the physical and human processes and factors that have shaped the environment in which you live. You will learn about the interdependence of the physical environments and how human activity influences our environment. The course will also give you the chance to get to grips with some of the big questions which affect our world and understand the social, economic and physical forces and processes which shape and change our world.

- **Paper 1: Living with the physical environment:** 3.1.1 The challenge of natural hazards, 3.1.2 The living world, 3.1.3 Physical landscapes in the UK, 3.4 Geographical skills
- **Paper 2: Challenges in the human environment:** 3.2.1 Urban issues and challenges, 3.2.2 The changing economic world, 3.2.3 The challenge of resource management
- **Paper 3: Geographical applications:** 3.3.1 Issue evaluation, 3.3.2 Fieldwork, 3.4 Geographical skills

## How will I be assessed?

There are three externally examined papers. Pupils must complete all assessment in May/June at the end of Y11.

## What will I learn?

Geography fosters skills that are an asset in any job situation and are highly sought after by employers.

Geographers are taught a wide-ranging combination of skills. This ability to view issues from a wider perspective is appropriate for working in many different areas. If your career path is to be varied, or if you are not yet sure what you want to do, Geography will help you develop vital transferable skills.

## Additional information:

There is a mandatory fieldtrip during the 1<sup>st</sup> half term of year 11 (cost to be confirmed). This fieldtrip enables pupils to access 25% of paper 3: geographical applications.

## Why should I study this course?

*If you enjoy exploring nature, have a thirst for travel and getting to know the people that live in different places. Pupils who study Geography will gain an understanding of the world around them and learn about the effect the environment has on people and the communities in which they live. Pupils will develop a variety of skills through practical work including fieldwork and decision-making exercises.*

## Where can I find out more?

*Talk to Mr McFadden, Head of Geography*



## Why should I study this course?

*If you enjoy learning about how the events of the last 1000 years help explain the problems and opportunities of the world today then History is the ideal subject for you. If you want to gain an insight on why important figures in history did what they did and develop valuable qualities such as reasoning and debating, then GCSE History is definitely for you.*

## Where can I find out more?

*Talk to your history teacher or Ms Catterall, Head of History*

# History

## What will I study?

- **Paper 1: Period Study and non-British depth study:** International Relations: The Changing International Order 1918-c.2001 & Germany 1925 - 1955: The People and the State
- **Paper 2: British Thematic Study:** Power: Monarchy and Democracy in Britain c.1000 to 2014
- **Paper 3: British Depth Study and Study of the Historic Environment:** The English Reformation c.1520-c.1550 & Castles: Form and Function c.1000 - 1750

## How will I be assessed?

- **Paper 1: Period Study and non-British depth study:** 50% (Written examination: 1 hour and 45 minutes)
- **Paper 2: British Thematic Study:** 25% (Written examination: 1 hour)
- **Paper 3: British Depth Study and Study of the Historic Environment:** 25% (Written examination: 1 hour and 15 minutes)

## What will I learn?

You will develop an awareness of how the past has been represented, interpreted and accorded significance for different reasons and purposes. You will be able to ask relevant questions about the past and to investigate them critically using a range of sources in their historical context.

## How will this course help me after my GCSEs?

The History GCSE has always been highly regarded by Sixth Form colleges and Universities. The History course is excellent preparation for a specific A Level in History, but also for other subjects within the wider Humanities and Social Sciences.

The knowledge acquired studying History is in great demand from businesses, especially for pupils interested in careers in management and for pupils interested in studying History or Law at University.

## Additional information

There will be a field trip to Kenilworth Castle, Warwickshire, in the summer term of Year 10. This supports the Power and Reformation units."



## Why should I study this course?

*Pupils with a passion for sport both practically and the theory of P.E. Pupils should have a good all round sporting pedigree and should represent the school in a range of sports. Taking part in sports clubs outside of school is a major advantage to accessing the higher grades.*

## Where can I find out more?

*Talk to your PE teacher*

# Physical Education

### What will I study?

- Fitness and body systems
- Health and performance
- Practical performance
- Personal Exercise Plan

### How will I be assessed?

- 60% Theory made up of two exams. Component 1 is a 1hr 45 minute exam. Component 2 is 1hr 15 minute exam.
- 30% Practical internally marked and externally moderated. One team activity, one individual activity and a free choice from the DfE approved list.
- 10% Personal Exercise Plan. Plan and analyse a personal fitness plan over a six week period.

