Study Program to Achieve Results for Kirrawee Students

‘Tomorrow’s illiterate will not be the person who has not learned to read and write, it will be the person who has not learned how to learn.’

H. GERJOY, 1991

Name: ________________________
Mentor: ________________________
Group: ________________________
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>Study Program to Activate Results for Kirrawee students</td>
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Study Program to Activate Results for Kirrawee Students

Why have this program?

A successful student is MADE not born. You can become a successful student by practising sound study habits regularly, the most fundamental being the efficient use of time. SPARKS is designed to support you through Year 11. Successful completion of the program will allow you to adjust to the changed demands of senior schooling and to experience success.

How will this program operate?

- SPARKS will be timetabled for six sessions. Each session will take a double period. The sessions will take place in Term 2 and Term 3 and the period will be rotated across all lines of the timetable.
- Students will work together in the same group of twenty students for the duration of the program.
- Each group will be supported by a teacher mentor.
- Each student will be issued with a folder containing the broad outline of the program.

What will students gain from this program?

- You will make a successful transition from junior to senior school.
- You will be a better learner able to maximise your assessment performance.
- You will have increased self confidence and greater belief in yourself as a successful learner.
Session 1

Goal Setting
Evaluation Before You Begin the Program
How good are your study methods?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Usually</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>I get satisfaction from study</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>I feel I know how to study</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>I study regardless of my interest in a subject</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>I study better when I am interested</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>I avoid distractions when I study</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>I keep my thoughts on the subject I am studying and nothing else</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>I study in a quiet place</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>I prefer to be alone when I study</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>I have definite aims to be achieved when I study</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>I break my study into periods of no more than 45 minutes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>I take a 5 minute break before the next period</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>I use a study timetable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>I start with the subject I enjoy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>I make sure that every subject gets study time</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>I try to understand the purpose of each assignment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>I use a special method to study for each subject</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>I prepare for tests and examinations by studying and revising all the term</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>I outline learning material as I study</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>I revise my notes and summarise without being told to do so</td>
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<td>20.</td>
<td>I glance through the next chapter in my text books in preparation for class lessons on it</td>
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<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>I look carefully at all pictures, tables and graphs for what they can teach me</td>
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<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>I use a dictionary as I study</td>
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<td>23.</td>
<td>I listen attentively in class</td>
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<td>24.</td>
<td>I make an effort to speak and write correct English</td>
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<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>I read over the assignments I write before handing them in</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>I take pride in handing in neat well written material</td>
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<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>I memorise so that I remember for a long period of time not just for a test</td>
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<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>I revise things I have memorised to refresh my memory</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>I work quietly and with an active mind during study</td>
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<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>I try to use my ability to the full</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL**

If you checked “usually” twenty six or more times, you have excellent study habits.
If you checked “usually” twenty or more times, you have good study habits.
If you checked “usually” under twenty times, you have poor study habits.
If you have checked “never” fewer than three times but have checked “sometimes” for the remainder of the items you are on the way to becoming an adequate student.
Goal Setting

1. **What is a goal?**
2. **Why should we have goals?**
3. **Are there poorly stated goals?**
4. **Are there obstacles to achieving goals?**

1. Goals are **targets** we set for ourselves to achieve in the future. Other words for goals include; aims or purposes.

2. Imagine playing a game of football/netball without a goal. It would make scoring and winning almost impossible.

   It is the same in all areas of effort. If we don’t know what we want to achieve, all our effort could be wasted or misdirected. Our time is too valuable not to focus on a very specific goal.

3. **Yes, some goals are poorly stated.** To be effective the best goals should be:

   (a) **Very specific** so you know when you have achieved it, for example to improve your grade in Economics from a 55% level in the mid course exam to say 65% by the final exam.

   (b) **Goals should be realistic.** It is not sensible to set a goal of 95% in the above situation. Failure to reach your goal may cause you to give up entirely.

   (c) **Set small steps** on the way to achieving your end goal. It may be sensible to set a series of short term goals which will lead to the achievement of a long term goal.

   (d) **Do not make goals to please someone else**

   Make goals which suit your interests and abilities, not goals which reflect expectations from your parents and friends. Often it is helpful to talk to parents or friends about possible goals, however the end decision must be your own. Be careful, sometimes friends and classmates can be a negative influence on your choice of goals. In the end you have to judge what is a realistic goal in terms of your ability.

   (e) **Obstacles to Achieving Goals**

   Obstacles often get in the way of successfully achieving goals.
Making Your Own Goals

- Favourite Teacher: Have you spoken to the Careers Adviser?
- Friend: "Come to TAFE with me"
- Dad: "I went to Uni so should you"
- Brother/Sister: I have found part/time work
- Grandmother: Think about your options and choose your best one
- Self: I thought I wanted to be a Vet
- Mother: Don’t worry about goals, just get on with your school work
I’m Going to be a ……………

1. What’s your long term goal? Remember, aim high.

2. What educational qualifications will you need to reach this goal?

3. What special skills would you require?

4. What personal qualities would you need to reach your goal?

5. Start your blue-print for success. What subjects will you have to do? What marks will you have to achieve to get there?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Necessary Marks</th>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. How will you go about developing the necessary skills?

7. How will you go about developing the appropriate personal qualities?
# Short-Term Study Goals

These are the things you want to achieve today, tomorrow, next week, e.g. to complete an assignment on time; to get better marks than last week for your History essay; to prepare for the next class test in a particular subject; to devise “revision quality” notes on certain topics; to read so many chapters of a set novel; to complete and fully understand so many units of Mathematics; etc.

Practise short-term goal setting now by nominating two such goals for five of your current subjects. Be specific.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Short-Term Study Goals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English (i)</td>
<td>______________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics (i)</td>
<td>____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science (i)</td>
<td>______________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Practise short-term goal setting now by nominating two such goals for five of your current subjects. Be specific.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Short-Term Study Goals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English (i)</td>
<td>______________________</td>
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<tr>
<td>(ii)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mathematics (i)</td>
<td>____________</td>
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<tr>
<td>(ii)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science (i)</td>
<td>______________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The Smart Way with Goals

Specific
The goal states exactly what we need to achieve

Wash the car

Measurable
If the goal can be measured we will know when we get there

Read Chapter 1 and 2 by Friday

Action-orientated
Tells us exactly what has to be done

I will finish the draft of my five hundred word essay by Sunday

Realistic
We must make sure it is possible

I will run my first marathon the first week of exams!!!!!!

