



# REVISION STRATEGIES

Linlithgow Academy

This booklet has been designed to give you some practical ideas for revising for your N5 exams. It does not cover any content (though some will be used in examples). You may even find it helpful for your other subjects!

Revision is most effective when you are USING information. The ideas below all require you to think about content and use it in a new way. Repetition of this process will help you retain facts.

## **Practical examples**

### **1. Past Papers**

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You can use past papers in a number of ways

- ✓ Do the questions, then ask your class teacher to mark them (if they are able - if not, ask a peer or try yourself using the marking instructions provided)
- ✓ Use the marking schemes to make up perfect 'model answers'
- ✓ Take notes from marking schemes on the different bits of knowledge or historiography you could use in various topics

A link to the SQA past paper site is below -

<https://www.sqa.org.uk/pastpapers/findpastpaper.htm>

Some subjects past papers are also available through 'Altra'. Here you can customise your search by question type and link in with specific marking schemes too

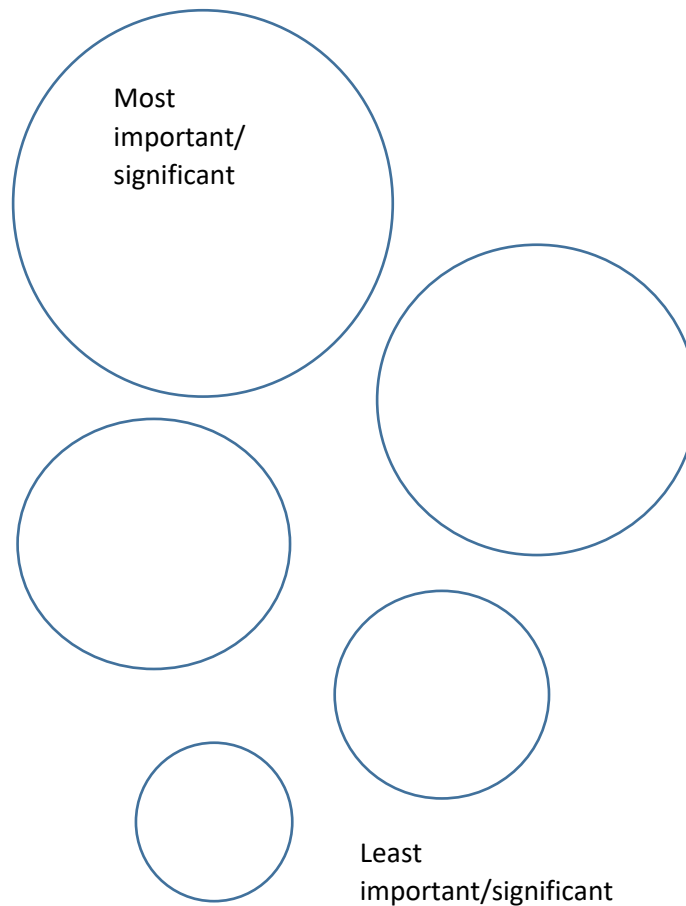
<https://curriculumexplorer.altra.space/>

Most decent bookshops will also stock past papers books too.

## **2. Circles of Significance (very helpful for thinking about evaluation)**

The idea here is to organise your factors by importance. Write your most important factor and associated notes in the biggest circle and continue until your least important factor and notes are in your smallest circle. A template is below.

This is a very helpful tool when weighing up your factors in essay planning or making judgements or issues. However do make sure you have clear reasons for your judgement, and that they back up your judgement on the factor (rather than a fact)



### 3. Gold Silver Bronze

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Useful as a quick revision tool on a **narrow** topic or sub issue

Think of the 3 most important facts to do with that issue. Write them down - your most important fact is your **GOLD** fact, then Silver then Bronze - example below



#### 4. Fact Catcher

A useful tool for when you are revising questions that require several points of recall. This is especially useful for Paper 2, and especially the 'explains', although you could use them to sum up your key points of knowledge for each essay too.