### What will I learn?

Applied anatomy and physiology, movement analysis, physical training, health, fitness and well-being, sport psychology, socio-cultural influences and the use of data in sport.

Opportunity to join the Leadership Academy managed by Bedford School Sports Partnership.

### How will this course help me after my GCSEs?

The blend of scientific and social knowledge positions candidates to access a range of qualifications. Pupils who enjoy GCSE PE can progress to BTEC Nationals in Sport and Exercise science or AS/A level Physical Education.

### Additional information:

Please note that pupils who choose GCSE PE should have an established record of playing sports or representing the school or a significant involvement in sporting clubs locally.



## Why should I study this course?

*The world has become a much smaller place. It is crucial that we learn to speak and understand each other. This can only be done effectively by learning other languages and appreciating associated cultures. Studying Spanish rewards practical communication skills and adds an international dimension to your studies. Learning Spanish can enhance your employment and mobility prospects whether you are looking for a career in business, engineering, fashion or world class football.*

## Where can I find out more?

*Talk to Mr Gomez, Head of Languages*

## Spanish

### What will I study?

GCSE Spanish is a multi-skill GCSE involving the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing and it is based around the themes of:

- Theme 1: Identity and Culture
- Theme 2: Local, National, International and Global Areas of Interest
- Theme 3: Current and Future Study and Employment

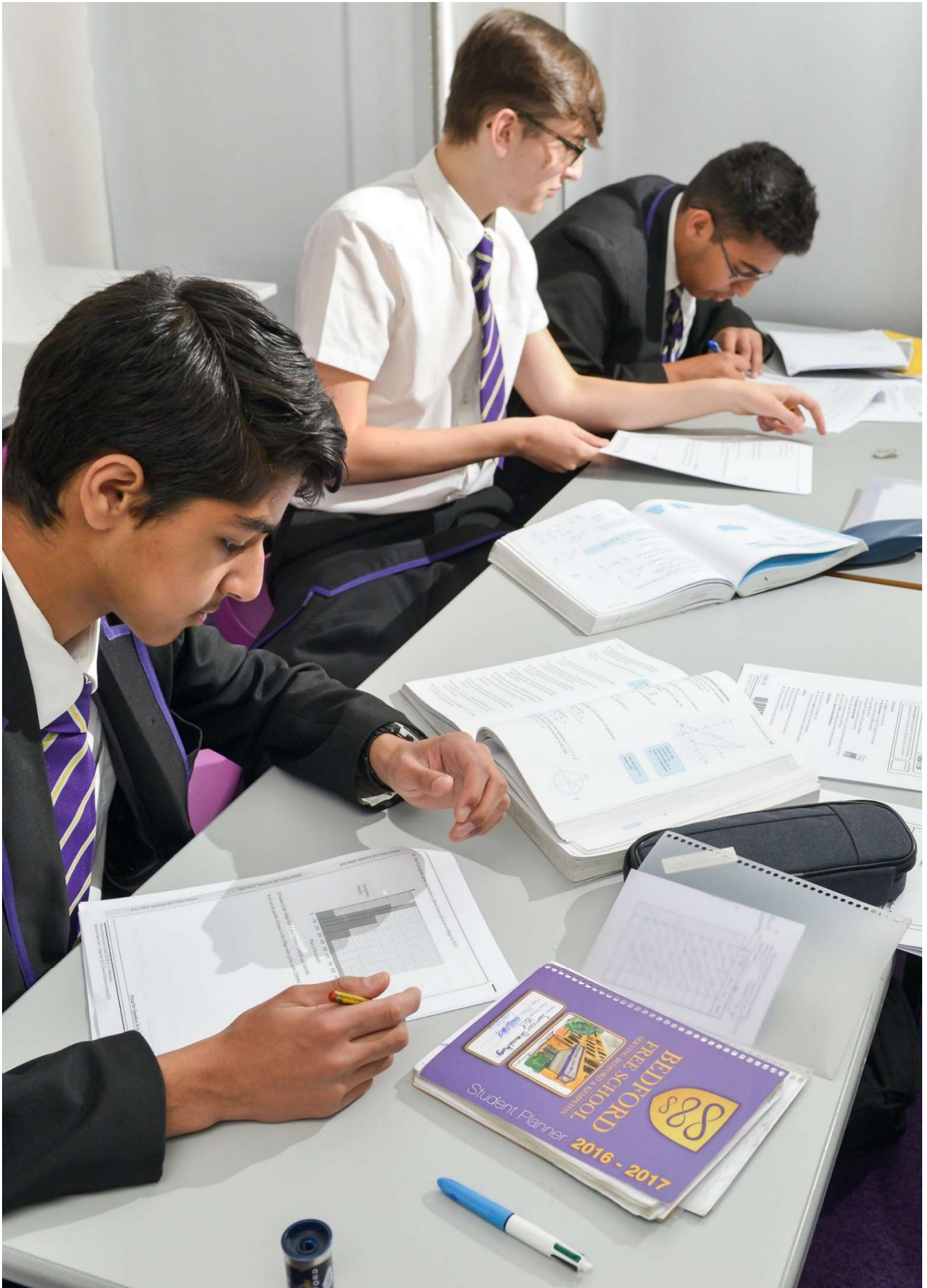
Through the study of these themes the course encourages you to express yourself including your likes, dislikes, ideas and opinions. The course also builds on your learning at Key Stage 3 and introduces you to a wider range of language, structures and vocabulary.