................. realistic??

Time and energy
We should always consider how much time and energy we have

Do you have the time and energy to train for a marathon?

See if you can write a goal using all of these elements.
Short and Long Term Goals

Your task is to think carefully about your studies and begin to form some goals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Think of long term goals</th>
<th>Now divide them into short term goals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Barriers to Success

Think of a situation when your peer group has influenced you to behave in a way that you would have preferred not to. What could you have done differently?
Consider the goals which you set for yourself in the preceding pages. How will your peer group help or hinder you in achieving these goals?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Help</th>
<th>Hinder</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Why do most mature adults have less trouble with peer pressure do you think?

Good luck with your goals. We will look back on your goals at the end of the year to see how you fared!
## Weekly Schedule Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Saturday</th>
<th>Sunday</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6-7am</td>
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<td>7-8am</td>
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<td>8-9am</td>
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<tr>
<td>9-10am</td>
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<tr>
<td>10-11am</td>
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<td>11-12am</td>
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<td>12-1pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>1-2pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Friday</td>
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<td>2-3pm</td>
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<td>3-4pm</td>
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<td>4-5pm</td>
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<td>5-6pm</td>
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<td>6-7pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>7-8pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>8-9pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>9-10pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>10-11pm</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Session 2

Time Management
### How I Distribute My Time

**Task:** Calculate how you spend your time

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>M</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>W</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>Total Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sleep</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Now transfer your totals to the pie graph

**Example:**

- Sport: 15%
- Sleep: 20%
- School: 25%
- Recreation: 25%
- Study: 15%

**Yours:**

- Sport: __________________
- Sleep: __________________
- School: __________________
- Recreation: __________________
- Study: __________________

Estimate how much time you wasted: __________________

List your main time wasters:

- __________________
- __________________
- __________________
- __________________
- __________________
Constructing a Study Timetable

A study timetable is a means of organising your study efforts, so that your goals will be achieved on time.

Step 1  Consult the curriculum or syllabus for each of your subjects before creating a personal study program, which lists all areas and topics to be covered.

Step 2  Set weekly objectives for each subject, based on this study program.

Step 3  Decide how much time (on average) you need to budget for homework, e.g. 2½ hours per night.

Step 4  Decide on the duration of your homework and extra study sessions, e.g. 50 minutes followed by a 10 minute break.

Step 5  Consider your study program and decide how much of it is likely to be covered by your prescribed homework assignments each week.

Step 6  Decide how many extra study sessions will be required for each subject each week. (N.B. This will often vary from one week to the next).

Example for a Senior Student:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>No. of study sessions</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>3 x 50 minutes</td>
<td>weakest subject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>2 x 50 minutes</td>
<td>new subject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>2 x 50 minutes</td>
<td>extensive note-taking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>2 x 50 minutes</td>
<td>a lot of reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>1 x 50 minutes</td>
<td>usually get homework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>1 x 50 minutes</td>
<td>vocabulary extension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>1 x 50 minutes</td>
<td>best subject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra Study</td>
<td>12 x 50 minutes</td>
<td>10 hours per week</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example for you in forthcoming week:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>No. of study sessions</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra Study</td>
<td>x minutes</td>
<td>hours per week</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Step 7 Design your study timetable grid, with headings for the days of the week and for the time of all your “out-of-school hours” activities.

Step 8 Insert your regular leisure, sporting and social commitments into their appropriate day and time slots, e.g. music practices and lessons, tennis practice, television viewing, disco etc.

TV programs (if any) should be selected at the start of each week - the television should always be switched off immediately your pre-planned program is finished.

Step 9 2½ hours of homework (or whatever amount you decide to budget for each night) should be scheduled before any extra study sessions. You don’t want to have prescribed work “hanging over your head” as you tackle an extra study session.

Step 10 If you have scheduled more than one extra study session per day, program your weakest subject first, while you are more likely to be fresh.

Step 11 Allow for a 10 minute break between every (50 minute) homework and extra study session. Plan self-rewards for those study breaks, as added incentive to complete each 50 minutes of study - have a quick swim, do some aerobics, glance at an evening newspaper, have a cup of coffee, etc.

Step 12 Schedule a much longer break (45-60 minutes) around your family’s usual dinner time.

**Timetable Variations**

Sometimes you will get much more homework than you have budgeted for. On these occasions, you will have to defer any extra study sessions that you had planned until an unprogrammed time slot on another night or at the weekend.

The reverse of this will also apply. Naturally, if you have only one hour’s homework on a particular night, you are not obliged to ‘kill’ a couple of hours while waiting for your first scheduled study session on that evening! Instead, bring forward one or more of your extra study sessions for that week, thereby creating additional relaxation (or contingency) time at the weekend.

**N.B.** There should be unprogrammed time periods - on arrival home from school, before bed and during part of the weekend - for both relaxation and contingencies. A contingency might be an extra study session which you didn’t have time for earlier in the week or a project assignment which is taking much longer than you anticipated.
Personal Timetable

An excellent way to ensure balance between school work, part time employment and social activities is to draw up a timetable for your personal needs. Here are some suggestions to design your own plan using the blank timetable given.

1. Mark off with a line the time you arrive home from school.

2. Write in any part-time work at the appropriate time.

3. Write in any regular weekly activities, i.e. sport training. These are “givens”!

4. A starting time could be one hour every night for homework, listed in the timetable as a set time each night i.e. 8pm.

5. Over the week plan one hour of study for every course attempted. These should appear in your timetable under the subject heading name. This would ensure a balance between all subjects. When planning your subjects, limit the times when similar subjects are studied, as a variety of tasks assists interest and motivation in the longer term.

6. If any blanks appear on your timetable then you would recognise them as being possible time slots for further work, fun activities, TV etc.

7. As you master the study plan you will more than likely decide to increase the time allocated for homework and study, especially as exams come closer.

8. If for any reason you cannot complete your timetable on any night (e.g. unexpected visitors), you should pay it back at any time.

It would be a good idea to have a copy of the study timetable within your homework diary as they should be used in conjunction with each other.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
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<td>6-7am</td>
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<td>10-11pm</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Things to do

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Submission Date</th>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Submission Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project:</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Date</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam Date</td>
<td>Exam Date</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reviewing the Day’s Work

At the end of each day, take time to think about what happened during each of your lessons or lectures.