Test yourself on these, and get others to test you too! When you check your knowledge the first time, you might colour code (eg red, amber and green) how you get on, and focus harder on learning the reds etc next time around.

| How did the Scots resist England, 1297 - 1305? | Why were the Scots successful at the Battle of Stirling Bridge? | Why did the Scots lose the Battle of Falkirk? | Why was Scottish resistance a failure between 1298 - 1305? |
|--|---|---|--|
| Fact 1   |   |   |  |
| Fact 2   |   |   |  |
| Fact 3   |   |   |  |
| Fact 4   |   |   |  |
| Fact 5   |   |   |  |
| Fact 6   |   |   |  |
| Fact 7   |   |   |  |
| Fact 8   |   |   |  |

#### 5. If this is the answer what is the question?

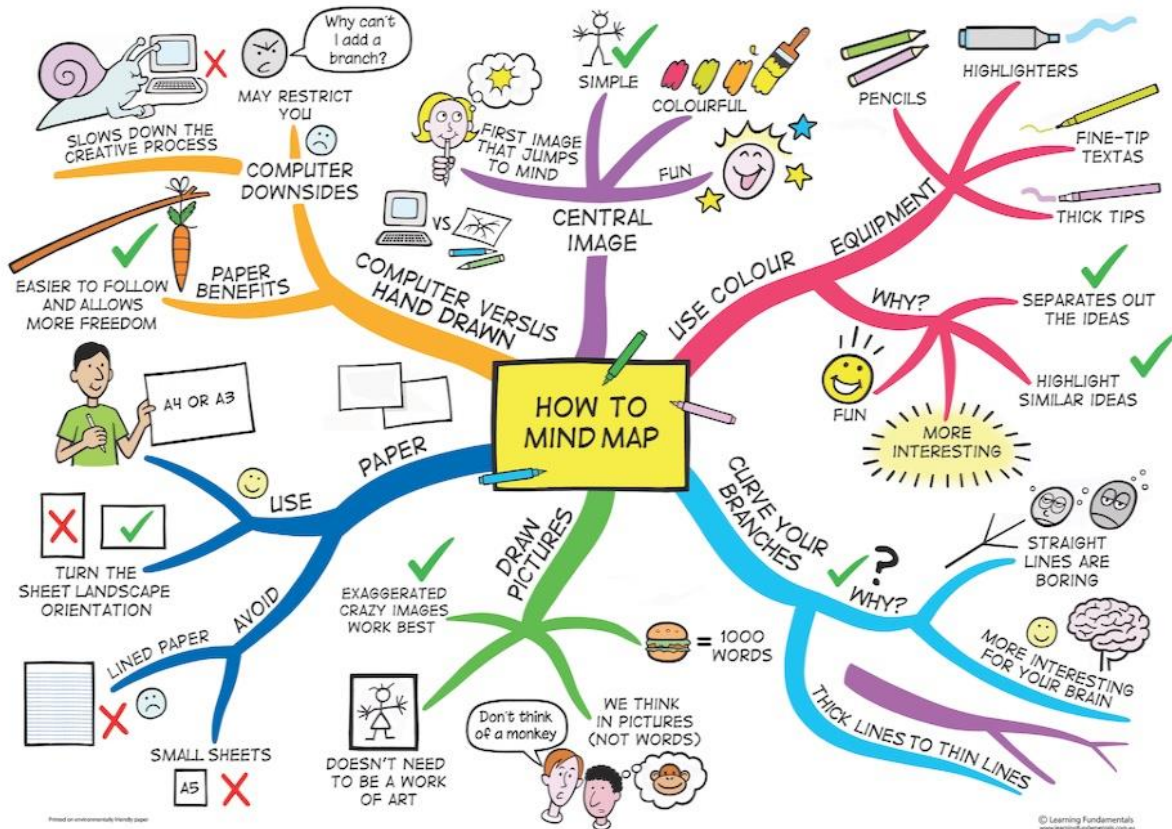
A nice activity to do with a study buddy!