### How will I be assessed?

The GCSE Spanish course is assessed with an examination in each of the four skills (listening, reading, writing and speaking) at the same tier at the end of Year 11. All of the skills are equally weighted and worth 25% each.

### How will this course help me after my GCSEs?

A GCSE in Spanish offers a progression route to further study of a foreign language at A Level or IB. A GCSE confirms your ability to learn a foreign language and facilitates the learning of other languages. Employers are always asking for candidates with language skills and a GCSE in Spanish will place you in a strong position for interesting employment with plenty of career opportunities. Journalism, media, law, engineering, business, marketing, ICT, sport, leisure, travel and tourism, customer service, civil service and teaching are all examples of careers where language skills are particularly valued.





## Options Requests Form

Please remember that these are options *requests* at this stage. Once all options forms are in and have been checked, we will analyse all the requests carefully and try to accommodate as many preferences as possible.

**Please be aware that it is never possible to offer all the possible combinations of subjects** that pupils request and a small number of pupils may be disappointed that they cannot study their first choice of options. This happens because:

- It is not possible to create a timetable to suit all the choices made
- Not enough pupils chose the subject for the course to run

Options forms must be completed and returned via your form tutor by **Monday 12<sup>th</sup> September**. We know this is a short turn around time but due to the unique circumstances this year, we need to move quickly to ensure you have the curriculum teaching time you will need to be successful.





# Year 10 Options Form 2022

## Your Requests

### Instructions

1. Choose your favourite **TWO** choices below by numbering them 1 & 2 (pupils should select a Humanities- History or Geography and Spanish if you have studied this before in Key Stage 3).
2. Choose TWO reserve subjects – subjects you wouldn't mind doing if you couldn't have all of your top choices. Number these 3 and 4.
3. Please check your options choices carefully.

Pupil Name	Form group
Example Pupil	10B

Subject	Preference number (1-2 and 3-4 reserve choices)
Art	4 (reserve choice)
IT	
Drama	1
Geography	2
History	3 (reserve choice)
PE	
Spanish	

Check:

