

**CALROSSY
ANGLICAN
SCHOOL
REVISION
GUIDANCE &
SUPPORT**

Name _____

Dear Student

I want to provide you with some information that will support your revision and give you every opportunity possible to be successful in your studies.

There are three main aims of this booklet:

1) *Where are you now and where do you want to be?*

You now have a very clear picture of where you currently are in all of your subjects. The most important aspect of this is identifying your strengths and weaknesses – and then working on your weaknesses to turn them into strengths.

2) *What learning techniques really work?*

Many people have a view on the best way to revise, but often there is no evidence to support whether or not these techniques work. I do not think that this approach is good enough – there is too much to risk from encouraging you to do revision techniques that do not really work.

To help you with this, I have looked at what the research evidence actually says does work – in terms of effective revision strategies. In 2013 there was a major research paper published by Professor John Dunlosky at the University of Kent, USA that looked at what actually works in terms of learning and revision. I have summarised these strategies for you here.

3) *Getting organised*

Once you know the revision strategies that work, you need to get organised and make sure you plan your revision time effectively. This booklet will help you with that.

I hope you find it useful.



Mr Rob Marchetto

Director of Quality Teaching and Learning

Evaluation of where I am currently and what I want to improve

Subject	What is going well?	Focus improvement areas
English		
Maths		
Science		

What Students Typically Do

“So how do students usually study—and what's wrong with it?

The typical student employs four study strategies. First, he reads the assigned chapter, trying to understand individual sentences as he goes but not necessarily ensuring he's got the overall gist. Second, as he reads, he marks what he takes to be important points with a highlighter. Third, he doesn't look at the chapter again until a day or two before the test. Fourth, in preparation for the test, he rereads the chapter, focusing on what he highlighted earlier.” Daniel Willingham Cognitive Scientist

What Learning Techniques Really work?

It's really important to be using revision techniques that have actually been shown to make a difference to learning. There are a number of common techniques that have been shown to have very little impact on learning – and so should be avoided:

Not effective list:

- Highlighting texts
- Re-reading
- Summarising texts

We often use these techniques because they are low stress. They don't really challenge us, but they make us feel good, because we are doing something. The truth is though, whilst it may keep you busy and stop you feeling guilty, it doesn't really help you learn.

There is a very simple reason for this. The way we remember things is by having to think hard about something and recall it from our memory. The more we do this, the higher the chances of us remembering something.

The following techniques will help you with this.

1. Practice Testing

This technique is straightforward – keep testing yourself (or each other) on what you have to learn. This technique has been shown to have the highest impact in terms of supporting student learning. Some ways in which you can do this easily:

Create some flashcards, with questions on one side and answers on the other – and keep testing yourself.

Work through past exam papers – many can be acquired through exam board websites.

Simply quiz each other (or yourself) on key bits of information.

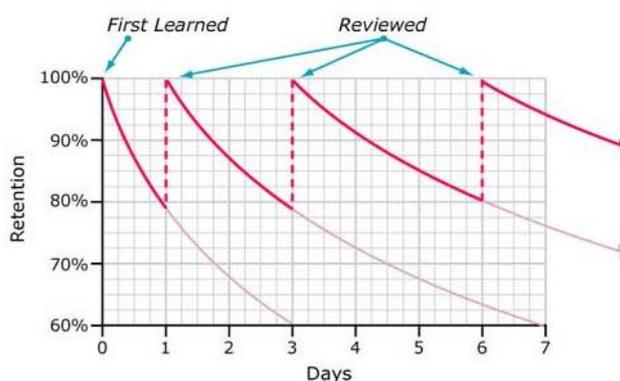
Create 'fill the gap' exercises for you and a friend to complete.

Create multiple choice quizzes for friends to complete.

2. Distributed Practice

Rather than cramming all of your revision for each subject into one block, it's better to space it out – from now, through to the exams. Why is this better? Bizarrely, because it gives you some forgetting time. This means that when you come back to it a few weeks later, you will have to think harder, which actually helps you to remember it. Furthermore, the more frequently you come back to a topic, the better you remember it. Look at the 'forgetting curve' below:

Typical Forgetting Curve for Newly Learned Information



So, use the calendar towards the back of this booklet, to space your revision for subjects out, over the coming months.