This “review” should be done before you begin your homework - perhaps even when walking home from the bus stop or the railway station.

This review of the day’s work helps you absorb what you have learnt during the day and gets you into the right frame of mind for work at home.

Ask yourself these questions......

1. Did I completely understand what was covered in Maths (or Science or whatever) today?

2. Did I take worthwhile notes in class or do I need to go to my textbooks and general reference books to rewrite them?

3. Did I experience any concerns that should go into my problem book?

4. Should I include any of these “problem areas” as study goals for next week?

5. How did today’s lesson in Science (or History or whatever) link in with the rest of the topic? Should I glance at the sub-headings and diagrams in the next chapter of my textbook before tomorrow’s lesson?

Filing, Collating & Summarising

Students need to develop an effective filing system for their personal study notes; corrected exam papers and assignments (you can learn a lot from your mistakes!); prepared handouts; classwork or lecture notes. All such material can be conveniently stored in separate binders for each major subject. These binders should contain clearly labelled dividers for each new topic.

It is advisable for students to establish a regular routine - weekly if not daily - for emptying their briefcases and updating these files.

Extra study sessions are usually needed to collate what is often excessive quantities of material on a particular topic. The objective for such study sessions is to produce a set of “revision quality” notes on the topic. These collated notes then become the student’s sole source of future reference on the topic.

Another study session will probably be needed to produce a “point form” summary of the topic under a series of “trigger headings”. Final preparation for exams should be largely confined to revision of these summaries and practice at expanding them into essays.
Organising Your Notes

During the year you are given lots of pieces of paper from your teachers and also spend a lot of time writing down notes from what you read and in completing class work and homework.

What do you do with all of those pieces of paper???

Many students just throw them in a folder hoping that they’ll be able to find them when they need them. Unfortunately, when you do, you have to sift through a pile of mixed up notes that mean nothing.

Organising your notes as you go is the method used by successful students.

On the top right hand corner of each page write the subject and topic name - for example English - *The Crucible*.

One method is to have your notes in folders with one folder for each subject and use dividers to differentiate between topics.

Some students use manila folders with one topic in each.

By putting all of your notes together on a topic, it is easier to revise and to find all the appropriate papers.

When you have finished a topic, prepare a summary outline and place this at the front of the topic section.

Don’t waste time making your notes a work of art - rewriting them just to make them neat is a waste of time. If you can read them, that’s all that matters. If you want to make them neater wait until you are preparing your summaries.
Notemaking

The notes YOU make will be the most use to you

Don't use your friend's notes

Don't buy your notes from the book shop

Make your notes linear or nuclear

Use pictures or diagrams

are easily understood by YOU

are brief and clear

are easily read

use abbreviations

use one side of the page only

leave gaps between points

Are arranged in suitable format

When you make notes

Look through the chapter or article

Then read the text carefully

Use your own words to restate the chapter
Ideal Study Conditions

Your study area should be as free from distractions and interruptions as possible:

• maintain a tidy desk - both during and after study sessions!
• turn off your music!
• close your door!

While ideal study conditions are not always possible, you should strive to have:

(i) a permanent place for study;
(ii) a desk which is high enough to prevent stooping;
(iii) a “moderately comfortable” chair which encourages good posture and alertness;
(iv) book shelves within reach of your desk - your desk top should not be used as a general storage place;
(v) good ventilation - fresh air is necessary to keep your mind alert;
(vi) comfortable clothing - change out of your uniform before settling down to study;
(vii) natural temperature control - have a shower or swim before study on a hot day; pull on a tracksuit in preference to turning on the heater in winter;
(viii) good lighting - maximum natural light in daytime;

- a desk lamp (with a frosted 75 watt globe) shining directly on to your work and not into your eyes;
- positioned on left hand side of desk if you are right-handed;
- normal room light also left on

What could you do to improve your present study conditions?
Permanent Study Place

- Normal room light on
- Door closed
- Desk lamp
- Bookshelves within reach
- Fresh air
- Tidy desk
- Good chair
- Comfortable clothing
Dealing with Distractions

It is very important that you try to keep your study time as free from distractions as possible. TV, the telephone, family activities and friends dropping in, will all impact on your effectiveness with study.

Try to plan your time around family activities and other commitments. For example if you know that you will eat at 7pm and that you will have to help prepare the meal in the hour before that, then this can’t be study time.

Make a time for telephone calls so that your friends know they can get you between 9-10pm. You can also get your family to take messages at other times so that you are not constantly getting up to the phone.

TV can be watched when you want to watch the program these days. If you have a favourite program but it’s on at a bad time, tape it and watch it in your weekly TV time.

Some people find background music effective in keeping out other noises in the house. If you do, try to listen to music that is instrumental so that you’re not distracted by the words in the song.

Get ideas from the group about how they manage distractions now.
Planning for Future Learning

Really successful learners:

**Do:**

**Do not:**

In future I will try to:
Notes
Session 3

Creative Study Techniques
Learning Styles

Do you learn better when you are able to hear information or when you are able to see it? Are you a “morning person” or a “night person”? Do you prefer to study by yourself in a quiet room or with a group, with the TV on or the stereo blasting? How does your personality affect your learning and study preferences?

It is important to answer all these questions if you want to improve your study habits. Students differ from one another in their styles of studying and learning just as teachers differ from one another in their styles of teaching. In this section, we will focus on different learning styles and show you that by understanding how you learn best, your performance in school will improve - and so will your grades.

The strategies presented in this section will help you become more familiar with your best learning style.

- Understanding How You Learn Best
- What’s Your Best Study Environment?
- Your Personality and Your Learning Style
Strategy
Understanding How You Learn Best

People learn using three different learning modalities. A learning modality can be either visual (seeing), auditory (hearing) or kinesthetic (touching or moving). While you may use any one or all of these modalities at certain times, most of us use one modality more often than others. That modality is part of your preferred style.

Directions: To figure out your preferred learning style, pretend that you have to learn 20 new words and their meanings for a big test. How would you tackle this job? (Check any statements that describe you - you can have none or more than one in any category).

1. I would prefer to:
   _______ read the words and definitions over and over again.
   _______ close my eyes and “see” them in my mind.
   _______ look at pictures that portray the words and their meaning.

   If these are the ways you like to learn new material, you may learn best by seeing, and you are probably a visual learner.