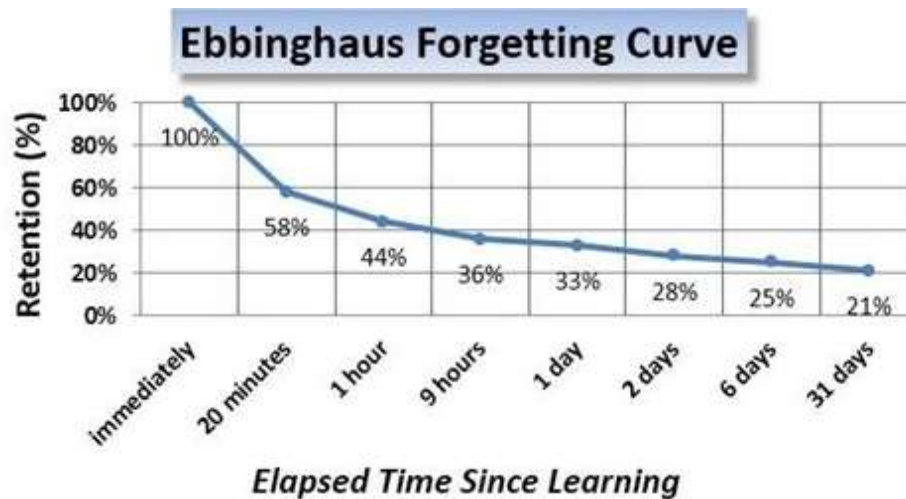
- Have you included at least one language and one Humanities if studied previously?
- Have you listed two options subjects (1-2) and indicated two reserve choices (3-4)?



<p><b>Parents/Carers please sign to confirm that</b></p> <p>The above requests have been discussed with me and I am happy that they are appropriate for my child</p>	<p>Parent/Carer Signature:</p>
--	--------------------------------

**Options forms must be completed and returned via your form tutor by Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> September**

# Revision techniques



The forgetting curve demonstrates the decline of memory retention in time – how information is lost over a period when there is no attempt to retain it. This is a big challenge for pupils. A typical forgetting curve shows that humans tend to halve their memory of newly learned knowledge in just a matter of days unless they consciously review the learned material.

Pupils will be used to using a number of key revision strategies in school to enhance their learning and support long-term memory retention. These strategies have been identified by cognitive psychologists as having the most evidence to back their effectiveness at improving learning. The following pages outline these in more detail.

**1) Spaced Practice** – space out your learning over time. Start planning early for exams, and set aside a little bit of time every day. Five hours spread out over two weeks is better than the same five hours all at once. After you review information from the most recent class, make sure to go back and study important older information to keep it fresh.

**2) Retrieval Practice-** Practice bringing information to mind without the help of materials. Recalling information without supporting materials helps us learn it much more effectively. Take as many knowledge quizzes or practice tests as you can get your hands on. You can also make flashcards to test yourself on key concepts, words or ideas

**3) Elaboration** – Explain and describe key ideas and concepts with many details. Make connections between different ideas to explain how they work together. Take two ideas and think of ways they are similar and different. Elaboration reinforces knowledge and retention of information

**4) Interleaving** – Switching between ideas and subjects when you study. Switch between ideas during a study session. Don't study one idea for too long. Go back over the ideas again in different orders to strengthen and consolidate your understanding.

**5) Concrete Examples** – Use specific examples to understand abstract and complex ideas. Link ideas to specific real-life examples as this will help reinforce your understanding.

