‘MAXIMISING YOUR RESULTS’

YEAR 12

Moving towards achieving your personal best in a stress-free way for your last year of school

Name: ____________________________________

(You will need a PEN!)

Note: We will not complete this entire booklet during the session. Some of it is set up for you to work through at home or your teacher may ask you to bring the booklet back to school to complete the remainder at another time.
HELP YOUR BRAIN

Study is all about getting information you read or see or hear to move out of the short term memory, which will not retain the information for long periods of time, into the long term memory which has an amazing capacity to recall information stored.

| * We learn best when we understand the material we are studying and even better when we can find ways to enjoy it. | REPETITION |
| * You learn best when you create the right environment, remove distractions and create study triggers such as clearing the desk, or placing a stuffed toy in front of you so your body recognises it is time to go into study mode. | * Water helps neural activity in the brain and gives energy; memory is affected by dehydration so keep fluids up. |
| * Belief in your ability to learn creates positive learning states. | * Memory is aided by working in small specific sections of content and completing tasks in their entirety. |
| | * Brain requires 25% of our oxygen intake. Exercise ensures a good consistent supply to the brain. It also relieves stress and improves circulation leading to better mental performance. |

| ENERGY |
| * We remember best in units of 7 or whatever words can be said in 7 seconds. |
| * If listening to music while concentrating choose music which has a recognisable melody played on string instruments and a steady bass rhythm of about 60 beats per minute – classical Baroque music such as Bach or Vivaldi, classical Indian or New Age healing tapes. |

| BREAKS |
| * If you study on automatic pilot without really thinking about what you are doing you won't retain the information. You need to direct your attention consciously and purposely. |
| * Optimal state for learning is when you are not tired, not stressed, not hungry, and not on a sugar high. Eat complex carbohydrates for slow release. |

To move information into long-term memory we need to ORGANISE the material we want to learn (ie study notes) and we need to find ACTIVE ways to study it.
## APPLY MEMORY MAXIMISERS

**Do you apply the following memory maximisers?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>* You create more permanent memories by ensuring you understand the material you are studying.</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* You do your studying in an optimal state for learning: when you are not tired, not stressed, not hungry, and not on a sugar high.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* You look for ways to find some enjoyment or satisfaction out of what you are studying (emotion anchors memories deeper).</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* You make sure the next day you review (for about 10 or 15 minutes) whatever you studied yesterday.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* You create the right environment for maximum learning: remove distractions and create study triggers (such as clearing the desk, or placing a stuffed toy in front of you so your body recognises it is time to go into study mode).</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* You have firm belief in your ability to learn (this creates positive learning states).</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* You ensure you get enough sleep each night in order to consolidate what you have learnt.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* You spread out your study for your subjects over different days – rather than doing one big block of work on a subject.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* You drink lots of water. This helps neural activity in the brain and gives energy; memory is affected by dehydration (causes short term memory loss) so you keep fluids up.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* You aid your memory by working through small specific sections of content and completing tasks in their entirety.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* You exercise regularly. Your brain requires 25% of your oxygen intake. Exercise ensures a good consistent supply to the brain. It also relieves stress and improves circulation leading to better mental performance.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* You memorise information in chunks. (Memory is most effective when you study in units of 7 or whatever can be said in 7 seconds).</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* If you listen to music while concentrating, you choose music which has a recognisable melody played on string instruments and a steady bass rhythm of about 60 beats per minute – classical Baroque music such as Bach, Vivaldi, classical Indian or New Age healing tapes, not the radio or modern music.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* You take a short break approximately every half hour and let your brain absorb what you have studied (for a few minutes) before starting any new work or watching TV.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* You direct your attention consciously and purposely when studying (if you study on automatic pilot without really thinking about what you are doing, you won't retain the information).</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* You do more than just ‘read’ in order to learn something – you use active learning strategies and a variety of techniques.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GET MOVING ON YOUR STUDY NOTES NOW!

Where are you up to in your study notes? You want to make sure you have a good set of notes ready to study from for the next set of examinations.

Fill in the grid below for each subject.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Write the subjects you are studying this year across here:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. My class notes for this subject are reasonably well organised – nothing much missing and mostly sorted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. I have started making study notes for at least some of the topics in this subject.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. My study notes are really up-to-date for this subject.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y/N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The process of making notes, selecting the main ideas and what is and isn’t important for future reference, helps you put the pieces of the topic together and see how facts are linked. Organising the information into subheadings and breaking the content into digestible chunks helps your memory retain this information. You also get a clear picture of any work you still don’t understand or aren’t clear on. Making study notes involves working out what you need to know, how it is all linked together and translating it into words or format that means something to you. Most importantly – it means you are revising as you go and gives you a huge time and knowledge advantage closer to exams.