3. Elaborative Interrogation

One of the best things that you can do (either to yourself or with a friend) to support your revision is to ask why an idea or concept is true – and then answer that why question. For example;

In science, increasing the temperature can increase the rate of a chemical reaction....why?

In history, the 1929 American stock exchange collapsed. This supported Hitler's rise to power....why?

So, rather than just try to learn facts or ideas, ask yourself why they are true.

4. Self-explanation

Rather than looking at different topics from a subject in isolation, try to think about how this new information is related to what you know already. This is where mind- maps might come in useful – but the process of producing the mind map, is probably more useful than the finished product. So, think about a key central idea (the middle of the mind map) and then how new material, builds on the existing knowledge in the middle.

Alongside this, when you solve a problem e.g. in maths, explain to someone the steps you took to solve the problem. This can be applied to a whole range of subjects.

5. Using Mnemonics

Mnemonics are a **memory device** or learning technique that aids information retention in the memory. How exactly do they help us remember? They are simple; they chunk down complex, overloading or forgettable knowledge and they make it memorable, cheating the limitations of our working memories; they give us a way of self-checking that we have remembered all the content, and in the right order.

POETRY

METAPHOR

RHYTHM

RHyme

ALLITERATION

PERSONIFICATION

ASSONANCE

SIMILE

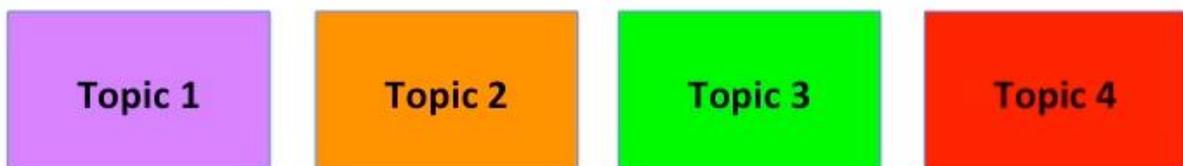
SYMBOLISM

ONOMATOPOEIA

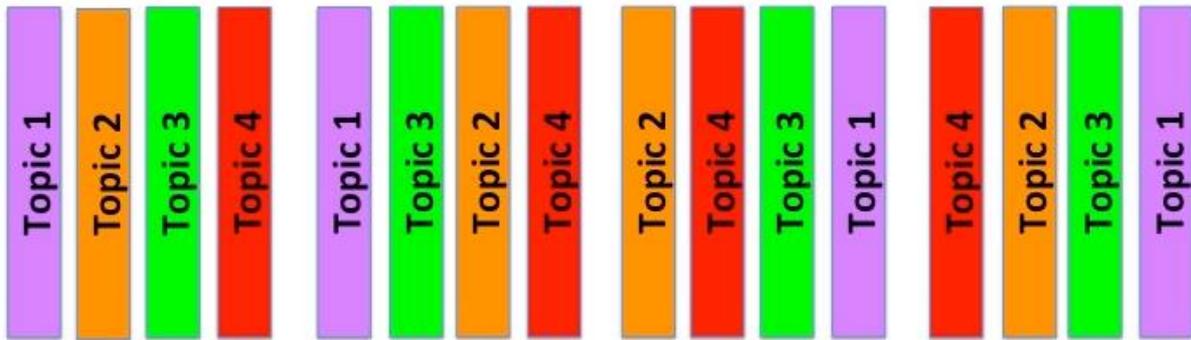


6. Interleaved Practice

When you are revising a subject, the temptation is to do it in 'blocks' of topics. Like below:



The problem with this is, is that it doesn't support the importance of repetition – which is so important to learning. So rather than revising in 'topic blocks' it's better to chunk these topics up in your revision programme and interleave them:



This means that you keep coming back to the topics. So, instead of doing a one hour block of revision on topic 1, do 15 minutes on topic 1, then 15 minutes on topic 2, then the same for topic 3 and 4.

