

Study Skills Information



What sort of learner am I?

Answer the Learning Style Survey. What sort of learner are you?

Set yourself up for effective study

plenty of sleep	fresh air	brain music
a quiet space	water	brain gym exercises
no distractions - phone on flight mode, TV off	materials readily available	exercise
a timer	comfortable posture	healthy snacks

Remember, study at a time of day that suits you. Talk about your information with others - parents, friends, anyone who'll listen! Sometimes, it can help to move around as you memorise information or use flip cards.

Three ways I can help improve my preparation for a study session:

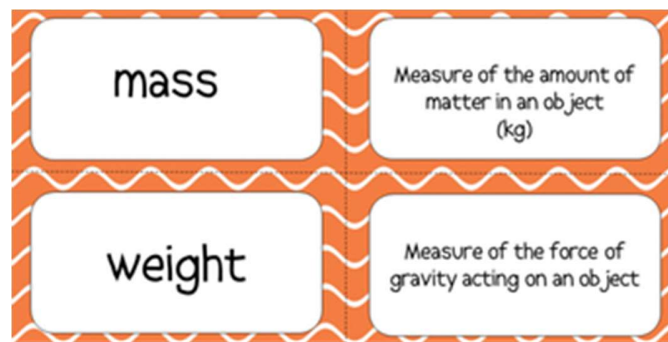
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Organising your information

The information will not get stored in your brain from just reading it – learning is active. You need to work with it and use and reuse the information for it to be available for recall.

First thing to do is go through your notes and identify key points/info:

- Highlight key information
- Chunk it into groupings (five works well) and use headings
- Create mindmaps and diagrams
- Make flash cards
- Summarise your notes



Summarising

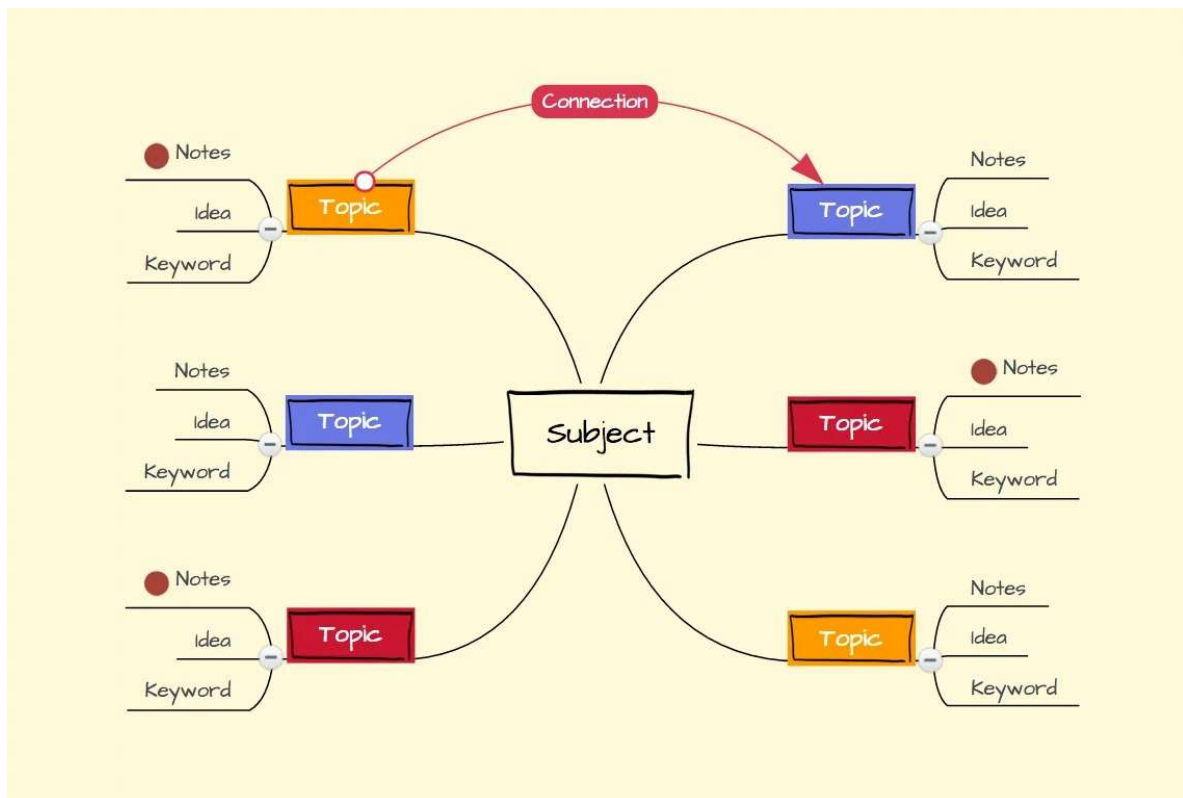
1. Consciously decide to reduce the amount of information you need to learn
2. Decide which things are most important from the page of information
3. Prioritise your list of points
4. Make your summary portable – this means you can use the notes anywhere
5. Compare with your friends
6. Make sure your summary addresses the question or includes all key information.

Mind Mapping

This is a really effective visual method of making notes. You can do it via a range of apps or freehand. Coggle.com provide easy to use, free, mindmapping software.

You learn the information in a number of ways:

1. By reading notes and selecting information to include
2. By organising and grouping the information while you are mapping
3. By making further connections
4. By using your mindmap as a plan to write practice answers
5. You can use your mindmaps again and again



Memorising:

It can be tricky to memorise information, especially terminology, quotes, and key facts. There are lots of ways to do this:

- Create mnemonics (shorty catchy phrases to remember key info)
- Use rhymes
- Repetition – lots of it
- Chunk – group things in fives
- Flash cards
- Quizlet – create your own sets and then use them to test yourself
- Picture prompts
- Colours

What is a Mnemonic?