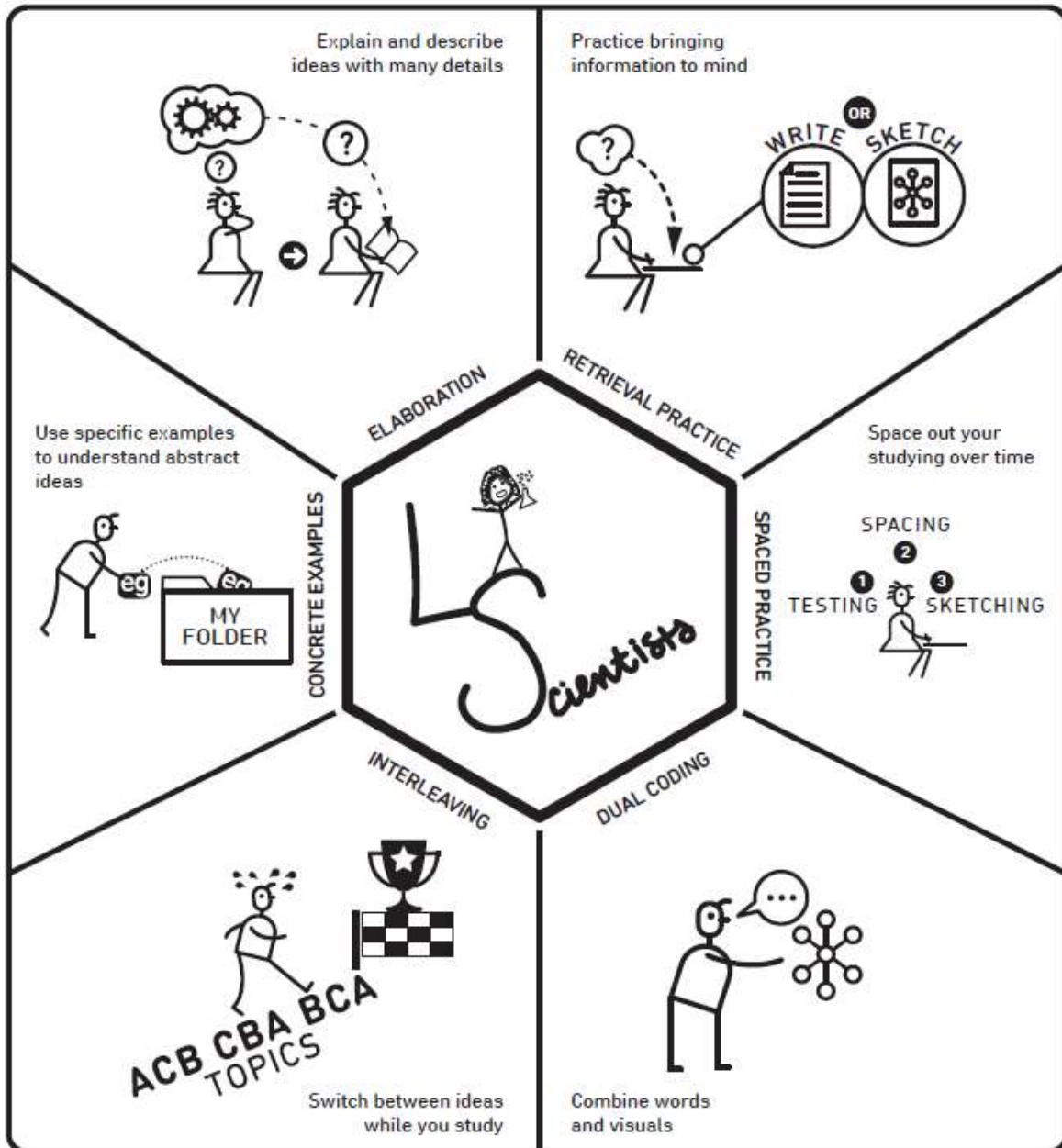
**6) Dual Coding** – Combine words and visuals. Pupils will find it useful to represent ideas alongside drawings, tables, diagrams, timelines and pictures. These help pupil remember and learn key conceptions.



# Six Strategies for Effective Learning

LEARNINGSIENTISTS.ORG

All of these strategies have supporting evidence from cognitive psychology. For each strategy, we explain how to do it, some points to consider, and where to find more information.



Content by Yana Weinstein (University of Massachusetts Lowell) & Megan Smith (Rhode Island College) | Illustrations by Oliver Caviglioli (teachinghow2s.com/cogsci)  
Funding provided by the APS Fund for Teaching and Public Understanding of Psychological Science