7. Acting on Feedback

Students are much more likely to value and apply feedback if it is followed by an opportunity to revise their work and deepen their learning.

Not next time, but on the task on which they are working and getting feedback. Students should dedicate quality time at home to act on this feedback: to redraft work in order to improve on it.

One way to act on feedback is to apply DIRT (Dedicated Improvement Reflection Time). It is incredibly simple but hugely effective. After returning work students read and respond to teacher comments. It is as simple as that. Students can do this by annotating a first draft, and then completely redrafting using the teacher improvement points as a guide. Students are empowered to make improvements. The principle of DIRT can be applied through using DIRT as part of their homework cycle.

The beauty of DIRT is twofold. It ensures that feedback does what it should: improve student performance. And it redresses the effort imbalance: students work harder on their improvements. I have attached a helpful visual on DIRT below.



8. Embracing Failure:

Unless you're prepared to struggle, you won't reach your potential. "The conditions which induce the most errors during acquisition are often the very conditions that lead to the most learning." Robert Bjork (2013)

Don't cheat yourself with easiness. "It doesn't help a student to tackle a difficult task if they succeed constantly on an easy one." Carol Dweck

It takes hard work to achieve real mastery. Purposeful practice of something makes you better at it.

"The key to success in any field is, to a large extent, a matter of practicing a specific task for a total of around 10,000 hours." Gladwell (2008)

The greatest successes have been failures

- Einstein did not read until he was 7
- Walt Disney was fired for lacking imagination
- The Beatles were rejected by 2 record companies
- Beethoven's teacher described him as "hopeless"
- 12 publishers rejected the first 'Harry Potter' book
- James Dyson spent 15 years creating 5,126 versions of his vacuum cleaner that failed before he made one that worked

MISTAKES are OK they

Mean

I

Start

To

Acquire

Knowledge

Experience

Skills

Fear:

Fear has two meanings:

1. Face Everything And Run OR
2. Face Everything And Rise

The choice is yours!

Michael Jordan – probably the greatest basketball player of all time.

Talks about his failures in basketball;

‘I’ve missed more than 9000 shots in my career. I’ve lost almost 300 games. 26 times, I’ve been trusted to take the game winning shot and missed. I’ve failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed.’

Perhaps one of the reasons why people don’t work every day toward their goals is because they know failure will rear its ugly head at some stage. Don’t be afraid of that... Embrace it! Failure provides us with valuable feedback. Consider how we learn from infancy. If an infant is learning to pick up a toy, he or she may try one way and fail, but immediately try a different approach. They may try dozens of times before they successfully grasp it. The infant does not try once and then give up and become miserable! The infant is learning from the feedback that failure taught them. Once learned, it becomes habitual and no longer requires conscious thought. Further to this, once the task is able to be performed consistently, it can be improved on over time.