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https://bubbl.us/
**MAKE SURE THE STUDY YOU ARE DOING IS EFFECTIVE**

*How do you actually study????*

**STEP 1 - ASAP Create some STUDY NOTES for each subject:**

The first stage is making your own study notes. This forces you to work through all the topics, find the areas you don’t understand and spend time working through them. You organise the information in ways to make it easier to learn it and you reduce what you need to go through to study. Purchased study guides are great to help you structure your own study notes but don’t let them replace the process of making your own notes – it is in the creation of your study notes that massive learning leaps take place.

If you have left it a bit late, consider going to Dymocks or another bookshop this week for a Study Guide to form the basis of your study notes. Use the information your teacher has given you about each specific exam and its content to help you keep adding to and improving your study notes.

**STEP 2 – ACTIVELY REVIEW the things you need to learn:**

Once you have some decent notes (and you can’t finish them all at once, just get the basics done then keeping adding to them and improving them over this year) time to move into the next phase: LEARNING AND PRACTISE!!!! You have to learn, understand and sometimes memorise the content, then you have to practise applying what you have learnt by practising the skills of the subject. Keep alternating between learning and practising. At first you may spend more time learning than practising (eg 30-40 mins of study, 20 mins of practise) but as you start to move info to your long-term memory you’ll spend less time reviewing your notes and more time practising under exam conditions (especially doing past papers for 3 hours).

**STEP 3 - Do as many PAST PAPERS as possible:**

- Do all papers UNDER EXAM CONDITIONS (time limits and without looking at notes)
- Mark/correct your work at the end or ask your teacher to check it.
- See your teacher about things you could not work out.
- Add notes to your summaries about things you need to remember.
- After each paper, review areas you did not know properly – targeted revision.
- Improve your examination techniques.

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*Do you follow the above steps when preparing for exams? What could you do to improve the way you prepare for examinations?*
Tick which of the following study techniques you have now been using:

- Write strongly visual summaries and study notes
- 3Rs – Read, Recite, Recheck
- Write out what you remember in your own words
- Look, cover, check
- Make up rhymes or songs to help you remember
- Have a parent or friend test you
- Write out lists of questions and answer them
- Make and use flashcards or index cards
- Type what you remember without looking at notes
- Put up formulas and rules around the house
- Teach what you have learnt to someone else
- Form discussion / study groups
- Write out info over and over
- Make recordings of the info you need to learn
- Speak out loud the info you’ve read to check recall
- Make lists of key points of part of a topic
- Form pictures in your mind of the information
- Keep adding to your study notes to make things clearer
- Check if you know everything listed in syllabus/outcomes

Do you spend enough time learning the material and checking that the information is in long-term memory by seeing if you can recall it without referring to your notes? ____________

What changes do you need to make to the way you have been making notes (or not making notes!) and studying?

- Re-do class exercises from the textbook
- Do past test papers under exam conditions
- Re-do past topic tests
- Do questions and submit to teachers for marking
- Do as many different types of questions as possible
- Buy study guides or extra textbooks to try other questions
- Ask your teacher for extra worksheets for revision
- Do any chapter reviews or summary questions
- Target the areas you are weak on with extra practice
- Do as many qus as possible under STRICT exam conditions
- Correct all of your work, re-do the ones you got wrong
- Add points into your study notes based on your practice
- Do sample essay plans
- Practise writing an essay completely under the time limits
- Spend time working out what it is you do NOT know yet
- Keep a list of areas you need to revise further
- Keep a list of things you need to ask your teacher about
- Be conscientious in chasing up EVERYTHING you can’t do

Do you spend enough time practising the skills of the subject, trying lots of different types of questions, making sure you can apply the information in different situations and looking for what you don’t yet understand? ____________

What changes do you need to make to the way you have been practising the skills of the subject?
Visual learners need to **SEE** the information:
- organise notes using COLOUR, highlighting and structure
- use MIND MAPS, sketches, flowcharts and diagrams
- VISUALISE words or facts to be memorised
- make MENTAL PICTURES and associations
- PRE-READ textbook sections before class
- make FLASHCARDS: limit amount of info so mind can make mental pictures
- put up NOTES around the house as visual reminders
- translate words and ideas into SYMBOLS, pictures and diagrams
- read a section of notes then see what you can WRITE DOWN without looking