2. I would prefer to:
   _______ recite the words and definitions to myself over and over.
   _______ have the words and meanings taped and then listen to them.
   _______ discuss the meanings with someone.
   _______ listen to the teacher’s explanations and recall them later.

   If these are the ways you like to learn new information, you may learn best by hearing, and you are probably an auditory learner.

3. I would prefer to:
   _______ write the words and definitions.
   _______ draw pictures that remind me of the meanings.
   _______ move around as I concentrate.

   If these are the ways you like to learn new information, you may learn best by feeling and moving, and you are probably a kinesthetic learner.

4. Think of other examples which show whether you prefer an auditory, visual, or kinesthetic learning style and write them below.

If you checked off some preferences in each modality, it means that you use more than one modality to learn. Many people are like you and combine what they see with what they hear to write. Use your best learning style whenever you want to be at your most efficient for learning. Practise using all three.
What Is Your Learning Style?

We all have different ways of learning. By finding out how you learn the best you will be able to make the most of your study time and get better results. Complete the questionnaire below by circling your answer to each of the questions. At the bottom write down the total number of answers you circled in each column.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Which do you find easier?</td>
<td>Making something with your hands - eg sewing, carpentry.</td>
<td>Writing a letter or a story.</td>
<td>Drawing a picture or plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. When spelling a word do you?</td>
<td>Write down a few versions to see which feels right.</td>
<td>Say it to yourself and then spell it.</td>
<td>Picture the word in your mind then spell it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. When learning something new do you prefer?</td>
<td>Being involved in group activities and role plays.</td>
<td>Being presented with a talk or lecture or group discussion.</td>
<td>Watching slides, videos, charts etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. If you are trying to find something you lost do you?</td>
<td>Physically retrace what you have done.</td>
<td>Ask yourself or someone else where it might be.</td>
<td>Visualise your actions trying to picture where you last saw it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. When you read a book do you?</td>
<td>Experience the emotions and feeling in the story in your own body.</td>
<td>Think about what is being said and how it is said.</td>
<td>Picture the scenes in your mind like you are watching a movie.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. When you get angry do you?</td>
<td>Throw things around to let off steam.</td>
<td>Raise your voice and talk about what’s making you angry.</td>
<td>Remain silent but replay the scene in your head.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Which do you find easier to remember?</td>
<td>Something you have done like a sports play or a dance.</td>
<td>A speech or talk.</td>
<td>A diagram or a plan of some sort.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. What motivates you the most?</td>
<td>The feeling you will have when you complete the job.</td>
<td>Verbal reminders of what you must do.</td>
<td>A clear image of what needs to be done.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. When you are concentrating, what distracts you the most?</td>
<td>Physical discomfort– being too hot or too cold.</td>
<td>People talking, traffic noise.</td>
<td>Your surroundings – a messy room, a picture on the wall or outside.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. How do you think most often?</td>
<td>By weighing things up in terms of feelings and actions.</td>
<td>Talk over the issue with yourself - out loud or to yourself.</td>
<td>Visualise what you are thinking about – see the picture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. When someone asks you a question do you?</td>
<td>Become very aware of how you feel about the issue.</td>
<td>Repeat the question to yourself and think about it.</td>
<td>Try to get a clear picture in your mind about what it is about.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. When describing things to others do you use words like?</td>
<td>“This feels right to me”. “I can handle it”. “It makes me feel sick inside”.</td>
<td>“Let’s talk it over”. “Listen to this”. “That sounds like a great idea”.</td>
<td>“I see what you mean”. “I can picture that”. “I’m not clear what you mean”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. When you meet someone new what do you remember the most about them?</td>
<td>What they did.</td>
<td>What they said or their name.</td>
<td>What they looked like.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. You know you understand something when.</td>
<td>You are able to put it into practice.</td>
<td>You can explain it to someone else.</td>
<td>You can see it in your mind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. When you are telling someone about a show you have watched do you</td>
<td>Get up and act out what happened?</td>
<td>Repeat the conversations from the show and talk through the actions.</td>
<td>Describe the scene in detail and what the characters looked like and were wearing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
16. Are you a person who most often uses hand gestures and body movement when you are talking?

17. Which group of subjects do you like the most?

18. When making a very important decision do you rely on how you feel?

19. Which career group appeals to you the most?

20. Which would you most prefer playing sport listening to a concert watching a movie

TOTAL CIRCLED

Your preferred learning style is ____________________________

**Learning Styles**

C

**Visual People**

Visual people are usually very interested in how things look and will go to the trouble to look at layout and colours. When you're talking to them they may appear to drift off as they work at getting a picture of what you are saying in the head. They are usually good spellers as they see the word in their head. You can improve your study by using colours and signs. Use lots of illustrations and charts to summarise your notes for study.

B

**Auditory People**

Auditory people love talking and listening to others. They love to talk, think through when making decisions. You can improve your study by writing notes, recording notes and playing them. Use mnemonics. Talk to someone about the topic and explain every detail to them.

A

**Kinaesthetic People**

Kinaesthetic people are very much into comfort, and tend to be more lay-back in their approach. They learn best by being active - making models, walking around as they make a point, doing experiments, hands on learning is important.
How Memory Functions

We receive information through all of our senses. Sight and hearing are the most used senses for learning, so it is most important that we can see and hear well.

At the start of the brain’s processing operations, information is momentarily held in what is called the “sensory store”. Most of the information decays very rapidly, as the result of continually new inputs from your senses. However, some significant or meaningful information is transferred to the short-term memory.

Even in the short-term memory, meaningful information is only retained for a brief period of time. The short-term memory has a very limited capacity (of between 5 to 9 items). During its brief stay in the short-term memory, information must be coded or simplified in some way, it is to pass into the long-term memory.

The long-term memory will readily retain information that has been understood, simplified and reinforced. The long-term memory has unlimited capacity for information which has been accepted in this way. However, retrieval techniques must be used to extract much of the information contained within the long-term memory.

The retrieval or out-putting of information from the long-term memory involves the very same simplifying techniques that were used to input it in the first place.
What We Know About Memory

How this works

When you have read a sentence in a novel, our short term memory retains the information at the start of the sentence, long enough for us to make sense of the whole sentence. It is the overall meaning of many sentences (rather than the individual words and sentences) which are transferred to our long term memory. We can therefore tell others about a book we have read.