**Watch a video summarising the six strategies here:**

<http://www.learningscientists.org/videos/>



# LEARN TO STUDY USING... Spaced Practice

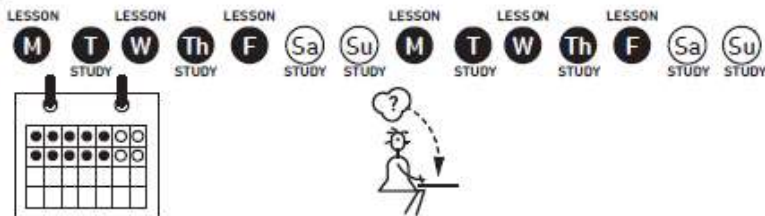
SPACE OUT YOUR STUDYING OVER TIME

LEARNINGSOCIETISTS.ORG

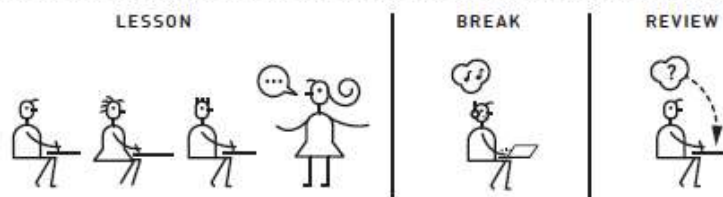


## HOW TO DO IT

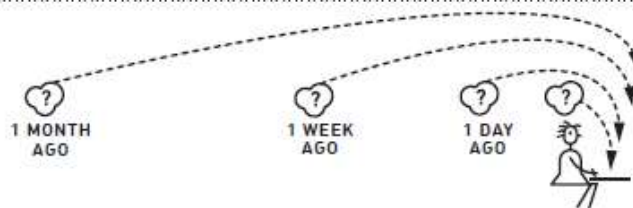
Start planning early for exams, and set aside a little bit of time every day. Five hours spread out over two weeks is better than the same five hours all at once.



Review information from each class, but not immediately after class.



After you review information from the most recent class, make sure to go back and study important older information to keep it fresh.



## HOLD ON!



When you sit down to study, make sure you are using effective study strategies rather than just re-reading your class notes.



This may seem difficult and you may forget some information from day to day, but this is actually a good thing! This forces you to retrieve information from memory (see Retrieval Practice poster).



## RESEARCH

Read more about spacing as a study strategy

Benjamin, A. S., & Tullis, J. (2010). What makes distributed practice effective? *Cognitive Psychology*, 61, 228-247.



# LEARN TO STUDY USING... Retrieval Practice

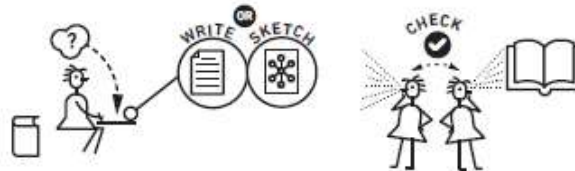
PRACTICE BRINGING INFORMATION TO MIND

LEARNINGSOCIETISTS.ORG



## HOW TO DO IT

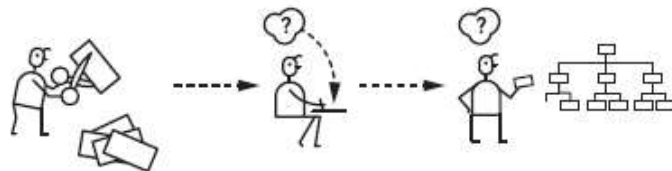
Put away your class materials, and write or sketch everything you know. Be as thorough as possible. Then, check your class materials for accuracy and important points you missed.



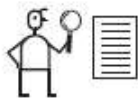
Take as many practice tests as you can get your hands on. If you don't have ready-made tests, try making your own and trading with a friend who has done the same.



You can also make flashcards. Just make sure you practice recalling the information on them, and go beyond definitions by thinking of links between ideas.



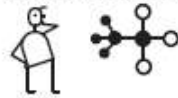
## HOLD ON!



Retrieval practice works best when you go back to check your class materials for accuracy afterward.



Retrieval is hard! If you're struggling, identify the things you've missed from your class materials, and work your way up to recalling it on your own with the class materials closed.



Don't only recall words and definitions. Make sure to recall main ideas, how things are related or different from one another, and new examples.

## RESEARCH

Read more about retrieval practice as a study strategy

Roediger, H. L., Putnam, A. L., & Smith, M. A. (2011). Ten benefits of testing and their applications to educational practice. In J. Mestre & B. Ross (Eds.), *Psychology of learning and motivation: Cognition in education*, (pp. 1-36). Oxford: Elsevier.