Auditory Learners need to **HEAR** the information (reading it is not enough!):
- make RECORDINGS eg. a question and answer mp3 file
- RECITE, repeat and say it out loud to aid recall, always read out loud
- EXPLAIN it to the cat (or your parents or anyone – just talk about it)
- when trying to understand something, TALK your way through the info.
- make DISCUSSION groups with friends
- never miss a CLASS, you’ll learn more in class

Kinaesthetic learners need to try and incorporate MOVEMENT:
- do something like ride an EXERCISE bike while reading
- remove all DISTRACTIONS
- PACE OR WALK while studying or reading notes
- REWRITE notes or TYPE into the computer to reinforce by sense of touch
- write notes or facts out OVER AND OVER to reinforce them
- sit near the FRONT of the classroom to help you stay focused
- take NOTES or draw diagrams of the info so you stay on track
- find ways to make it TANGIBLE & have lots of EXAMPLES in study notes
- do some EXERCISE before trying to sit down & study for a 20 min block

Note: Depending on the length of your session you may not need the boxes below:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>A</th>
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<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
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</table>

Number of 1s ____ Number of 2s ____ Number of 3s ____ You are mainly: ________________________

Study is all about getting information you read or see or hear to move out of the short term memory, which will not retain the information for long periods of time, into the long term memory which has an amazing capacity to recall information stored.

Many students spend either too long on learning and not enough on practicing (in which case they know the information but can’t apply it) or they spend too long practising but not enough time learning (in which case they can do the work provided they have their notes to refer to).
ADVANCED MEMORY TECHNIQUES

M
Take the first letter of a key word of each thing you are trying to recall and make up a ‘nonsense’ word to help prompt memory.

When you study, be conscious of which direction you move your eyes to in order to recall the subject information.

1 – sun 6 – sticks 2 – blue 7 – heaven
3 – tree 8 – gate 4 – door 9 – wine
5 – hive 10 – hen

Reason is that learning involves both focused attention and peripheral perception. The brain sweeps the landscape in the same way as the eye and picks up all kinds of sounds, smells, images and tactile sensations.

“The definition of insanity is continuing to do the same things but expecting different results”

What changes could you make to improve your study notes and improve the way you study for exams and assessments?
REVIEW: MANAGING TIME EFFECTIVELY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Your 3 biggest distractions from your schoolwork when you are at home trying to do work:</th>
<th>What have you tried so far to deal with this?</th>
<th>How well has it worked?</th>
</tr>
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Have you tried any of these ideas to deal with distractions and procrastination?

- TECHNOLOGY: Put the technology out of sight or try blocking software: *Self-Control, Cold Turkey, Stay Focused*
- REWARDS: Use small rewards to motivate you to complete sections of work.
- TIME LIMITS: Set an alarm in your mobile phone of when you will start work and end breaks.
- FRIENDS: Work with a friend and keep each other on track.
- SNACKS: Take snacks with you so you are not getting up all the time.
- TWO-FER CONCEPT: Have two pieces of work and alternate between them when you get bored.
- GLUED TO THE SEAT: Remove all distractions and don’t let yourself get up for a set period of time.
- TOP 3: Make a list of work and circle the top 3. Don’t move onto other tasks till those are complete.
- WORK TARGET: Decide how much work you want to get done before you allow yourself to stop.
- FRIEND CHECK UP: Have a friend call you at the end of the night to see how much work you did.
- AVOID THE MEASLES: Every time you think of a task but do no work on it put a red dot on the page.
- PAVLOV’S TRICK: Create rituals and routines you only do when you are studying.
- HOLIDAY STUDY:

What changes could you implement to work more effectively?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.
Most people, if they were really honest with themselves, probably know why they are not getting the results they’d like. But if you are not sure, try this checklist:

**The Basics:**

___ You are using your classtime effectively.
___ You are asking for help on things you can’t do.
___ Your papers and files are organised and filed.
___ You get all your homework done and stay up-to-date in your work.
___ You put effort into planning and preparing well for your assessments.
___ You use spare time to work on study notes and stay up-to-date.
___ You are doing at least 3 hours work per night (21 hours per week).
___ You make sure you ‘test yourself’ when memorising (not just read).
___ You do questions under exam conditions when studying.
___ You do questions from lots of different sources when studying.
___ You have balance in your life and a healthy lifestyle.