The more carefully we place material into our long term memory by encoding (and we'll come back to this term) the greater our ability to remember it and recall it. This leads us to a discussion of the 3R’s of Memory:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3 R’s OF MEMORY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Registration:</strong> (Encoding) becoming aware of new facts and <strong>actively</strong> transferring them to long term memory.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Retention:</strong> Storing of facts in long term memory.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recall:</strong> To bring forth/retrieve these facts at any time.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Retention** and **Recall** are developed by careful registration or **Encoding** the material to be learned in an **active, creative way**. Strangely this occurs best when we are relaxed.

Spend a few minutes examining the following list. Try and memorise as many words as you can.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>bicycle</th>
<th>neck</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>car</td>
<td>phone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>red</td>
<td>INXS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>penny</td>
<td>wallet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>box</td>
<td>paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rope</td>
<td>television</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ball</td>
<td>coffee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chain</td>
<td>glue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ice</td>
<td>stapler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>crate</td>
<td>bottle</td>
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<tr>
<td>Column</td>
<td>Symbol</td>
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<tr>
<td>h</td>
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<tr>
<td>i</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Maximising Your Brain Power

Human brains are all of similar size, and have approximately the same number of cells. However, most students use only a small fraction of their potential brain power. They tend to be “left” or “right” brain orientated.

There has been much research conducted in recent years into the learning roles played by the different sides of the brain. It is now widely accepted that the left and right hemispheres of the brain fulfil different learning functions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Left Hemisphere</th>
<th>Right Hemisphere</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arithmetic</td>
<td>Creativity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logical analysis</td>
<td>Imagination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract thought</td>
<td>Intuition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal fluency</td>
<td>Musical ability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conformity</td>
<td>Non-conformity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part learning</td>
<td>Whole learning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grouping (involving counting) and association (involving logical reasoning) are both left hemisphere functions.

Mnemonics (being creative) and visual imagery (being imaginative) are right hemisphere functions.

Learning is most effective when it is “whole brain” rather than “part brain” orientated. Mind mapping is a memory simplifying technique which uses both sides of the brain.
Simplifying Techniques

There are three principal simplifying techniques which should be used to help information pass from the short-term memory into the long-term memory:

(i) **Grouping and Association**

This is breaking down large amounts of material into smaller and more manageable groups.

(ii) **Mnemonics**

This involves making up a rhyme or sentence to help you learn lists, formulae the key points associated with any topic.

- **e.g.** My Mercury
- Very Venus
- Elderly Earth
- Mother Mars
- Just Jupiter
- Saw Saturn
- Uncle Uranus
- Ned Neptune
- Passing Pluto

**or**

- Some Old Hags
- Can Always Hide
- Their Old Age
- Sine Opposite Hypotenuse
- Cos Adjacent Hypotenuse
- Tan Opposite Adjacent

**or**

- Tall Tenacity
- Athletes Ambition Qualities of a student with a positive attitude
- In Independence
- Sport Self-confidence
- Can Co-operation
- Win Well-balanced nature

(iii) **Visual Imagery**

This is the development of a mental or physical picture of what you are trying to learn.

When learning foreign language vocabulary, you picture the object in your mind as you learn how to spell it.

Information can be physically visualised by the use of illustrations, diagrams and ‘mind maps’ (explanation to follow).
Mind Mapping

Mind mapping is a method of visualising information in a kind of map or diagram. It eliminates excessive note-taking by forcing the use of key words and phrases rather than sentences.

Mind mapping focuses attention on essential information and helps establish the link between all of the supporting points.

Mind maps can be used to:
- take notes in the classroom or lecture theatre
- make notes from textbooks or reference books
- prepare for class talks
- revise for examinations

There are three principal features of a mind map:

(a) the name of the topic is put in the centre circle
(b) every new important point is circled at the end of a branch
(c) all subordinate or supporting points are positioned along their appropriate branches

A mind map for “Ideal Study Conditions” might be as follows:
The Four R's of Remembering

**Read**
- Understand everything before you start to learn it
- Highlight headings

**Recite**
- Recite main points
- Recite onto tapes
- Listen to the tapes

**Write**
- Write out examples
- Write out charts
- Write out graphs

**Repeat**
- Go over and over and over – 4 or 5 times is not unrealistic

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The Causes of Forgetting

The main causes of forgetting are:

1. **Distractions**

   If you are distracted while attempting to input material, the information will not be transmitted to your short-term memory, thereby precluding any chance of it getting access to your long-term memory.

2. **Decay**

   Memory decay occurs if:

   (i) you try to learn complex material without simplifying it, or
   (ii) you fail to revise the material regularly.

3. **Anxiety**

   Anxiety or nervousness can be a major cause of forgetting during exams. This is unfortunate, because anxiety can have very positive effects - it will help you write fast and concentrate fully.
The Mind Map

Venn Diagram
The Sequence Chart

Problem:
# The Agree/Disagree Chart

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The Spectrum

The Target
The Pie Chart
A Report or Essay Title

Introduction:

Conclusion:
Ranking Ladder
Making Study Cards

Card size: 5cm x 8cm

Ring size: 30mm or 50mm

Limit the amount of information on one card

- Cut cardboard rectangles
- Use a hole punch on one end
- Put onto a hinged ring

Colour code for subjects

or

Colour code for topics

or

Separate each section with a coloured card

Study one section of your card set at a time (5 to 20 cards)

Use colour, space and clear, large writing
Pathways of Verbs

**Outline/Describe**

*Outline* = Sketch in general terms; indicate the main feature of

*What is it about?*

**Main Factor**

*Describe* = (add detail/observations) provide characteristics and features

*Detail*
Explain – Version 1

Relate cause and effect; make the relationship between things.

Explain – Version 2
Distinguish

Recognise or note/indicate as being distinct or different from; to note differences between

What is it about?
(objects being compared)

Object A

Now
(what happens)

BUT

Compare – Version 1

Show how things are similar or different

What is it about?

What is being compared?

How is it different?

How they are similar

How it’s different
Compare – Version 2

What is it about?
(objects being compared)

Similarities

•
•
•
•

Differences

•
•
•
•

Critically Evaluate

Critically Evaluate = add a degree or level of accuracy, knowledge and understanding, logic, questioning, reflection and quality to

What is it about? (Identify)

Main idea and detail

•
•

Main idea and detail

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Main idea and detail

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So what? (judgement)
Discuss

Discuss – identify issues and provide points for and/or against (no judgement)

Assess/Evaluate

Assess = Make a judgment of value, quality, outcome, results or size.
Evaluate = Make a judgement based on criteria; determine the value of.
Analyse

Identify components and the relationship between them; draw out and relate implications

What is it about?