Create a list of key words/ people/ facts/ phrases. Challenge a partner to make up a question that can only be answered by the word or phrase on the list. For example if the answer is 'Wigton, Dumfries and Buittle' the question could be 'What castles did Bruce seize in the aftermath of Alexander III's death?'

Again, you may find it useful to look at the course specifications here and organise your answer lists by sub topic.

## 6. The good old mind map!

- You only need to write down what's important
- You can easily show how things link up
- All the information you need is on one page
- When you have made a pattern, your brain will remember the whole shape of the topic.



## 7. Nightmare before your exam!

Useful for targeting more tricky concepts

Create an exam paper OR set of questions that you would hate to be in the exam, in order target your revision. Once you have identified the killer topics you can either write answers to the questions or make up your own marking scheme.



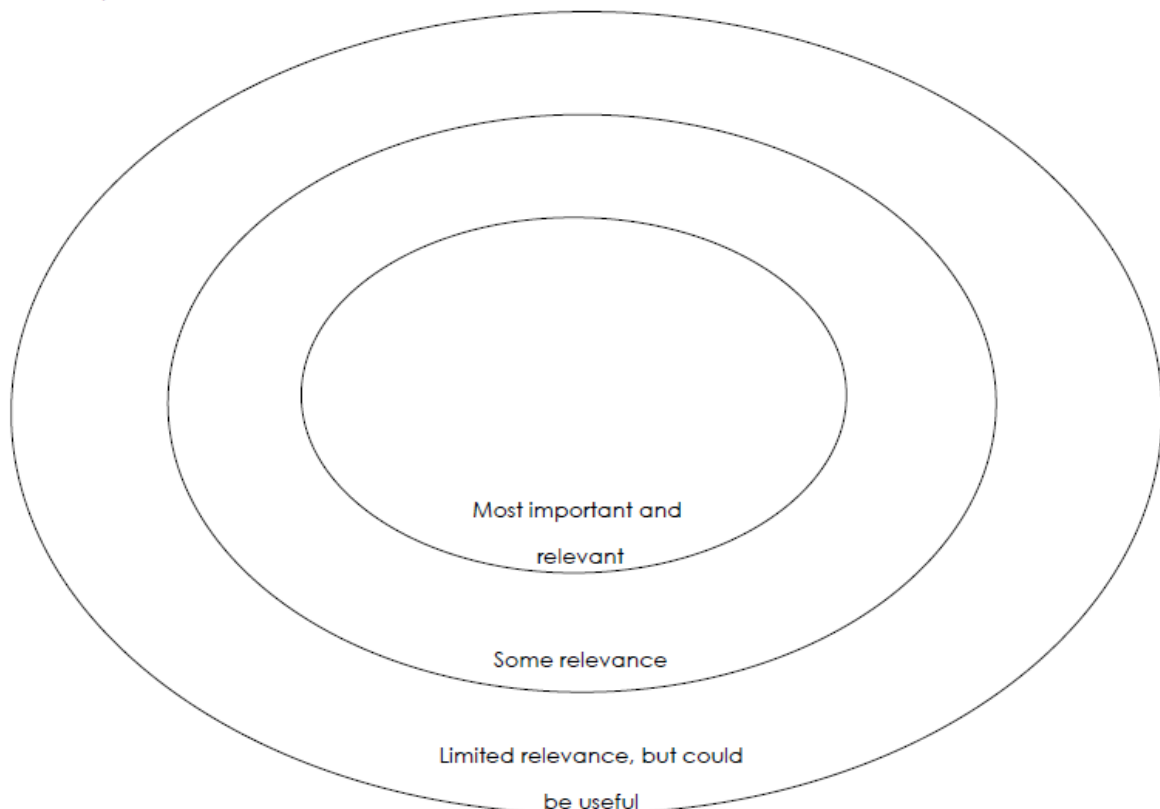
## 8. Zone of relevance

This is where you have an exam question and use notes to select the most relevant information for that specific question.