Many students are not doing all of the above and each of these makes a huge difference to the results you achieve. If you haven’t got all of the above under control, focus on fixing these first.

**What do you need to work on from the above list?**
Now if you ARE doing all of these things, what else do you need to consider????

Next stage is:

1. Get extra resources to practise from eg: extra textbooks, study guides, worksheets, papers from other schools. The more different questions you can find the more chance you have of eliminating any holes in your knowledge.

2. Review and work through marker’s reports for your subject. Make notes on things you need to remember, analyse what a Band 6 answer looks like, decide what changes you need to make to the way you answer questions and write essays.

3. Get teacher feedback on your work. Write sample essays (under exam and time conditions) and ask for feedback, work out what your areas of weakness are and then fix these.

4. Read widely in subjects that will benefit from this. Add to and develop your study notes and your ideas about the topics.

5. Check your notes against the syllabus outcomes and dot points for each subject.

6. Do as many papers as you can (under exam conditions) and make notes on things you need to learn/remember. Always study in the way you will be tested.

7. START EARLY!!! You will find time goes really quickly and it is a challenge to learn everything and have enough time to do as many review questions and past papers as you’d like. Increase the amount of work you are doing and start early.

8. START EARLY!!! (Just in case you didn’t get the importance of the last point).

What could you use in the above list to move your results to the next level?
**IMPROVE TEST-TAKING TECHNIQUES**

*Time Management*

Allocate your time before you go in by working out how much time you should spend on each section. Keep an eye on the clock so that you don’t get bogged down or spend too much time on one question.

**EXAMPLE.** Your exam is 1.5 hours or 90 minutes long. Part A is 30 marks, Part B is 50 marks and Part C is 40 marks. Total 120.

To calculate time allocated:

\[
\begin{align*}
30/120 \times 90 &= 22.5 \text{ minutes} \\
50/120 \times 90 &= 37.5 \text{ minutes} \\
40/120 \times 90 &= 30 \text{ minutes}
\end{align*}
\]

You may decide to spend 20 minutes on Part A, 35 minutes on Part B and 25 minutes on Part C so you have 10 minutes left for checking.

**SECTION MARKS / TOTAL MARKS * TOTAL TIME**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YOUR COMMON MISTAKES:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- **Strategy?** What works best for you? Doing easier questions first to get the most marks possible and building your confidence? Or from start to end?

- **Mental Blanks?** Leave the question, mark it clearly and move on, let your subconscious work on it, then come back later and try again.

- **Running out of time?** Look for where you can get the most marks in the time left.

- **Feeling Stressed?** Close your eyes for a few seconds, take a few deep breaths to increase your oxygen intake, stretch your fingers and shake them out then move to a new question. Try and do a question you feel confident about.

Try the checklist on the next page to work out what techniques you need remember for your exams.
Go through and put a tick or a cross next to each one as to whether you do this or not.

___ I have enough sleep before the examination.
___ I have a decent and healthy breakfast the morning of the examination.
___ I arrive well ahead of time.
___ I don’t stand around discussing what I did or didn’t study before going in.
___ I bring all the correct equipment.

___ I read all instructions very carefully, taking note of any choices.
___ I glance quickly through the whole paper before starting the paper.
___ I do a short memory dump if needed as soon as I am allowed to write.
___ I know beforehand how marks are allocated & the time I should allot to each part.
___ I have a plan before starting of what to do first, eg. easy ones, first to last?

___ I don’t use liquid paper, I just neatly draw a line through any mistakes.
___ I write neatly so my work flows smoothly when read by the examiner.
___ I do a plan before attempting essays.
___ If I finish early, I check and check again.
___ If I have a mental blank, I leave it and come back to it later.

___ I attempt every question, I don’t leave anything out.
___ I do not spend too long on one question, ie not get bogged down.
___ I show all working in numerical questions and set out my working neatly.
___ I keep asking myself if I am actually answering the question.
___ I remember the small details, i.e. significant figures.

___ I draw clear diagrams that are a good size.
___ I read the question carefully, am careful of the wording, and highlight key points.
___ I actually answer the question rather than tell everything I know about a question.
___ I look at the marks to help determine the depth of my response to the question.

Now go back and highlight the main techniques that you need to focus on for these examinations. Write them on a card and put them above your desk so that your subconscious will keep absorbing them.