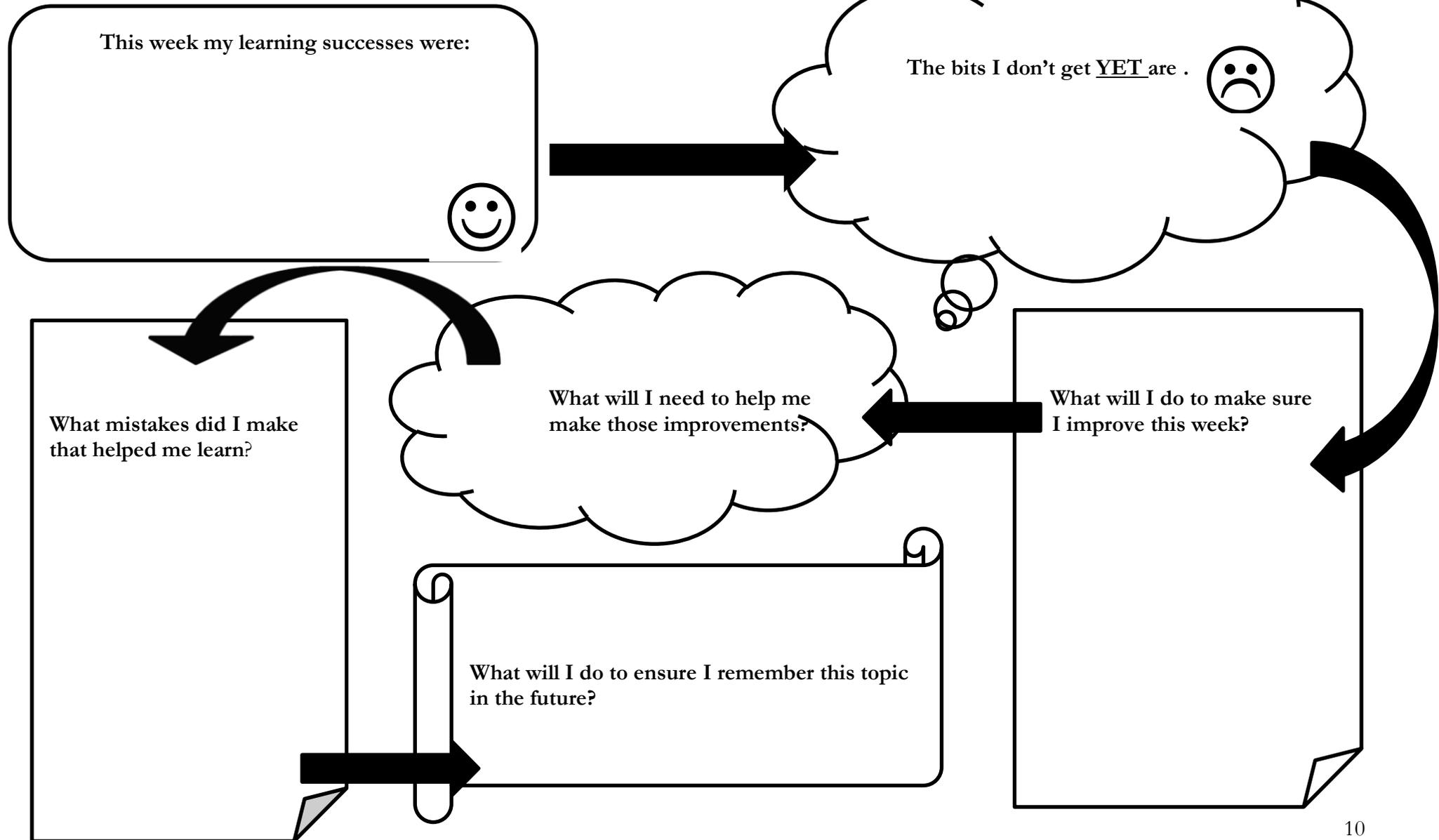
9. Homework to Extend Learning

In secondary school homework has been proven to be an essential component of academic success in the senior years.

- *“A positive relationship was found between the amount of homework completed and the academic achievement of students.”* Cooper et al 2007
- *‘Breadth of knowledge is the single factor within human control that contributes most to academic achievement and general cognitive competence.’* Hirsch 2006
- Building pupils’ knowledge is crucial, because a memory replete with facts learns better than one without. (Willingham)
- To learn effectively students need 3 exposures to a concept, in different contexts. Homework gives the opportunity for students to practice until they have gained mastery.

