The **best bet** for **effective** and **efficient** revision is

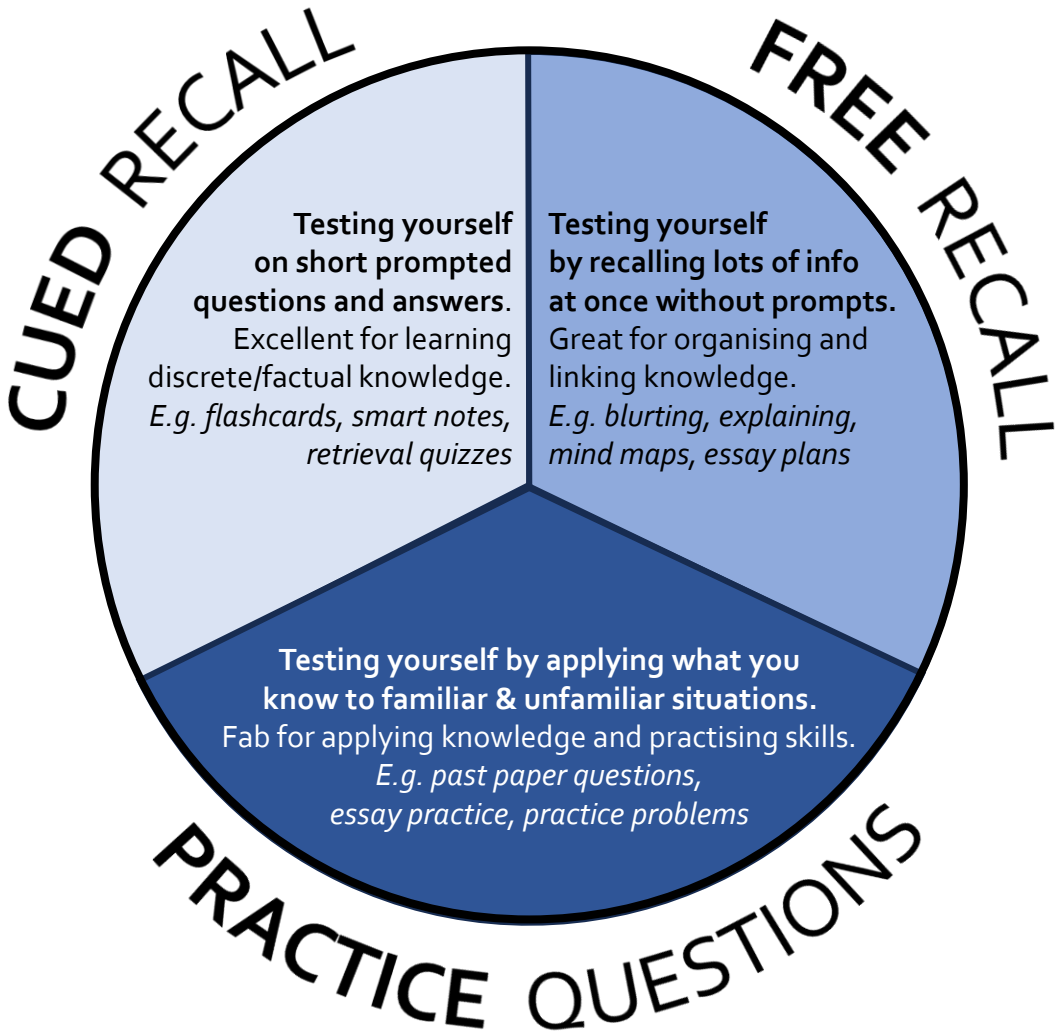
# SPACED RETRIEVAL PRACTICE

Repeating the testing over time, with increasing gaps between retesting.

Pulling knowledge out of your memory by testing yourself.

## There are three main types of retrieval practice

Each subject will require a different balance of them to be used, depending on the knowledge and skills to be learned and applied.