Component

Component

Relationship

So what? (Are there any implications?)

Justify

Support an argument or conclusion

What is it about?

(Argument, point of view, conclusion)

Supporting points

So what? (evaluation/judgement)
### Analyse
Identify components and the relationships between them; draw out and relate implications.

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<th>Component:</th>
<th>Relationship between components:</th>
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**OR**

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<tr>
<th>Outline an implication:</th>
<th>Relationship between implications:</th>
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</thead>
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SPARKS Handbook-MM:GA
Assess: make a judgement of value, quality, outcomes, results or size

- Pros ('advantages'): 
  - 
  - 
  - 
  - 

- Cons ('disadvantages'): 
  - 
  - 
  - 

AND

Judgement:
**Compare:** show how things are similar or different

Objects being compared:

How similar:
- 
- 
- 
- 

How different:
- 
- 
- 

AND / OR
Describe: provide characteristics and features

Object/thing being described:

Characteristics/features:

•

•

•

•

•

•
Discuss: identify issues and provide points for and/or against

Issue identified:

Points for:
- 
- 
- 
- 

Points against:
- 
- 
- 

**Explain:** relate cause and effect; make the relationship between things evident; provide why and/or how

- **Cause:**
- **Effect:**
- Clearly describe the relationship between things:

**OR**

- **AND**

Why (because...) and/or how (in time or cause)?
Evaluate: make a judgment based on criteria; determine the value of

Description of feature/issue

Points for (“advantages”)
•
•
•

Points against (“disadvantages”)
•
•
•

AND

Criteria (ion):
•
•
•

Judgement (of each point/issue against criteria):
**Justify:** support an argument or conclusion

**Argument/point of view/conclusion:**

**Points supporting the argument/Point of view/conclusion:**

- 
- 
- 
- 
Session 4

Essay Writing
What sort of discursive prose do you write?

- the **STODGY** essay                      K Mart vocabulary and style
- the **FLASHY** essay                      Supré
- the **BLANC MANGE** essay                Colourless and gooey
- the **TASTEFUL, COMPETENT BUT BLAND** essay Country Road
- the **MOUSSE** essay                     light and fluffy ballet tutu
- the **BOUTIQUE** essay                   Bay Road Clothes
- the **DESIGNER** essay                   Gucci
                                          Versace
- the **DIOR or CHANNEL** essay            20/20 - style
                                          - panache
                                          - pizzazz
                                          - affluence of thought
                                          - love to have
How to write a good essay

Step 1: Understanding the question

Most statements/questions will contain a key word telling you what you are expected to do. Become familiar with these different types of instruction.

ANALYSE
Separate or break up a unit into its parts so that you may discover their nature, proportion, function, relationship etc.

COMMENT
Make critical observations, even if they are fairly open-ended.

COMPARE
Find similarities and differences between two or more events, ideas, interpretations etc.

CONTRAST
As above, but concentrate upon the things that are different.

CRITICISE
Express your judgment regarding the correctness of something being considered. Discuss both strong and weak points and give results of own analysis.

DEFINE
Provide concise, clear authoritative meanings.

DESCRIBE
Recall facts, processes or events. You are NOT asked to explain or interpret. Try to provide a thorough description, emphasising the most important points.

DISCUSS
Present a point of view - needing both description and interpretation (use evidence).

ENUMERATE
Provide a list or outline form of reply.

EXPLAIN
Interpret the facts. Don’t describe or summarise. Main focus on HOW or WHY and aim to make clear reasons, causes and effects.

ILLUSTRATE
This asks for an explanation.

INTERPRET
Explain the meaning of something and give own judgment of the situation.

LIST
Give an itemised series of points.

OUTLINE
An organised description. Make points with essential supplementary details, but omit minor ones. Present systematically.

PROVE
Confirm or verify. Evaluate, using evidence or logical reasoning.

RELATE
Connections and associations in a descriptive manner.

REVIEW
Re-examine, analyse and comment briefly on major points of issue.

STATE
Express high points in brief and clear narrative.

SUMMARISE
Provide brief statements or account covering main points.
Step 2: The Outline

Essay material must be presented in a logical order to:

1. Analyse the question.
2. Jot down the points you think are relevant.
3. Re-work these points, so there is a clear starting point and a logical progression from point to point.
4. Re-write these points in the order you intend to present them in the essay.

It is a waste of time and effort attempting an essay without sufficient background information. Once you have acquired sufficient knowledge, you must then plan the outline of your essay. You must choose paragraphs carefully so that they develop the THEME of your essay. An average paragraph should be about 100 words (approximately). Each paragraph should contain a topic sentence, or main point.

These should follow a logical sequence.

Step 3: The introduction of your essay

Try to attract your reader’s attention and establish the tone of the essay. Instructions are often used to define key terms from the statement/question and/or for stating your thesis.

Other ways to begin are:

1. State a proposition that you will support.
2. Ask a question that you will answer.
3. Present a quotation leading to an important aspect of your theme.
4. Limit your subject by moving from the general to the specific.
5. Present impressive facts or statistics in support of your thesis.
6. Divide your theme into topics and indicate those that you will emphasise.

It is important that your introduction suits your subject, your purpose and your audience.

In your introduction avoid:

1. Writing general information that conveys no important message and bears no obvious relevance to your theme.
2. Repeating what is essentially the essay statement/question.
3. Apologising for deficiencies in the material that is to follow.
4. Making promises that your essay will not fulfil.

Step 4: Topic sentences

The points that you choose to develop for your essay are called TOPICS. These help to organise your essay and assist the reader in moving through from point to point. Your plan needs to be set in a LOGICAL progression and each of your topics should build together into a complete essay.

Paragraphs usually consist of several sentences that are arranged in a logical manner to develop a main idea. The main idea is usually contained within a single sentence, part of a sentence or sometimes two sentences.
For example: “HARVEY LEADBELLY WAS AN UNUSUAL PERSON. At the age of six he had announced to his family that his ambition in life was to become a fat man in a circus. He ate constantly, and at the age of 18, weighing 290 kg he made his debut in the circus. We used to see him being transported around at times in the back of a truck, always with a drink in one hand and a cake in the other.”

