



ST BENET BISCOP
CATHOLIC ACADEMY

Year 13 Revision Support

This guide covers some important information:

- Ways to revise
- Planning your revision
- How long should you revise for each day?
- Managing exam stress?

Ways to Revise

Avoid passive revision: embrace active revision techniques

One of the most common but also one of the most ineffective revision techniques is reading notes. Revisiting information is good but just reading notes is a passive technique. You need to engage your brain so you can maximise how much information you retain.

Active revision is a far more efficient:

1. It makes your brain work, activating your memory and makes you more likely to store information.
2. It makes you evaluate what you think you know, and you to focus on re-learning it.
3. It is far more interesting than just reading notes!

12 active revision techniques

1. **Make effective notes** by extracting key points to help you remember. Summarise information with bullet points.

2. **Write down a summary of a topic** before you move on to the next one. If you can sum up all of the key points from memory, you can confidently say that you know it.

3. **Flashcards** are great to reduce information into a small, easy to review format. Use them to test yourself. It'll help you find out which topics within a unit/subject you need to revise more thoroughly. It might be quotes from a play or formulas for physics.

4. **Draw mind maps** to organise information. Especially if you're a visual learner. Mind maps can help you 'see' the information and the connections between key points.

5. **Practicing along with educational videos** can be more engaging than just reading. If you like to learn by watching demos/listening and watching a tutorial, take notes or pause and practice while the video is playing.

6. **Discuss your ideas** with your classmates and friends especially for opinion-based subjects such as English Literature. Hearing other people's ideas helps you form your own - and adds more layers of meaning to your understanding. Debate ideas to help you to express your opinions in the exam.

7. **Teach the topic to someone.** If you can teach it then you can be confident you've got it. But remember, any gaps will stand out, so make a note of them and you'll know what to go back to.

8. **Diagrams and tables** of information might be a good way to break information down and organise it clearly and neatly. If you're more creative then sketch out key ideas.

9. Create a presentation to review a topic. Working on a presentation lets you organise ideas within a topic and it's good to plan the order of things.

10. Test, test, test - test friends and get them to test you. A 10 question quiz is a quick way to check what you know and what you don't.

11. Practice questions are vital. Get them online, in revision guides or ask for them from teachers.

12. Doing past papers in timed conditions is brilliant for getting used to timing. It's the best way to test yourself on the full extent of knowledge needed for each subject.

Repeat, repeat, repeat

Whatever techniques you use, repetition is how you create long term memories so repeat, repeat, repeat. Test and re-test yourself. If you find areas that you need to work on. Focus on those areas and repeat.

Revise multiple subjects across the day

The longer you spend on one subject, the more likely it is that you'll get bored and stop learning. Instead, study multiple subjects each day or break a subject down into chunks/topics that can be revised at different times.

Planning your revision

Get organised

As soon as you know your assessment dates, note them down in a calendar. What subjects have you got first? How many days have you got until your first exam?

Plan to start sooner rather than later. The longer you give yourself to revise, the easier you're making it for yourself.

Create your revision timetable

A revision timetable is the best way to plan your revision and stick to it. Here's a template to help you:

My Revision Timetable

	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
8.30am-10.30am First subject and topic							
Morning activity (e.g. run, one tv episode, snack)							
11am – 1pm Second subject and topic							
Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
2pm-4pm Third subject and topic							

Reward and free time!							
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Plan one week at a time

A revision timetable doesn't work if you plan too far ahead. Revision is fluid. The more revision you do, the areas you need to focus on more change. Plan one week at a time to reflect these changes. If your plan needs to change - change it.

How many hours per day?

The amount of revision we'd advise is at least **2-3 hours per day**.

In the holidays, or at weekends, you should aim for **6 hours per day**.

At what time of day?

Know yourself and take that into account. If you're most alert in the early hours, make use of that time. If you take some time to reach peak-focus, schedule your revision sessions later in the day.

Don't regret not putting the effort in - and don't listen to friends who tell you they're not revising. Chances are, they are, and if they're not, don't follow their example.

Where to revise?

The best study zones:

- **Quiet**, so you can stay on task and avoid distraction.
- **Well-lit**, so you get plenty of daylight and stay alert.
- **Spacious**, so you've got plenty of room to organise your books and notes.

If you have a desk at home, that's a perfect solution. Make sure it's near a window and make sure you have any stationery you need. Otherwise, a kitchen table or dining table is better than on a sofa. Anywhere too comfortable makes it easy to lose focus.

Avoid distractions

When you're revising, turn your phone on silent and turn it over so you can't see the screen. Better still, put it on the other side of the room so it's out of reach. Every time you get distracted, you lose your flow. Starting back up again becomes more and more difficult. Meanwhile, more and more of your study session will be wasted, and you'll be learning less and less.

Take breaks

Short breaks improve your level of focus. When we change tasks we re-engage our brain. When we return to the same task again, we have improved levels of concentration.

The study/break technique

25 minute work sessions, followed by 5 minute breaks. After four of these cycles, take a longer break of up to half an hour. Plan out your day into timed study sessions and breaks: stick to that plan, and you'll find you are far less prone to becoming distracted.

Managing exam stress

Some stress is good, it's pressure that you need to motivate you but you need to manage it. Starting to revise early is the best way to feel confident in the in-year assessments and final exams. If you find yourself getting overwhelmed, follow these 7 simple steps:

Recognise stress symptoms

The symptoms to look out for range from loss of appetite, not sleeping well, forgetfulness, increased stomach pains and headaches.

Watch what you eat

Your diet is important in stress management. Eating a balanced diet gets you in a good mood for studying and helps recover the energy lost during the period. Avoid lots of sugar; it can make your mood go up and down. The brain loves good fat! Eat lots of omega-3 rich fish such as salmon and mackerel and dark leafy greens and avocados.

Stay active

Exercise helps clear the mind and boosts energy levels.

Get enough sleep

Get enough sleep to rest your brain and wake up ready to learn. Make an effort to finish studying early enough so you can get at least 8 hours of sleep.

Talk to someone

Find someone to talk to. Share how you are feeling with parents, form tutor, teachers or friends.

Organise your study environment

Look for a place that is free from distractions and choose it as your designated study spot.

Be your own person

Don't be tempted to compare yourself with others who may seem to know it all as this may increase your anxiety. You are your only competition, try and improve on your personal results each time.

Who can help you?

- Your teachers
- Your classmates, family and friends

These are your exams but it's a team effort. You, your teachers, your friends and family all have a part to play.

Good luck Year 13!