**Challenge is your friend** – if revision feels easy, it's probably not effective!



**Time is not an infinite resource**; other techniques can work but will take longer.

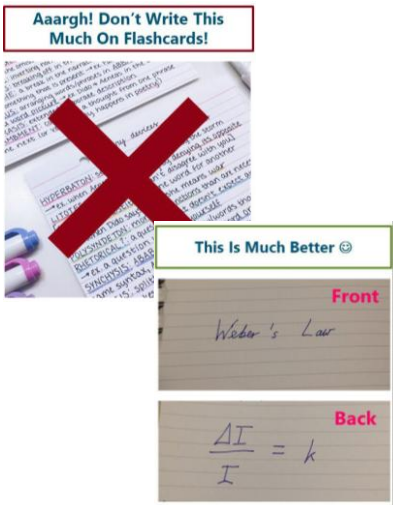
*This approach has been developed based on the work and advice of study expert, speaker and coach William Wadsworth (https://examstudyexpert.com)*

How to **effectively** and **efficiently** use

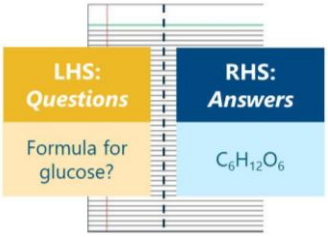
# CUED RECALL

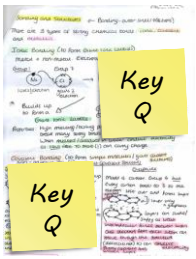
*Cued recall involves responding to **specific prompts/questions** that require quite **short**, **definite** answers, making it perfect for learning **large quantities** of **factual knowledge**. Your answer is either **accurate** (correct) **or not** (incorrect or incomplete). Our recommended '**best bet**' methods are…*

## Flashcards




- Using flashcards is more important than making them!
- Presentation isn't very important , but content really is.
- The best flash cards have the smallest amount of information on them and use a prompt rather than a question.
- It's good to test yourself in order, but flag which cards you didn't get quite right and need to test again sooner – fold the corner over or add a paperclip.
- *You can make online flashcards using apps such as Quizlet and Anki.*




## Smart Notes

- Split your page vertically, about a quarter of the way in.
- Write your notes on the right hand side, then add in questions that your notes answer on the left.
- Test yourself by covering the answers and writing them from memory. Don't forget to check and correct your answers!
- *To make notes that have already been written smarter, cover over important areas with a post-it note and write a prompt/question on there – then it's a lift the flap quiz!*

## Quizzing

- Make yourself a retrieval quiz of the key content you need to know, with the answers elsewhere.
- Test yourself by writing the answers out, or ask a family member of friend to quiz you.
- *You could even record question and answer pairs as a voice recording – leave a decent pause between the question and the answer so you can try to say the answer before you hear it!*

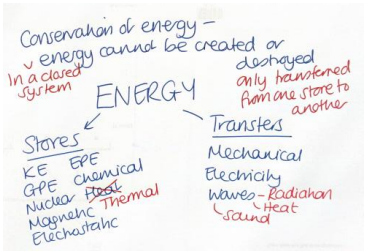
How to **effectively** and **efficiently** use

# FREE RECALL

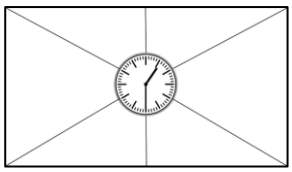
*Free recall involves answering **wide**, **open-ended** questions/prompts, and recalling a **large volume** of knowledge all at once. It's fantastic for **linking** and **organising** knowledge.*

*Our recommended '**best bet**' methods (ranging from least to most structured) are...*

## Blurting




- Write down everything you can about a topic on a blank piece of paper from memory – don't worry about presentation!
- Using your notes/textbook etc., correct anything you got wrong and add in anything you missed in a different colour pen, so it's easy to see what you knew well and what you missed later.
- *A more structed adaption of this is a revision clock – split your page into sections radially and write the title of a sub-topic at the top of each. Then, use a stopwatch to keep you on track as you blurt for each section.*



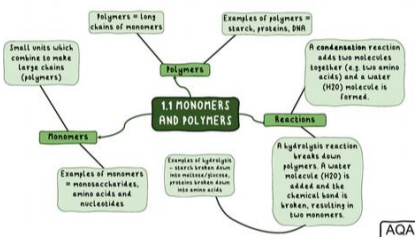
## Explain It



- Try to logically and clearly explain a whole topic from scratch to a peer, parent/carer or even just yourself (recording this on a voice note adds extra pressure here!).
- It's easy to identify areas you aren't as strong on, as you'll find them harder to explain - note these down to work on in the future.