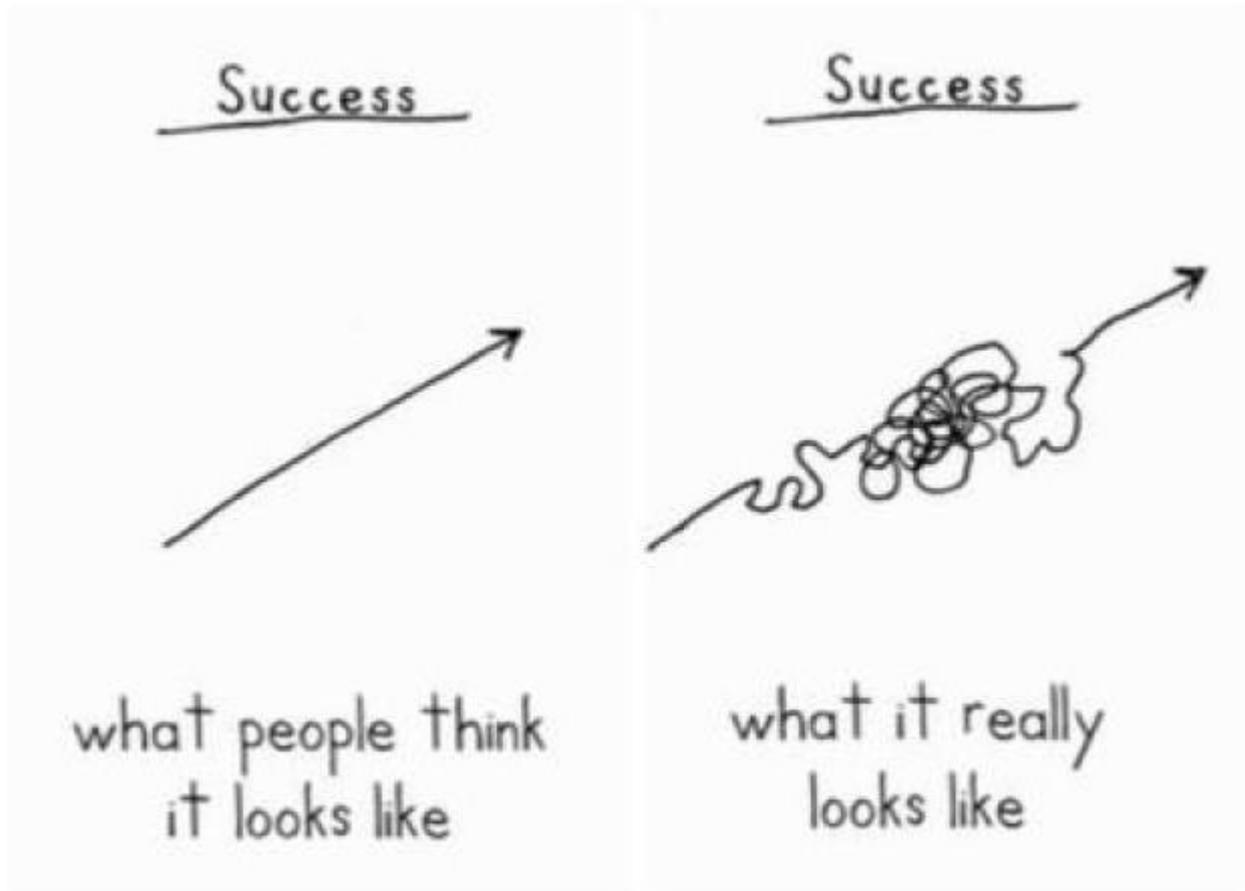
Reflect on where you are at with your learning: Use the 5 minute reflection plan!
How can you be better this week?

Week beginning: How did you get on in your learning last week?



Success:

Success is messy, as is learning.



Monitoring Reflection Sheet - First Report

Where does your report show you have been successful in your learning?

What do you think are the reasons for your successes?

Where does your report show that you need to improve in your learning?

What could you do to make those improvements?

What support will you need to help you make those improvements?

Organising your time:

How can you achieve balance? How many activities do you have? Write in everything you do then slot your hours for the week for schoolwork/homework etc.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
3-3.30					
3.30-4					
4-4.30					
4.30-5					
5-5.30					
5.30-6					
6-6.30					
6.30-7					
7-7.30					
7.30-8					
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8.30-9					
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9.30-10					
10-10.30					

	Saturday	Sunday
8-9		
9-10		
10-11		
11-12		
12-1		
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2-3		
3-4		
4-5		
5-6		
6-7		
7-8		
8-9		
9-10		
10-11		

PERSONAL BEST (PB) WORKSHEET

A PB is where you aim to match or better a previous best performance. It can be aiming to do your schoolwork or study in a way that is an improvement on last time or the way you usually do it.