Mnemonics can really help you to remember specific information in the correct order. Acronyms and sayings, or even song lyrics, can work in the same way.

The diagram illustrates a mnemonic for the first seven elements of the periodic table. On the left, a vertical list of words forms a sentence: "HIS LAST SON PLAYS RUGBY CRICKET & FOOTBALL". Arrows point from these words to a corresponding list of elements on the right: "HIS (HYDROGEN)", "LAST (LITHIUM)", "SON (SODIUM)", "PLAYS (POTASSIUM)", "RUGBY (RUBIDIUM)", "CRICKET (CAESIUM) &", and "FOOTBALL (FRANCIUM)". To the right of this list is a vertical strip of the periodic table showing the first seven elements: Hydrogen (1, 1.008), Lithium (3, 6.941), Sodium (11, 22.990), Potassium (19, 39.098), Rubidium (37, 85.468), Cesium (55, 132.905), and Francium (87, 223.020).

What are the mnemonics that are used in your classes already?

For example, English students at SMC use an acronym to remember the paragraph structure, which is similar to a mnemonic:

T	Topic sentence
E	Explanation
E	Example
P	Purpose of writer
E	Effect (on reader)

Mnemonics (or similar) from my other classes:

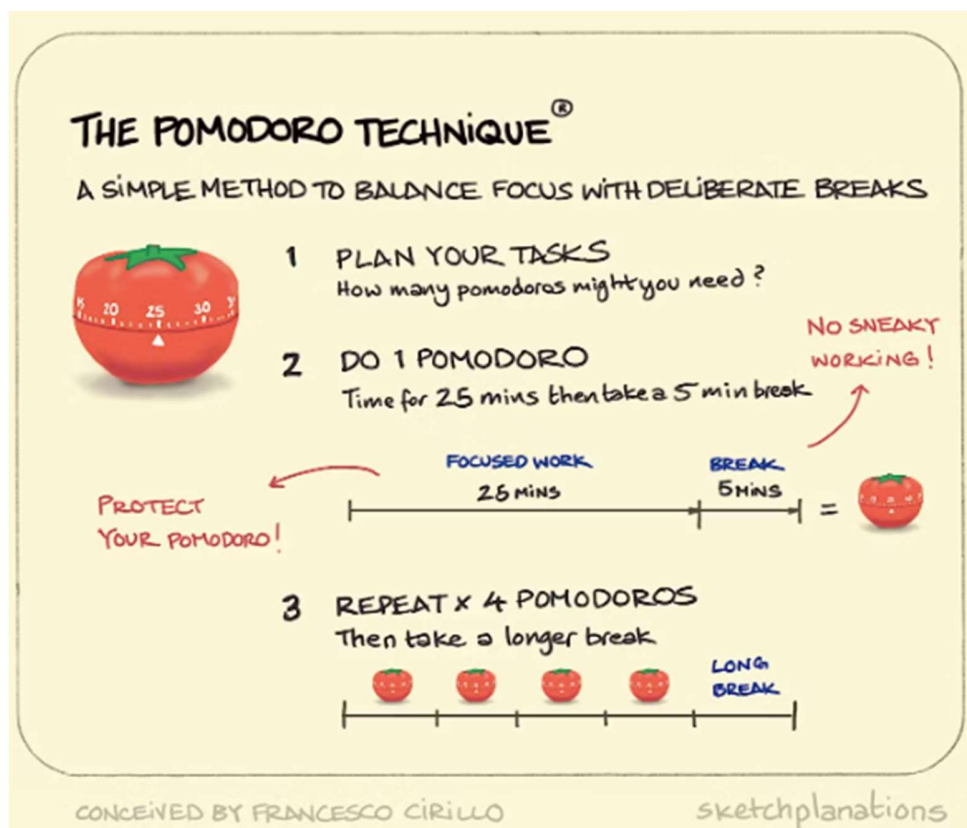
Use digital platforms for revision:

- Schoology
- Education Perfect
- Study It <https://studyit.govt.nz/>
- NZQA (for past exam papers and assessment schedules)

Let's Get Studying!

Try the Pomodoro Technique

Effective study is best broken into small blocks rather than longer ones. The Pomodoro Technique can help you to do this in a structured way. This technique is recommended by the University of Auckland.



Break your study into 25 minute blocks of time - use a kitchen timer (or your phone in flight mode), then take a five-minute ACTIVE break. Maximum of four blocks in a session. If you are having a study day, then do four then have an hour break before returning to do another set.

When you are a few weeks out from exams, do one Pomodoro session per subject. When you are getting closer, arrange your study into Pomodoro Technique blocks of four.

Make a Study Plan

A well planned study schedule should be detailed, realistic, flexible, and varied. Good time management is an important skill to learn.

- Prioritise tasks that are urgent (internals)
- Do one thing at a time. How many Pomodoros will you need to do it?
- Write these on your Study Planner
- Chunk large pieces of work into bite-sized pieces
- Use spare bits of time to look at your flash cards etc
- Include exercise on the schedule
- Make sure you are in bed with lights out at a reasonable hour.

On Exam Day

- Try to relax the night before
- Use the breathing exercises your teachers have taught you
- Get up in plenty of time
- Eat a healthy breakfast
- Check you have everything you need for the exam
- Arrive a bit early
- Listen carefully to instructions
- REad over the entire exam first then plan your time carefully
- Attempt all questions – return to difficult ones at the end if you have time left over
- Highlight key words in the questions
- Plan your answers
- Never leave before the end – check and recheck your answer!
- Stay positive!
- Remember, if you've planned your study programme well, there should be no surprises.