*Notice how the other sentences stand in relation to the topic sentence. They expand upon the main idea.*

**That Harvey Leadbelly was an unusual person**

**Step 5: Connective words or phrases**

Connectives are words or phrases used within or between paragraphs to help the connection between one sentence and another. They should be used sparingly, however a careful use of connectives can assist your reader in moving from one point to the next.

Some common connectives are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FOR EXAMPLE</th>
<th>FIRSTLY, SECONDLY etc</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FOR INSTANCE</td>
<td>MEANWHILE</td>
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<tr>
<td>THEREFORE</td>
<td>AFTERWARDS</td>
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<td>CONSEQUENTLY</td>
<td>THOUGH</td>
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<td>BESIDES</td>
<td>NEXT</td>
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<tr>
<td>ALSO</td>
<td>HOWEVER</td>
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<td>BUT</td>
<td>FINALLY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>SIMILARLY</td>
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<tr>
<td>SO</td>
<td>LIKewise</td>
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<tr>
<td>AND</td>
<td>THUS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IN SHORT</td>
<td>THEN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TO SUM UP</td>
<td>IN OTHER WORDS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Step 6: Conclusions**

Your essay should have a conclusion which brings together the different sections of your essay and which supports its main message. The ending should not leave your reader with the impression that you have simply run out of ideas and have nothing more to write. Avoid raising a new issue.

- **MAKE THE CONCLUSION A NORMAL LENGTH**
- **MAKE SURE IT AGREES WITH YOUR MAIN IDEA**
- **REPEAT THIS MAIN IDEA**
- **ADD NEW INFORMATION**
- **JUST RUN OUT OF IDEAS**
- **MAKE THE PARAGRAPH TOO LONG OR TOO SHORT**

**Step 7: Presentation of your essay**

Your essay should be well-ordered, easy to read and attractive to look at. Markers often resent having to struggle through illegible writing or essays that have unclear headings with no margin.
Some suggestions:
- WRITE IN THICKER, DARK PEN
- LEAVE A GOOD MARGIN
- LEAVE A LINE BETWEEN EACH PARAGRAPH
- WRITE YOUR NAME ON EACH PAGE
- INDENT YOUR PARAGRAPHS AT LEAST TWO CENTIMETRES
- ONLY WRITE ON ONE SIDE OF THE PAGE

Step 8: Checklist for your essay

When you have completed your essay, use the following checklist to see if you have actually answered the question:

1. Have you got something to say, or does the essay ramble on from point to point while you fill up a page or two.
2. Do you sound convincing? Does the essay read as if you were involved in saying it?
3. Have you said it in the most interesting manner? Does the opening of the essay captivate the reader’s attention?
4. Is your style (formal, informal, personal, general) appropriate to the mood of the essay?
5. Have you maintained the mood and style?
6. Have you selected the best words to accurately express your ideas?
7. Have you made use of punctuation to help the reader “hear” the story?
8. Have you constructed the sentences carefully or have you been unnecessarily using “words”?
9. Did you really understand the question?
10. Have you planned your essay to reach your conclusion?
11. Have you really answered the question?

Basic essay structure

Introduction
- Outlines your thesis (line of argument); doesn't just restate the question.
- Lists points in the order they will be covered in the body of the essay.
- Introductions contain little detail although they must outline specific points that the essay will cover.

Body - paragraph structure
TOPIC SENTENCE - This doesn’t have to go at the beginning, but in this position, it may assist the examiner to grasp your point quickly. The Topic Sentence:

- Outlines the main point of the paragraph.
- Contains no details or quotes.

DETAILS / EXAMPLES / QUOTES / ARGUMENT - This part of the paragraph supports and argues your point by giving examples, quoting from texts and grounding your argument in specific cases.

Conclusion
- The conclusion is a general restatement of the main points.
- It usually begins with a linking word like “Therefore” or “Thus”.
- It should tie the rest of the essay back to the question.
- It is where you draw conclusions.
- Introduce no new material at this stage.
Session 5

Examination Techniques
Exam Techniques

Final revision before exams

A good exam performance requires consistent work during term time, detailed revision in the weeks just prior to the exam and the use of effective techniques during the exam itself.

The two weeks prior to a major exam are invaluable for consolidating your knowledge and priming you to a top performance. This period should be used for “over learning” – for consolidating knowledge already learnt.

To make productive use of the two week countdown before exams you should:

1. Set your textbooks aside and work primarily from your own notes.
2. Draw up a revision timetable for every day that remains - set yourself specific tasks and allow more time for weaker subjects.
3. Maintain personal fitness - light exercise, regular meals and enough sleep.
4. Work actively - highlight main points, jot down new ideas, practise recall.
5. Study summaries - by now you should have prepared a summary for every important topic.
6. Practice recall often - half your study time should be devoted to recalling what you have learnt.
7. Plan answers to anticipated questions.
8. Practise essay writing with a time limit.
9. Your “night before” routine should involve only revision of topic summaries.
10. Be self-confident that you will perform to the best of your ability.
Revision - Exam technique

Name: ____________________________

This is designed to test your understanding of what you have just discussed. You have ten minutes to complete it.

Instructions:

1. Answer all questions in full sentences, in your own words.
2. Do not refer to the previous page. Cover it if necessary.
3. Read the whole paper before you start.
4. Write your answers in the space provided.
5. Write your name in the space provided.
6. Good luck.

1. Why should you avoid your friends before the exam? (2 marks)
2. What are compulsory questions? (1 mark)
3. What are key words? What should you do with them? (3 marks)
4. Why should you plan an essay answer? (2 marks)
5. Which questions should you do first? Why? (3 marks)
6. In your own words, what is a mental block? Give two methods of freeing it. (3 marks)
7. What should you do if you finish early? (1 mark)
8. What should you do at the end of the exam? (2 marks)
9. Do not answer questions 1 - 8. Just read them and if you followed the instructions, think about them. You do not have to write anything but your name. Don't give the game away. Just sit quietly and let those who are writing learn from their mistakes.

(20/20)
Practical Example:

It is 8.50am. You have been handed an exam paper which provides for ten minutes of reading time. The directions on the paper are as follows:

Time Allowed: 3 hours  
Answer all questions in Section A.  
Section A is worth 20 marks.  
Answer two questions from any two of Sections B, C and D.  
All questions in Sections B, C and D are worth 20 marks.  
Answer Section A first. The other questions may be answered in any order.  
Start each question on a new page.