My PB is a better way of doing my schoolwork or study in _____

The better way of doing things is: _____

Is this PB maintaining a previous best or improving on a previous best? YES/NO
 If NO, you need to develop a PB that does.

Do you believe you can reach this PB? YES/NO
 If NO, you need to develop a PB that you believe you can reach.

When do you plan to achieve this PB? _____

Describe the steps involved in reaching your PB	✓ when achieved
1. First, I will	
2. Next, I will	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	

I believe I reached my PB Evidence _____

I think I just missed out Because _____

I didn't get close to my PB Because _____

My next PB is _____

SAMPLE PERSONAL BEST (PB) WORKSHEET

A PB is where you aim to match or better a previous best performance. It can be aiming to do your schoolwork or study in a way that is an improvement on last time or the way you usually do it.

My PB is a better way of doing my schoolwork or study in Geography

The better way of doing things is: I aim to be more organized when doing my next assessment task and plan things out a bit better before I start it.

Is this PB maintaining a previous best or improving on a previous best?
If NO, you need to develop a PB that does.

YES/NO

Do you believe you can reach this PB?
If NO, you need to develop a PB that you believe you can reach.

YES/NO

When do you plan to achieve this PB? Next Friday 16 May (when it's due)

Describe the steps involved in reaching your PB	✓ when achieved
1. First, I will <i>understand the questions</i>	✓
2. Next, I will <i>break the questions into parts</i>	✓
3. <i>Initial search for information (on the internet and at the library)</i>	✓
4. <i>Focused and detailed reading of booklets received, books and other resources collected</i>	✓
5. <i>Detailed summary of information</i>	✓
6. <i>Organize information (put information under each heading)</i>	X
7. <i>Write first draft of report</i>	✓
8. <i>Tie up loose ends (e.g. do a bit more reading, ask teacher anything I don't know)</i>	✓
9. <i>Have peer(s) critique your first draft & then Write second draft of extended response</i>	✓
10. <i>Edit the extended response (check spelling, grammar, formatting)</i>	X
11. <i>Write final draft and hand it in</i>	✓

I believe I reached my PB Evidence I did most of the steps, more than I've done before

I think I just missed out Because _____

I didn't get close to my PB Because _____

My next PB is _____

Assignment Planner

1. Read carefully through the criteria for the assignment. Do you understand what you need to do or do you need to go and ask some more questions?
2. Think about what steps you will need to take to complete the task.
3. Determine how long each of the steps will take.
4. Decide when you will do each step in order to complete the assignment by the due date and tick when you have completed each step. Keep the planner prominently displayed on your desk so you can keep track of where you are in the process.

Assignment steps to complete:	How long will it take:	When are you going to do it:	Tick when completed:
Steps related to preliminary planning and working out what to do:			
Steps related to research and gathering information:			
Steps related to organising the material you collect:			
Steps related to writing drafts of the assignment:			
Steps related to completing the assignment and working on final presentation elements:			

Student Goal Setting and Learning Habits

"The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step"

Lao Tzu

Why Set Learning Goals?

Personal Learning Goals are targets that you want to achieve in your learning and learning habits provide the foundation for academic success. Research tells us that goal setting allows you to choose what is important to your learning and to monitor this yourself. Goal setting and reflection on Learning Habits give you a sense of independence and ownership. A growth mindset sees ability and intelligence as flexible and not fixed, and as such we can use goals, planning and reflection as tools to help us become more successful learners.

Students who set and reflect on their own goals often:

- choose challenging goals
- focus on improvement
- devise strategies for achieving these goals
- persevere in achieving their goals

Smarter Goals

All goals should be **SMARTER** goals. You will need to ensure that your goals are:

Specific	Your goals should be exact and defined
Measurable	You should know how you have achieved your goals
Ambitious	Your goals should be challenging
Realistic	Your goals should be possible and be able to be accomplished
Timely	Your goals needs a start date and an end date
Evaluated	You need to evaluate your goals to measure your progress along the way, and possibly rethink how you can now go about achieving your goals
Re-evaluated	You will return to your goals over time and continue to consider your growth. You might need to rethink or adjust your goal, or the strategies you have in place to achieve it

The Process

The process of goal setting and reflection should look like this:



Step 1: Defining Your Goals

You will need to create your goals at the start of each semester.