Take the time to go through your paper when it is returned. Feel good about what you could do, review how to do the things you couldn’t do and make the experience one that you learn from.
BE FAMILIAR WITH BOARD OF STUDIES KEY TERMS FOR THE EXAMS

| Express, concisely, the relevant details |
| Arrange or include in classes/categories |
| Ascertain/determine from given facts, figures or information |
| Make clear or plain |
| Show how things are different or opposite |
| Show how things are similar or different |
| Suggest what may happen based on available information |
| Use, utilise, employ in a particular situation |
| Account for: state reasons for, report on. Give an account of: narrate a series of events/transactions |
| Identify components and the relationship between them; draw out and relate implications |
| Make a judgement about the value of |
| Make a judgment of value, quality, outcomes, results or size |
| Add a degree or level of accuracy depth, knowledge and understanding, logic, questioning, reflection and quality to (analyse/evaluation) |
| Make; build; put together items or arguments |
| Draw conclusions |
| Provide characteristics and features |
| Recognise or note/indicate as being distinct or different from; to note differences between |
| Identify issues and provide points for and/or against |
| Show by example |
| State meaning and identify essential qualities |
| Infer from what is known |
| Inquire into |
| Choose relevant and/or appropriate details |
| Make a judgement based on criteria; determine the value of |
| Relate cause and effect; make relationships between things evident; provide why &/or how |
| Recognise and name |
| Present remembered ideas, facts or experiences |
| Provide reasons in favour |
| Put forward (for example a point of view, idea, argument, suggestion) for consideration or action |
| Putting together various elements to make a whole |
| Draw meaning from |
| Plan, inquire into and draw conclusions about |
| Retell a series of events |
| Sketch in general terms; indicate the main features of |
| Support an argument or conclusion |

Synthesise, Summarise, Recount, Recommend, Recall, Propose, Predict, Outline, Justify, Investigate, Interpret, Identify, Extrapolate, Extract, Explain, Examine, Evaluate, Distinguish, Discuss, Describe, Demonstrate, Define, Deduce, Critically (analysis/evaluate), Contrast, Construct, Compare, Classify, Clarify, Calculate, Assess, Appreciate, Apply, Analyse, Account
TEST-TAKING STRATEGIES

As the exam block approaches do you:

___ Ensure your study notes are completed.
___ Spend time testing yourself on your study notes to make sure you remember the info.
___ Do lots of general revision practise.
___ Do past exam papers so you are used to the style and length of papers.
___ Make sure you are eating healthily and drinking lots of water.
___ Do some exercise to burn off energy and stress.
___ Make sure you know what equipment is allowed and that you actually have it.
___ Check your timetable so you are clear about when exams are on and starting times.
___ Plan out how you will allocate your time in the exam.

To calculate time for one section:

\[ \text{Marks for that section DIVIDED BY total marks for exam} \]
\[ \text{MULTIPLIED BY total time for exam.} \]

(ie Marks Section / Marks Total * Time)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The night before you should:</th>
<th>The morning before you should:</th>
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Before you start writing in an exam do you (esp during reading time):

___ **PUT YOUR WATCH ON YOUR DESK:** Take your watch off and prop it up on your desk in front of you. This is much more effective than having it on your wrist or having to look up at a clock on the wall.

___ **READ INSTRUCTIONS:** Read the instructions really carefully making sure you are clear about what you are expected to do. Look for any special instructions about the test or suggested timings.

___ **PREVIEW THE EXAM PAPER:** Have a quick look through the whole paper to get a feel for the paper and an overview of the information. This will also help you familiarise yourself with the sorts of questions on the paper so that there are no surprises. Your subconscious will start working on the questions!

___ **DECIDE YOUR PLAN OF ATTACK:** If there are options for questions, select your option. If you feel that one section will be easier than another, do that section first. The advantage of doing this is that you will start to feel more confident about the paper if you know that you have already definitely got some marks and you may save some of the time you allocated for that section so you can use it later in a more difficult section.
As soon as you are allowed to write do you:

_____ MEMORY DUMP: Do a quick memory dump of anything you are worried you might forget. This means as soon as you are allowed to write you quickly jot down any formulas etc. you are worried you are going to forget so they are there and ready for when you need them. But don’t spend too long doing this.

_____ WRITE DOWN YOUR TIME PLAN: As soon as you get into the examination, write the key times at the top of the page (eg Part B 9.20, Part C 9.55am) so that you have a mental reminder of your time plan for the exam.