This activity can help to understand, the most important and relevant information that specifically answers the exam question. Another useful technique for essay planning. Can be helpful in organising your analytical points. May also be useful when revising explain questions.

*Example - how effective were the Liberal reforms? Revise over your notes, then transform your key facts by drawing the diagram on a big sheet of A3, and plotting the reforms in a place you think makes sense (eg most helpful reforms in the middle). You can make this even better by detailing the reforms briefly in one colour, then explaining in another why you put it there. For example, in the outside ring you might write 'Free school meals, 1906 - limited because only 1/3 got it, and there was no provision in the holidays'*

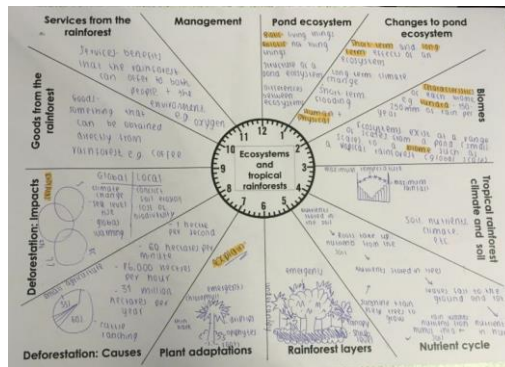
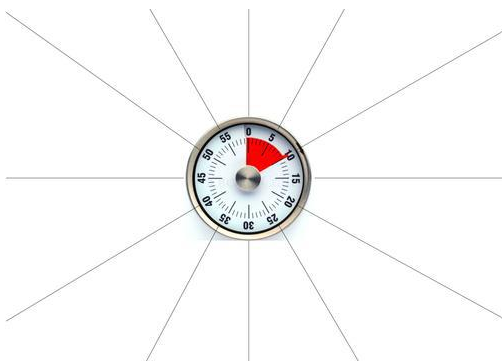
Exam question: .....



## 9. Revision clock

Really helpful for all topics where you need a lot of knowledge.

- Break down topics into 12 sub-topics (or fewer if it suits better)
- Create segments for each (see below)
- In each segment you can make or illustrate diagrams and summarise key information.
- Set a time limit for each segment set a time limit (eg 5 minutes)
- After revising a particular issue, give yourself this fixed time to record all the key, relevant information. You can do this with or without your notes - I recommend without, but then go back after the timer has gone off to see what you missed out



## 10. BUGS!

Grab an A3/4 bit of paper and write an exam question in the middle of it



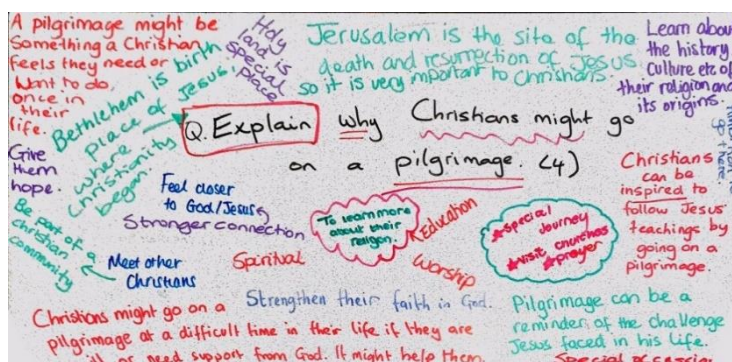
**Box** the instructions so you fully understand what they need to do; this could be explain, evaluate or describe...etc.

Then they **Underline** key ideas/ focus of the question, again ensuring full understanding of what content will be needed in their answers.

Then **Glance** over the question once more to make sure you don't rush to answer the question and possibly miss out any important information or read the question wrong, which can happen especially, under exam pressure.

**Summarise** the main content needed for that question around the paper.

Example





## 11. Flashcards (make them effective)

Using flashcards to self-test helps you learn information, and helps you to identify any weak spots you may have with the material.

These are a great tool to use with a study buddy too!