Personal Learning Goals can be related to:

- **Academic skills:** for example paragraph writing, or answering short answer questions
- **Academic behaviours:** for example, reading each night for 15 minutes or completing all Science homework on time.
- **Career Aspirations:** for example, correlating your academic needs with your future career aspirations to help create incentive to strive to do your best at school.

Step 1 of the process will look something like this:

Class	Goal	Strategy	Reflection
English	This semester I will develop more fluent and analytical PÉTAL paragraphs		

You will set your goals and strategies at the start of each semester

Step 2: Determining Strategies

It is important that your strategies are specific to the goal at hand. The more detail you include, the better.

Step 2 of the process will look something like this:

Class	Goal	Strategy	Reflection
English	This semester I will develop more fluent and analytical PETAL paragraphs	I will complete one PETAL paragraph per week and give this to my teacher for feedback	

Step 3: Reflecting on your Goals

At the end of each semester, you will return to your goals and reflect on:

- What you have achieved?
- How you achieved your goal?
- What your learning strengths were?
- How you can improve for next time?

You will reflect on your goals at the end of each semester

Step 3 of the process will look something like this:

Class	Goal	Strategy	Reflection
English	This semester I will develop more fluent and analytical PETAL paragraphs	I will complete one PETAL paragraph per week and give this to my teacher for feedback	This worked really well at the start of the term but became harder as the term went on. Next semester I will make sure that I work on my PETAL paragraphs each Thursday night from 4-5pm and will hand these in on Fridays in class.
English	This semester I will develop more fluent and analytical PETAL paragraphs	I will complete one PETAL paragraph per week and give this to my teacher for feedback	This worked really well at the start of the term but became harder as the term went on. Next semester I will make sure that I work on my PETAL paragraphs each Thursday night from 4-5pm and will hand these in on Fridays in class.

Step 4: Reflecting On Learning Habits

Learning Habits are an important part of how we approach our learning and how we plan for future learning.

- **Challenge:** I took on learning challenges
- **Engagement:** I was engaged with my learning
- **Effort:** I worked to the best of my ability and maintained a high level of effort
- **Feedback:** I sought out and acted upon feedback
- **Collaboration:** I considered others in the learning environment
- **Planning:** I planned and managed my work effectively

These reflections will assist you in talking through your goals with your teachers throughout the year, refining current goals and creating new goals for the future.

Revision Calendar

Use the calendar below to block out times for your revision each day.

Add your assessment dates in too.

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Things to be aware of:

1. Knowledge Organiser / Glossary Of Terms

Knowledge is the key to reading comprehension. The more you know about a topic, the more you will understand what you are reading.

Knowledge provides vocabulary, it allows learners to bridge logical gaps, it allows chunking, which increase room in the working memory and thereby makes it easier to tie ideas together: and it guides the interpretation of ambiguous sentences. (Daniel Willingham, 2009)

2. The Value Of Handwriting

When young students print by hand, it creates memory traces in the brain that assist with the recognition of letter shapes.

This does not happen when typing on a keyboard or tablet. (H Roessingh, "The magic of writing: Dispelling the myths of early literacy development," 2014 in review, The Reading Teacher)

3. Multi-tasking Reduces Your Attention To A Task

The decades of attention research have told us at least two things.

1. When you try to divide your attention between two tasks, one or both tasks WILL suffer.

Divided attention is costly! Don't try to study and _____ (you fill in the blank). You really must stay focused on the primary task of learning, practicing, studying. If you find yourself being distracted, remove yourself from the distracting situation.

4. Students Need To Turn Off Devices An Hour Before Sleep

Artificial light from electronic and other devices generally emit a blue light (it may not actually look blue, but that is the underlying light). Blue light, along with ultraviolet light is a type of non-visible light at a very short wavelength.

What does blue light do to the human body?