During the exam do you:

_____ MOVE ON IF YOU GET STUCK: If you feel yourself getting bogged down, leave that question, put a mark next to it and move onto the next question. Spending too long on a question when you are not getting anywhere with it becomes unproductive. You are better to move onto other parts of the paper as:

1. Firstly, you may pick up hints to that question or trigger a memory through reading other questions in the paper.

2. Secondly, your subconscious will be processing that question and when you come back to it for a fresh look you often find you have new ideas on how to approach it.

3. Thirdly, continuing for too long on a question you are struggling with lessens your confidence and can raise your stress levels.

Become more aware of how you are spending your time in an examination and if you have been working on a question for too long – move on and come back later!

_____ NOTE THE MARKS A QUESTION IS WORTH TO DETERMINE DEPTH RESPONSE

_____ READ QUESTIONS CAREFULLY HIGHLIGHTING KEY WORDS

_____ BRAINSTORM IDEAS TO LET RIGHT HEMISPHERE CLICK IN

_____ ORGANISE IDEAS AND PLAN FOR ESSAYS

_____ KEEP ASKING YOURSELF: AM I ANSWERING THE QUESTION?

_____ USE CLEAR SETTING OUT (AND SHOW ALL WORKING)

_____ CROSS OUT MISTAKES AND MOVE ON (NO LIQUID PAPER)

_____ ENSURE WRITING IS CLEAR AND LEGIBLE

At the end of the exam:

___ Check you have completed all questions and not left anything out by mistake

___ Go back and check you have actually answered the questions

___ Check small details (eg decimal places, no. of responses).
MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS IN THE EXAM

Before you start:

___ Check if there can be more than one answer
___ Check if marks are deducted for incorrect answers
___ Plan how much time you should spend on this section
___ Work out how and where to record your answers

Tick which of these strategies YOU usually use in a multiple choice test or exam.

___ QUICKLY DO THE ONES YOU KNOW FIRST:
Do all the questions you are sure of first as quickly as possible. It is best to have as much time as possible up your sleeve to spend on the more challenging questions.

___ ELIMINATE ANSWERS YOU KNOW ARE WRONG:
Then for each question, eliminate answers you are sure are wrong. Elimination is a very effective strategy in a multiple choice examination. On the question paper, cross out the letters of the alternatives you are sure are not correct then consider those that are left.

___ GO WITH FIRST INSTINCT (IF READ QU CORRECTLY):
First instinct is usually right, but only if you read the question properly. You might hear students say, ‘every time I change an answer I end up changing from the correct answer to the wrong answer. I am best to just leave it as it is’. Your first instincts are usually strong for a reason, but it is very dependent on your reading the question correctly. There is no point going with a strong instinct if it is based on an incorrect interpretation of the question.

___ CONSIDER YOUR ‘HUNCHES’:
But if you have a strong hunch or a good reason for changing, do it. If you re-read the question and find that you’d misinterpreted it, then this is definitely grounds to change your answer. It is not your instinct that was at fault – it was just that you gave it faulty information. It is perfectly OK to change your answer provided you have a solid and sensible reason for doing so.

___ COVER ALTERNATIVES AND WORK OUT ANSWER:
Another good approach is to cover the alternatives and read the question carefully (underline key phrases). Don’t let yourself get influenced or biased by possible answers. First of all just consider the question by itself. Try and work out the answer first. It is best if you try and independently arrive at the answer yourself before even considering the alternatives. Then read through all alternatives before choosing (don’t choose too soon). Once you have a possible answer in your head, look and see if the answer is there or not and read through all the other alternatives.

Things to watch out for with multiple choice questions:

Have you ever been tricked by these:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THE ‘COMMON MISTAKE’ ALTERNATIVE</th>
<th>This is where one of the options is based on a common mistake people make so you think ‘great, my answer is there it must be right’ when in fact it is just you made a mistake they expected lots of people to make.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>THE ‘FAMILIARITY’ TRAP</td>
<td>Watch out for the trick ‘I’ve seen this before’ question. Sometimes teachers may have taken existing questions then just altered them slightly, enough so that if you don’t read the question carefully and instead rely on your memory of the answer, you could find that your answer to THIS question is actually wrong due to a subtle change in the question. The other trick is to keep the question the same, but to switch around the order of the alternatives so that while you remember the correct answer to this question was b, now the correct answer is c!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JUST FOCUSING ON A KEY WORD ONLY</td>
<td>Many students just latch onto a key phrase in the question but not read the whole question fully and then look in the answers and go for the answer that they seem to recognise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHOOSING AN ANSWER THAT IS CORRECT BUT NOT THE BEST ANSWER</td>
<td>In multiple choice there may actually be more than one answer that is correct even though they only want one answer. You have to determine which of the responses is the BEST answer for the question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOT NOTING INSTRUCTIONAL WORDS</td>
<td>Look for words like all, every, none, not, many, always, sometimes, never, least, most. These words can make all the difference. A question that says ‘which of the following is NOT...’ requires you to eliminate responses by examining each response in relation to the question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GETTING TRICKED BY ALL/NONE OF THE ABOVE QUESTIONS</td>
<td>It is best to take each alternative one by one and see if it meets the criteria of the question. There are usually one or two responses that you are certain are not correct, then you can narrow down the possibilities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WRITING QUESTIONS IN THE EXAM