- ✓ Use your notes or your textbook to identify key concepts in the material. On one side of a flashcard, write the name of the concept. On the back of the flashcard, write the definition.
- ✓ Make a stack of instruction flashcards that invite you to interact with and elaborate on these concepts. Use a different colour flashcard or different colour pen to keep these separate from your concept flashcards. Here's a list of possible instructions to get you started, but each subject and topic will require slight tweaking of these instructions.
  - Describe a movie/television scene that depicts this concept
  - Describe this concept without using any key words written on the flashcard
  - Draw this concept
  - How would you explain this to a child/someone who has never heard of it before?
  - Mime this concept
  - Thirty seconds to give four knowledge points related to this concept
- ✓ Once you have two stacks of flashcards, you are ready to study! Shuffle both stacks, but keep them separate (colour coordination of the flashcards is helpful). Select one card from each stack and follow the instructions in regards to the concept that you selected. It is important to write or say aloud your responses to ensure that you can formulate and execute an answer.
- ✓ This works well for any topic!
- ✓ You could tweak this by putting your key knowledge for each essay on one side, and the following analysis on another
- ✓ Another tweak might be to make a set of cards for each sub issue in topics and making your focus narrower- this may be helpful for detailed concepts in Science or Maths

## 12. Let's Play a Game!

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Useful for anything and great if there are few people wanting to study the same topics.

You are actively processing the information by making the game so you are more likely to remember it. By playing several times, you are repeating the revision. It is auditory and fun. If you include pictures/symbols/colours/different fonts on the game cards it will also be visual: 3 out of 4 factors which our memories like to work with.

Make games of your learning, such as:

- ✓ Key words snap: write as many key words from the topic as you like onto cards, one word per card. Play snap, against yourself or a partner. Every time there is a link between two of the key words, shout 'snap', explain the connection, if your partner accepts it you have won the cards.
- ✓ Index card time trial: write a term on one side and the definition/key information on the other. You have to accurately identify the information on the reverse within a set time. Play against a partner; you decide on the time limit and how many cards you have to accurately describe in that time. For example, you could have 3 cards in 30 seconds to score a point. You could also do this with questions and answers, rather than terms and definitions.
- ✓ Memory game: write each stage of a sequence on a different card. Turn them over. Turn over one at random and you have to say what comes before and what comes after. You could set yourself a time limit too and play against a partner.

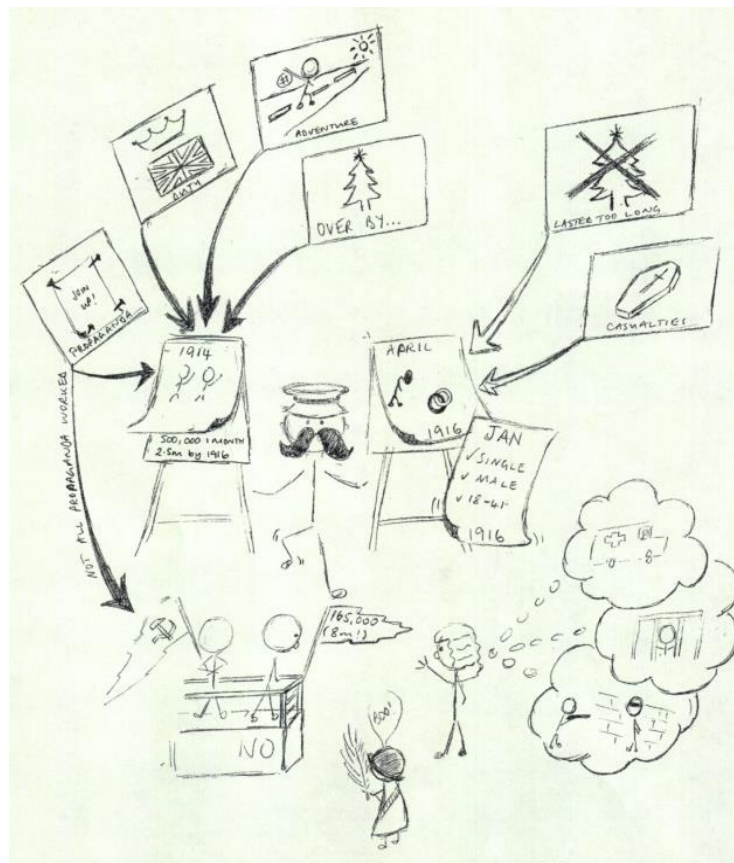
### 13. Have a Doodle

Useful for revising whole topics . This strategy is especially helpful for a topic which lends itself to storytelling and imagery.