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# Elaboration

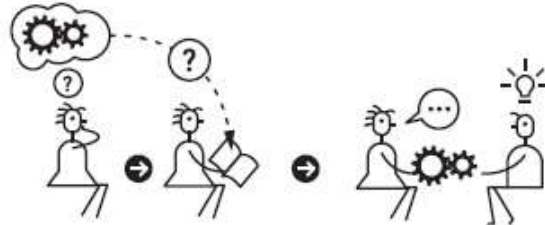
EXPLAIN AND DESCRIBE IDEAS WITH MANY DETAILS

LEARNINGSOCIETY.ORG

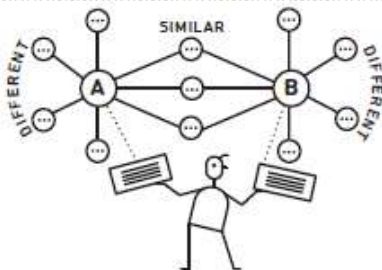


## HOW TO DO IT

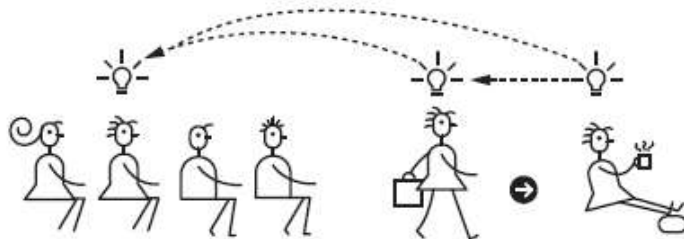
Ask yourself questions while you are studying about how things work and why, and then find the answers in your class materials and discuss them with your classmates.



As you elaborate, make connections between different ideas to explain how they work together. Take two ideas and think of ways they are similar and different.



Describe how the ideas you are studying apply to your own experiences or memories. As you go through your day, make connections to the ideas you are learning in class.



## HOLD ON!



Make sure the way you are explaining and describing an idea is accurate. Don't overextend the elaborations, and always check your class materials or ask your teacher.



Work your way up so that you can describe and explain without looking at your class materials.

## RESEARCH

Read more about elaboration as a study strategy

McDaniel, M. A., & Donnelly, C. M. (1996). Learning with analogy and elaborative interrogation. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 88*, 508-519.

Wong, B. Y. L. (1985). Self-questioning instructional research: A review. *Review of Educational Research, 55*, 227-268.



LEARN TO STUDY USING...

# Interleaving

SWITCH BETWEEN IDEAS WHILE YOU STUDY

LEARNINGSOCIETISTS.ORG



## HOW TO DO IT

Switch between ideas during a study session. Don't study one idea for too long.



Go back over the ideas again in different orders to strengthen your understanding.

TOPICS  
A B C



STUDY  
SESSION  
1

TOPICS  
C B A



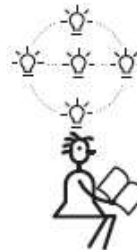
STUDY  
SESSION  
2

TOPICS  
A C B



STUDY  
SESSION  
3

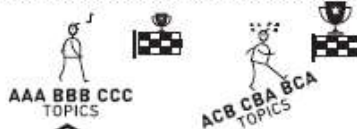
Make links between different ideas as you switch between them.



## HOLD ON!



While it's good to switch between ideas, don't switch too often, or spend too little time on any one idea; you need to make sure you understand them.



Interleaving will feel harder than studying the same thing for a long time. But don't worry - this is actually helpful to your learning!

## RESEARCH

Read more about interleaving as a study strategy

Rohrer, D. (2012). Interleaving helps students distinguish among similar concepts. *Educational Psychology Review*, 24, 355-367.



# LEARN TO STUDY USING... Concrete Examples

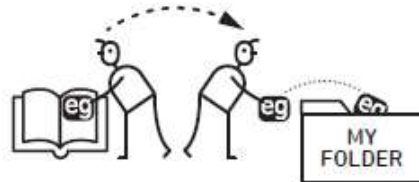
USE SPECIFIC EXAMPLES TO UNDERSTAND ABSTRACT IDEAS

LEARNINGSOCIETISTS.ORG

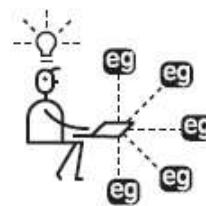


## HOW TO DO IT

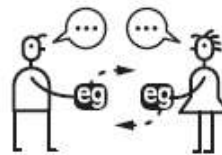
Collect examples your teacher has used, and look in your class materials for as many examples as you can find.



