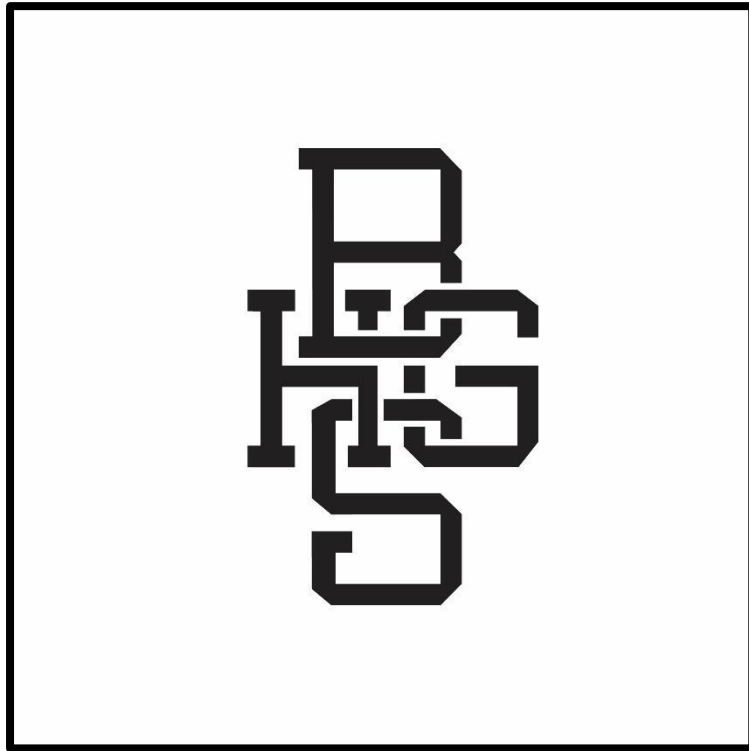


Information about the Year 10 Summer Exams



**Bishop's
Hatfield**

The purpose of this pack is to give you all the information you need to be successful in your exams.

The exams are really important because:

- They give you practice at the discipline of taking exams and concentrating for the required lengths of time.
- They show you what to expect next year.
- They give you a clear indication of how you are doing in your subjects at this point of your GCSE's.

It is extremely important that you prepare for your exams by revising carefully, you need to aim to get the best grades you are capable of.

We hope you have all the information that you feel you need to manage your own revision and prepare for your exams. Talk to your subject teachers if you need any more help or guidance.

Don't let things get on top of you, speak to your Form Tutor or Heads of Year. Between us we will try to help you achieve your best!

We wish you all the very best of luck!

GOOD and BAD Revision

What is revision? It means literally 're-looking' at information you have learnt previously. The aim is that you know the information you will be tested on and can remember it for the exam. Knowing something depends on understanding it.

The aim of revision. The aim is to reduce the amount of information relating to a subject to a series of key-points; any point, phrase or work prompts your brain to retrieve the information stored in it. At the end of your revision for each topic or sub-topic, aim to end up with a card or A4 sheet with the KEY points for that section.

The structure of revision sessions. Good revision techniques always include:

- An aim for the session. e.g. 'By the end of this two hour revision session I will understand and be able to answer questions on photosynthesis'.
- Thinking about what you know already and identifying the bits you need to spend more time on (usually by doing some sort of self-testing – many revision aids include opportunities for self-testing).
- Breaking down each topic into 'do-able' chunks.
Revise each section – not just reading the information but doing something active with it (see below).
- Producing notes (shorter each time you revise a particular area) noting key points, phrases or words.
- Testing yourself to see what you have learnt.
- Ticking off the subject on your 'overall list' so that you can see regular progress.
- Revisiting your notes briefly after one day, one week and one month, as well as just before the exam – **THIS REALLY WORKS!**

The key to effective revision. Useful revision involves **DOING SOMETHING** with the information you are trying to learn and remember. This is **ESSENTIAL** to allow your brain to learn, make connections and remember. Different people find different activities useful, and you need to find out how you revise best. Some ideas:

- Drawing 'spider maps' on large pieces of paper – to show how different parts of a subject hang together.
- Use pictures and big flip-chart sheets and colour to make posters with key points and display these on the walls or where you will see them regularly.
- Put revision aids up around the house – especially for any 'rote learning' – chemical or mathematical formulae, French verbs – read them when sitting on the loo, brushing your teeth or eating your breakfast.
- Record yourself making 10 key points about a particular topic, then play it back when you are travelling, running etc.
- Highlight key areas of notes or books (if yours), picking out the key points or summaries.
- Listen to tapes of e.g. books and plays and discuss them with another person.

- Watch revision DVDs but don't just sit back passively – pause them and make notes of key or difficult areas, test yourself or get someone to watch with you and test each other.
- Read a page and shut the book – what can you remember?
- Tell someone about what you have learned – explain how the heart works over a meal (or perhaps stick to something less gory).
- Get people around you to test you on 'rote knowledge' – have a family quiz.

Memory techniques. Find out what helps you to remember stuff. Some ideas are;

Acronyms (using the first letter of each word to make a word to prompt your memory) e.g. you may find it hard to remember this sentence 'Wholly Inadequate Needless Damned Outrageous Waste of Space'. However, turn it into an acronym and it becomes much easier: **WINDOWS**.

Picture stories (thinking of a strong visual image to associate with each word and linking them together in an unlikely and silly story) e.g. you may find it hard to remember the facts in this sentence, simply by reading it through.

'The great plague struck London in 1665, followed by the fire of London in 1666, starting in the shop of the baker to King Charles II in Pudding Lane'.

Try this out: get a picture (for example) of a large rat (the plague) running around before being burnt (plague year before fire) in a bread oven (bakers shop) with the flames curling up around it like the curls of the numbers 666 (1666), and then being put into a pudding eaten by two King Charles spaniels. Go through the picture sequence a couple of times, then see if you can remember the 7 facts in the sentence. Ask someone to test you, and see if it works for them. It's magic!

Mnemonics are also useful – make up a silly sentence to help you remember the order of something, e.g. Never Eat Shredded Wheat (North, East, South, West).

Review. Take time occasionally to ask yourself how well your revision techniques are working for you. How much have you covered? Have you stuck to your timetable? Are you ending up with notes you can use for last minute revision? Congratulate yourself for all the subjects you have covered. Change your timetable plan if necessary.

Later on. When you have revised and revisited each topic, have a go at some old exam questions. Make sure you set the appropriate time limit, and try to work under exam conditions. Don't do this too early (although it's worth looking at them early on to get an idea of the sort of question you will be answering – essays, multiple choice etc). Do these in plenty of time so that your teacher can mark them (see 'Making a Revision Plan – Phase 3').

Quick tips for revising

- Make yourself start however much you don't want to – the hardest bit is over with then!
- Build in short breaks.
- Do frequent short exercises – stretches, neck and shoulder rolls, walking around etc.
- Drink water and get fresh air. Keep the temperature cool.
- Eat 'brain food' – avoid sugar and have lots of healthy snacks around to eat little and often.
- Take a day off and do something completely different.
- Don't leave the difficult bits to the end.
- Do something relaxing between revising and bedtime.
- STOP and take a break if you start feeling frustrated, angry, overwhelmed. Make a note of the problem to take to your next lesson, and move on to something else.
- Focus on what you have done, not all the things that you haven't – every little helps.
- Promise yourself little rewards after each session – a favourite TV programme, reading a trashy novel or going out with friends.
- At the end of each session, file away your notes and clutter so that your work-area is clear for the next session.