This does take time to do - you will need to be thorough for it to be effective but once you have it done it is a great speedy way to remind yourself of key concepts and as a memory jogger.

What to do:

- ✓ Collect together all your notes on one topic
- ✓ Now create a picture which links all of this information together.
- ✓ Make sure all of the bits of your picture fit together.
- ✓ Ideally, use colour, different font shapes and sizes to increase the visually memorable elements.



## 14. Lotus Diagrams

You could use the Lotus as an essay plan by placing your topic/ essay title in the middle and using each 'bloom' as a paragraph plan or space to record subtopic facts (you would use a 4 part lotus diagram for this - see bottom image).

|      |          |      |          |              |          |      |          |      |
|------|----------|------|----------|--------------|----------|------|----------|------|
| Fact | Fact     | Fact | Fact     | Fact         | Fact     | Fact | Fact     | Fact |
| Fact | Factor 1 | Fact | Fact     | Factor 2     | Fact     | Fact | Factor 3 | Fact |
| Fact | Fact     | Fact | Fact     | Fact         | Fact     | Fact | Fact     | Fact |
| Fact | Fact     | Fact | Factor 1 | Factor 2     | Factor 3 | Fact | Fact     | Fact |
| Fact | Factor 8 | Fact | Factor 8 | Key Question | Factor 4 | Fact | Factor 4 | Fact |
| Fact | Fact     | Fact | Factor 7 | Factor 6     | Factor 5 | Fact | Fact     | Fact |
| Fact | Fact     | Fact | Fact     | Fact         | Fact     | Fact | Fact     | Fact |
| Fact | Factor 7 | Fact | Fact     | Factor 6     | Fact     | Fact | Factor 5 | Fact |
| Fact | Fact     | Fact | Fact     | Fact         | Fact     | Fact | Fact     | Fact |

## 15. Quizzing

You can make and use online quizzes which you can use in class or can use to revise at home/with peers.

[www.kahoot.com](http://www.kahoot.com)

[www.quizziz.com](http://www.quizziz.com)

[www.quizlet.com](http://www.quizlet.com)

[www.blooket.com](http://www.blooket.com) - this one combines quizzes with game modes such as tower defence when studying alone

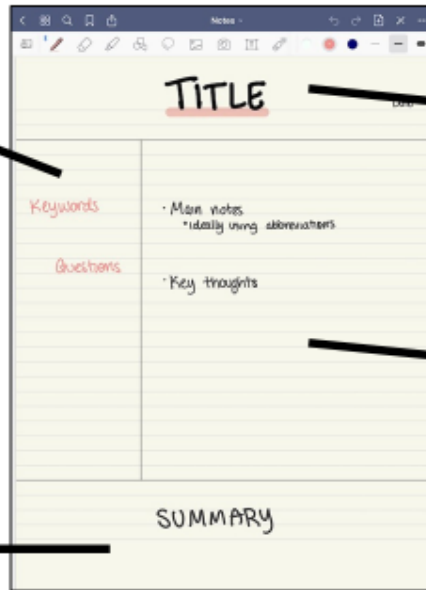
## 16. Cornell Notes

They are an efficient and easy way of organising your class notes, and might be useful for people who find mind maps confusing!

Key words and questions go here.

You could put a question that you might be asked in the exam.

This part comes later (24 hours) – hide the top part, can you summarise it?



The title of this part of the unit (e.g. Areas of low population density)

Your main notes: Bullet point, shorten, key words, diagrams and pictures