## Mind Map Retrieval

- For the most effective use of mind maps as a free recall activity, you will need to start off with a model version.
- You can make this yourself using your notes/other resources, or you might have a ready made one.
- On blank paper, try to replicate the mind map from memory.
- Use the original version to check how well you've done – make any corrections and additions in a different colour pen.




## Unsupported Essay Planning

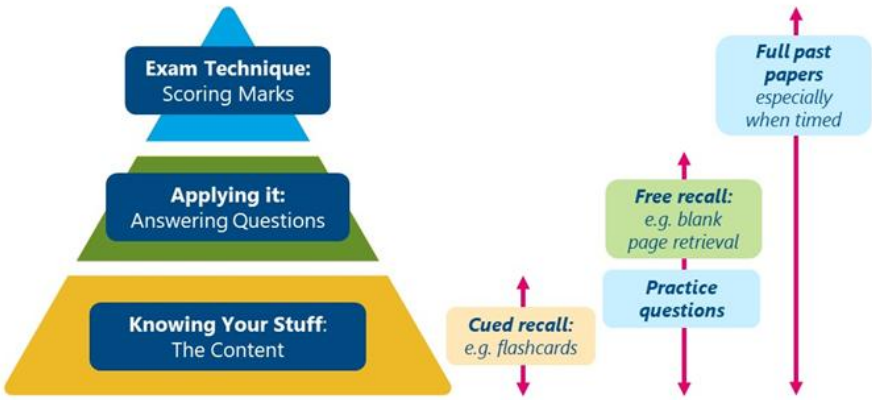



- From memory, bullet point/mind map a plan to answer an extended response question. Make sure it is in a logical order, with only relevant knowledge included.
- Then, use a textbook/other resources to check for any key points you may have missed. Add these and any other edits in a different colour pen.

How to **effectively** and **efficiently** use

# PRACTICE QUESTIONS

*Using practice questions as part of your revision allows you to both **retrieve** and then **apply** knowledge to both **familiar** and **unfamiliar** situations - it is the final 'step' of the process. Importantly, they also allow you to **practice** the **skills** that are required in a subject.*




*In most subjects, practice questions should generally be used after you have used cued and free recall to securely learn the core content – using them too early can reduce their effectiveness.*

## Where do I find practice questions?




- The most common place is from past exam papers, but you can find further examples in places such as textbooks, revision guides and revision websites.

## Should I complete whole papers or individual questions?




- This depends – if you want to work on an individual area, then completing questions topic by topic is valuable. It can show patterns in the questions asked/marks awarded.
- However, for both GCSEs and A-Levels, it is vital that you practice completing whole papers well in advance of your exams, to build up your stamina!

## How can I get the most out of using practice questions?



- Firstly, answer the questions from memory in timed conditions.
- Then, use pencil to show what you can add using your notes/extra time.
- Finally, correct your work in a coloured pen – it's good to leave this final step until the next day, as this makes you more objective when applying the mark scheme.

*Urmston Grammar would like to thank William Wadsworth (https://examstudyexpert.com) for contributing his framework, ideas and graphics to this guide and whole school approach. William's podcast & YouTube channel are excellent resources for advanced students and their parents interested in exploring the world of effective revision strategy in more detail, including interviews with leading cognitive psychologists whose research underpins the principles in this guide. William is also the author of "Outsmart Your Studies" and "Outsmart Your Exams" which provide more in-depth guides for students on effective revision technique and day-of-exam strategies respectively.*