STEP 1: Read question carefully.

STEP 2: Examine key words and work out what the question is asking.

ANALYSE, ASSESS, CLARIFY, COMPARE, CONTRAST, DESCRIBE, DISCUSS, EXPLAIN

| Compare to show and focus on the differences. |
| Identify and describe the main ideas expressed, the relationships between them and any implications or significances. Discover the essential features. |
| Do more than just describe: identify the issues, give the positive and negative sides or points for and against. |
| Examine in order to show how things are similar (what do they have in common) and show how they are different. |
| Determine and make a judgement about the value or significance of information. |
| Provide a detailed picture by giving an account of the characteristics and features in order to present an accurate account of the information. |
| Make the relationship between things clear, answer the 'why, how, what, where, when' questions raised, make clear any causes and effects. |
| Make clear, explain it or express so it is easier to understand. |

STEP 3: Brainstorm ideas.

STEP 4: Create a plan/outline.

- Which of these ideas can be grouped together?
- Which of these ideas are related?
- What is my main idea or argument?
- Do these ideas really answer the question?
- In which order should these ideas be presented?
- Is there a logical order or flow to my ideas?
- Do the ideas make sense in this order?

STEP 5: Write essay.

STEP 6: Review/correct essay.

- Spelling and grammar mistakes.
- Words or phrases where your writing may have become a bit illegible or difficult to read and you can rewrite that word clearly.
- Cohesion and clarity of ideas.
- Evidence that you have clearly explained how you have answered the question.

INTRO

- Introduce the topic.
- Make it clear to the marker what your argument is.
- Explain how you will be structuring your response.
- Use the language of the question picking up on the key words or phrases.
- Stick to the big picture, ie the general ideas, and not get into details.

BODY

- Stick to your plan to ensure your essay follows a logical structure.
- Try not to waffle too much. Get to the point and present your arguments clearly and succinctly.
- It is a good strategy to stick to one main point per paragraph.
- Provide evidence or details (eg quotes, references to the text, examples) about this main point in this paragraph.
- Have a clear topic sentence for each paragraph that makes it clear to the marker where you are going next with your argument.
- Make sure you link the paragraphs, ie explain how one point leads into another.
- Keep making it clear how what you are writing relates to the question.

CONCLUSION

- Summarise your argument.
- There should be no 'new' information or ideas in the conclusion.
- Explain what you have concluded or how you have answered the question.
- Use the language of the question to make it clear you have answered the question.
- Have a strong ending that responds to the question making your position crystal clear.
REVIEW YOUR LIFESTYLE

Many students don’t realise how small things can make a big difference to results! Let’s see what changes you need to make at home to help improve your marks.

### SLEEP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Extra Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What time do you usually go to bed each night?</td>
<td>It is important that you do not wake up feeling tired or you will not be able to work well that day or concentrate properly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What time do you usually get up each morning?</td>
<td>Sleep is when your brain recharges and replenishes the proteins (chemicals) you need to think effectively.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many hours sleep do you usually get each night?</td>
<td>The last stage of memory takes place while you are sleeping. This is where the brain takes the information from the day and files it into long-term memory (REM cycles).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you getting enough sleep to ensure you remember the information you are studying?</td>
<td>Reviewing your notes just before you go to sleep and as soon as you wake up helps you remember the information more effectively (alpha state).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would you benefit from gradually going to bed earlier each night?</td>
<td>What time do you go to sleep? If you are going to sleep after 11.30pm, it is too late! Earlier, like around 10 or 10.30pm would be even better! You may need to change your sleep patterns gradually. Start going to bed a bit earlier each day until you can get to sleep well before 11.30pm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>You should be getting around 8-9 hours of sleep per night.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### EXERCISE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Extra Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you play any sports on a regular basis?</td>
<td>Exercise, fresh air and sunlight also help improve brain function. You need to try and get some exercise each day – even if it is a 15 minute walk around the block.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you do any exercise regularly?</td>
<td>Your brain requires 25% of your oxygen intake. Exercise ensures a good consistent supply to the brain. It also relieves stress and improves circulation leading to better mental performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you walk for at least 10-30 minutes every day?</td>
<td>Research has shown that exercise juices the brain with more glucose, which may promote and increase the neural connections or pathways along which information flows in your brain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you spend some of your time each day outside?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### WATER