Make the link between the idea you are studying and each example, so that you understand how the example applies to the idea.



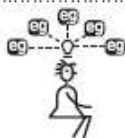
Share examples with friends, and explain them to each other for added benefits.



## HOLD ON!



You may find examples on the internet that are not used appropriately. Make sure your examples are correct - check with your teacher.



Ultimately, creating your own relevant examples will be the most helpful for learning.

## RESEARCH

Read more about concrete examples as a study strategy

Rawson, K. A., Thomas, R. C., & Jacoby, L. L. (2014). The power of examples: Illustrative examples enhance conceptual learning of declarative concepts. *Educational Psychology Review*, 27, 483-504.





# LEARN TO STUDY USING...

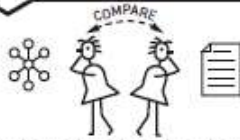
# Dual Coding

COMBINE WORDS AND VISUALS

LEARNINGSOCIETISTS.ORG



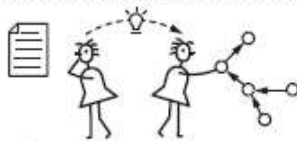
## HOW TO DO IT



Look at your class materials and find visuals. Look over the visuals and compare to the words.



Look at visuals, and explain in your own words what they mean.



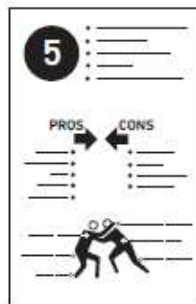
Take information that you are trying to learn, and draw visuals to go along with it.



## HOLD ON!

Try to come up with different ways to represent the information visually, for example an infographic, a timeline, a cartoon strip, or a diagram of parts that work together.

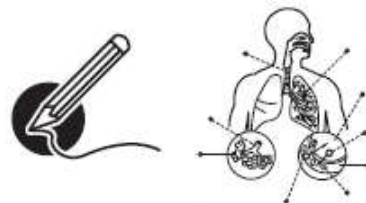
### INFOGRAPHIC



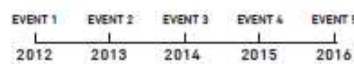
### CARTOON STRIP



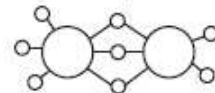
### DIAGRAM



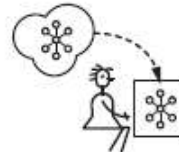
### TIMELINE



### GRAPHIC ORGANIZER



Work your way up to drawing what you know from memory.



## RESEARCH

Read more about dual coding as a study strategy

Mayer, R. E., & Anderson, R. B. (1992). The instructive animation: Helping students build connections between words and pictures in multimedia learning. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 4*, 444-452.



## The Science of Learning

### How to do Retrieval Practice

1. Study the material you are trying to learn first. Take about 20 minutes the first time BUT this will get less and less each time as you get to know the material.

You can study the material by;

- Reading it again, over and over
- Look/cover/write/check
- Creating flashcards that you test yourself on

2. Pick up and use a **black pen**.

Put away all the answers and test yourself writing everything you remember in the blank spaces provided. Do not cheat!

3. Now pick up and use a **green pen**.

Check your answers:-

- Tick all of your correct answers
- Amend any incorrect answers (even if they are slightly wrong)
- Fill in any blank spaces with the correct answer copying the answer word for word
- Check all spellings are correct

4. Repeat the process as many times as you need to, pay special attention to your previous green pen answers (as these are the bits you need to learn!)

5. *Tip:- Lay blank pieces of paper over the answers in order to re-use the quiz again and again*

*Tip: - Even if you think you know it test yourself a week or so later to check you do.*

*Tip: - Do not leave it until the last minute – do some every week in the summer holidays (this is called Spaced Practice)*

*Tip: - Once you think you know it test yourself on everything AGAIN*

Retrieval practice feels hard but it is a really effective way to learn and commit knowledge to long term memory!