Non-visible light has a lot of energy and studies show that a lot of exposure to this type of light can do damage to eyes and also impair sleep cycles. During sleep lots of essential physical processes take place and it is also when learning from the day is consolidated in memory. So getting enough sleep is essential for students.

Blue light is naturally generated only during the day, from sunlight. When it gets dark, naturally occurring blue light ceases, signaling the body to produce melatonin, the hormone associated with sleep. Using artificial lighting and devices which emit a blue light at night confuses the body-clock (the body's natural sleep-wake cycle) by stopping the body from producing melatonin. This can result in disrupted sleep patterns including difficulty in falling asleep and staying asleep and shortened sleep duration.

So, GO BLUELESS half an hour before going to sleep.

5. Linking school learning to individual career aspirations can help provide motivation to do the best our students can do.

As human beings, we tend to operate closer to our best if we can align our activities to a specific goal. For instance, if we know we need to do well in Mathematics or English to enter a certain course at university, we know what our targeted goals are and we will be more inclined to do our best to reach our targeted goal.

Habits:

“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence therefore, therefore is not an act, but a habit.” Aristotle

“Motivation is what gets you started. Habit is what keeps you going.” Jim Ryon

“We first make our habits and then our habits make us.” John Dryden

“Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts.” Winston Churchill

How can parents help their child with their learning?**Parental Mindset: Find a balance**

Your job as a parent is to help your child achieve the optimal balance between being too relaxed and being paralysed by anxiety.

Try to listen, absorb, and contain the distress of your child through affirmation and reassurance. Make sure they know that their worth to you and others is separate from their achievements.

It also helps for parents to put things in perspective: exams are important but your child's whole life does not depend on them, although it may feel like that at the time.

Think back to your own youth and remember that when the worst happened, it usually wasn't as bad as you expected: it's what you did next that made the difference.

1. Encourage PB (Personal Best):

Andrew Martin from UNSW has taken an idea from sport and applied it successfully to parenting and children's study. The notion of PB deals with focussing on bettering a child's previous effort. A focus on the process and not the achievement of a percentage or grade is important with PBs. The lesson here for parents is that if there is an intentional focus on striving for continual improvement this is a much more positive approach than pigeon holing children into grades and chasing percentages

2. How Do We Model Dealing With Failure?

You are very powerful and sometimes unbeknown to us negative role models for our children. The way you approach your failures and past failure models the way your children can learn to deal with failure too. Hence what you say is of the utmost importance. Children need to welcome errors and failure as an opportunity to try again and learn. You can allow this to happen through discussing with your child how to evaluate and improve as ultimately *failure provides us with valuable feedback.*

3. Avoid Negative Talk And Do Not Catastrophize

Catch yourself before saying such things as “I was never any good at Maths as this may give your child an excuse not to try. So instead focus on how you worked hard to become better at Maths and focus on how this led to progress.

Practical strategies to enable you to help

1. Get them to self-test, a lot. This should be in the form of quizzing themselves where possible.
2. Get your child to tell you what they have learnt or are revising.

Then quiz them at random times. At breakfast, at the dinner table or even in the car. Ask them questions that relate to their studies and get them to think hard about the answer. Their textbooks should be a good source of quizzing information for you.

3. Learn keywords and definitions by heart.

Mnemonics are a good way to helping to store larger chunks of information. Write these on posters and stick them up around their room or the house.

4. Make sure they sleep, eat and stay hydrated. Exercise can be beneficial for the mind and body and students should not ignore this. Exercise and all the above revision can lead to tiredness and learning is hard work, so the brain and body need plenty of fuel.
5. Provide positive working conditions by removing any distractions such as screens – computers, laptops, tablets and mobile phones. It is useful to have learning environment, a dedicated space that is clear and equipped for revising so there is no procrastinating
6. For students in years 7 to 9, encouragement to seek a casual job will help inspire them to know of the value of learning and education, especially if that casual job is not in an area they wish to work in for their entire working lives. For students in years 10 to 12, the careers adviser can help with creating an individual career map which can highlight where links exist between learning in senior high school and achieving individual career goals straight after leaving school.