**Read through the extra notes below carefully when you have time at home:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What types of drinks do you have each day?</td>
<td>- You may know your body is 70% water but did you know your brain is 78% water? It is vital that you keep the brain hydrated as dehydration lowers your brain's ability to retain information and causes short-term memory loss.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much water would you drink each day??</td>
<td>- Have a water bottle on your desk and keep sipping as you study. Try and drink 3 of the 600mL bottles every day. Maybe add some fruit juice to your water for the natural sugars if you don't like plain water.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- More than 2 coffees per day will only increase dehydration and make it more difficult to focus and concentrate. Avoid 'energy' drinks and sugar filled soft drinks that give you a short-lasting energy boost.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Herbal teas and fruit juice in moderation are OK.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### HEALTHY FOOD

**Read through the extra notes below carefully when you have time at home:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you eat a decent breakfast each morning?</td>
<td>- Your brain needs the right fuel to keep it healthy and ensure it works properly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you eat between 3-5 regular meals?</td>
<td>- Regular meals are important to ensure a good flow of fuel to the brain. If you have fallen into the bad habit of skipping breakfast, start eating a little bit in the morning then gradually increasing the fuel you give your body first thing in the morning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you eat much takeaway food like McDonalds for your meals?</td>
<td>- Eat a balanced diet and combine proteins and carbohydrates in a meal for best results in energy levels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you eat much 'junk' food: ie sweets, sugary foods or foods that are deep fried or oily?</td>
<td>- Look for low GI foods. Increase the amount of fresh fruit and vegetables you eat and reduce sugar and fat: cakes, lollies, chocolates, donuts, sugary drinks, take-away food, McDonalds, KFC, deep-fried food.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you eat lots of fresh fruit and vegetables each day?</td>
<td>- Eat omega 3 rich fish like salmon twice a week to help your brain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Think twice about the damage from cigarettes and over-indulging in alcohol!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**In Summary:**
- START GOING TO BED A BIT EARLIER AND GET 8 HRS SLEEP
- DO A BIT MORE EXERCISE EACH DAY, MAYBE GO FOR A WALK
- DRINK MORE WATER AND LESS SUGARY OR CAFFEINE DRINKS
- TRY AND EAT MORE HEALTHY FOOD AND LESS JUNK EACH DAY

**What could you do to improve your lifestyle?**
THE IMPORTANCE OF PERSPECTIVE

Keep things in perspective. As important as the final exams seem right now, it is not the end of the world. Doing well in these exams can allow you to fast-track to the path you want to take in life. But just remember, there are always alternate paths you can take and other ways, that admittedly could take longer, but that will take you to where you want to go. One exam will not determine the outcome of your life. Do your best, and work to your potential and that is in the end the most important thing.

Making the most of the last months of school:

_____ LEARN FROM YOUR MISTAKES AND FIX THEM
_____ GET ON TOP OF ASSIGNMENTS AND BIG PIECES OF WORK
_____ GET YOUR NOTES AND STUDY MATERIAL Organisation AND COMPLETE
_____ START STUDYING AGAIN NOW, YOU CAN SEE HOW QUICKLY TIME GETS AWAY
_____ MAKE YOUR STUDY ACTIVE! DON’T JUST SIT THERE READING
_____ GET UP-TO-DATE AND STAY THERE
_____ USE EVERY AVAILABLE BIT OF TIME – LIKE STUDY PERIODS!
_____ CONCENTRATE ON PAST PAPERS UNDER EXAMINATION CONDITIONS
_____ MAKE A FIRM DECISION AS TO HOW MUCH TIME YOU WILL ALLOCATE TO SCHOOLWORK AND STICK TO IT
MY GOALS

My main goal for the end of Year 12 is that I am going to......

The reasons why I want to do this are.....

And the result of making this happen will be ........

To achieve this goal I need to do/remember the following:

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