You find that Section A contains 10 “short-answer” questions and that Sections B, C and D all contain four essay questions.

Group Exercise:  
List in sequence all of the procedures involved in correctly interpreting this exam paper:

| STEP | |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| STEP 1: | |
| STEP 2: | |
| STEP 3: | |
| STEP 4: | |
| STEP 5: | |
| STEP 6: Plan your time as follows: | START | FINISH |
| Section A (20 marks) | 9 am | |
| Sections B, C, D (20 marks each) | | |
| 1st essay | | |
| 2nd essay | | |
| 3rd essay | | |
| 4th essay | | |
| Final checking | 12 am | |

STEP 7:

STEP 8:
During the Examination

- Before you go into the exam, avoid comparing study time or knowledge with friends.
- Sit quietly and calmly.
- Practise your relaxation methods.
- Avoid sitting near friends in the exam room.
- Read the WHOLE exam carefully before you start.
- Read carefully ALL INSTRUCTIONS and note what you are required to do.
- Note any compulsory questions.
- Allocate time to each question, according to the value of the question.
- Underline key words in the questions.
- Do a two minute plan for long written answers (essays). As you are doing the exam if you think of another point, add it to your plan.
- Do the questions you feel confident about first.
- If you suffer from a mental block during the exam use the method of free writing to free up the blockage.
- On scrap paper or area of exam for notes simply write down what comes into your head. It need not make sense; it can simply be odd words or phrases. When you write like this for a few minutes you should find that ideas you need will come back.
- Another method to free that mental blockage is to put the pen down, sit up straight, clear your mind and take five deep breaths.
- Use all the time you are given in the exam; if you finish early use the time to carefully review your answers - DON’T WASTE TIME.
- After the exam, don’t take part in post mortems, comparing answers. Put your energy into preparing for the next exam.

Interpreting an exam paper

Even though you have prepared well for an exam, incorrect interpretation of an exam paper can cause you to perform poorly.

Consider the following essential steps:

- Read the directions on your exam paper thoroughly. Make sure that you know:
  (a) whether there are any compulsory questions;
  (b) whether you must answer the questions in any particular order;
  (c) how many marks each question is worth;
  (d) whether each essay (or section of the exam) should begin on a new page (or in a new answer book).
- Plan your time carefully. The best method of dividing your time is on the basis of the number of marks that each question is worth.
- Read all essay questions carefully, underlying key words and phrases.
- Decide on the order in which you will answer the questions. In essay exams, answer the easy questions first, as this will give you confidence to attempt the more difficult ones.
- In an objective or multiple-choice exam, it is best to answer the questions in the order in which they appear.
How test-wise are you?

If you are test-wise, you can score 8 out of 8 on this test, even though you know nothing of the subject matter. Begin now.

1. The fribbled breg will minter best with an:
   A. ignu
   B. derst
   C. sortar
   D. morst

2. The reasons for tristol doss are:
   A. the kredges roted with the crets
   B. the sabs foped and the doths
   C. few rakobs were accepted in sluth
   D. most of the polats were thonced

3. The sigia frequently overfesks the trelsum because:
   A. all sigias are mellious
   B. all sigias are always votial
   C. the trelsum is usually tarious
   D. no trelsa are feskable

4. Which of the following is/are always present when trossels are being gruven?
   A. rint and vost
   B. shum and vost
   C. vost and plone
   D. ost

5. The purpose of the cluss in furmpaling is to remove:
   A. cluss-prags
   B. tremails
   C. cloughs
   D. plumots

6. Trassig is true when:
   A. lusp trasses the von
   B. the viskal flans, if the viskal is donwil or zortil
   C. the belgo fruls
   D. dissels lisk easily

7. The mintering function of the ignu is most effectively carried out in connection with:
   A. a razma tol
   B. the groshing stantol
   C. the fribbled breg
   D. a frailly sush

8. A.
   B.
   C.
   D.

Well ............ How test-wise ARE you?
Answering objective tests

To perform well in an objective test, you need to memorise facts and thoroughly understand the main points for each of your study topics.

Some tips for good performance in objective tests are:

- Know how many marks each question is worth and budget your time accordingly.
- Make sure that you understand the required method of answering, e.g. putting a tick or perhaps a cross or a letter in a box. This is particularly important if computerised marking is involved.
- Read all of the alternatives, even if you think the first one is correct.
- Work rapidly, answering the “easier” questions first and leaving the more difficult ones till later.
- Unless the instructions tell you that you will lose marks for wrong answers, be sure to answer every question.
- Find more difficult answers by a process of elimination. “Guess” only as a last resort.

Writing short-answer responses

In a short-answer exam, you are required to write statements of fact, briefly and concisely.

The answer required can sometimes be stated in a single sentence. On other occasions, a half-page answer (involving two or three paragraphs) is called for.

Important points to consider:

- If there are no specific instructions, the number of marks allocated to each question is the indication of how much to write. A question worth one mark probably requires a single sentence answer, whereas a question worth five marks probably requires a half-page answer.
- Take the time to read each question carefully and plan your answer. Then write it down quickly.
- First answer the questions that you know well, leaving an appropriate space for any answers that you find difficult. You will need to come back and give extra time to the questions you find more difficult. If you have a “memory block” about a particular answer, it will probably come back to you as you are working on another answer. Make an attempt to write something about every question - no marks can be awarded for an empty space.
Preparing for exams
Exam room hints

1. Take some time to be alone before you go into the exam room. Focus on what you will have to do, remind yourself that you can only do your best and that you know your work. The purpose of exams is to give you a chance to show what you know, not to trick you up.

2. Block out the other people in the room – don’t worry about what they’re doing. You have enough to do worrying about yourself.

3. Answer all the questions you plan to attempt even if you know very little about some of them. Spending time writing a brilliant answer to one question and leaving the rest will not get you a pass.

4. Make sure you read the instructions carefully - doing only three questions when you need to do four will lose you marks as will not answering questions from each section if this is the instruction.

5. Make sure you read the question carefully - a great answer to the wrong question gets no marks.

6. Start each question on a new page so you can always go back and write some more if you have time.

7. Show all your answer outlines and plans on the left hand side of the book and write your answers on the right hand pages.

8. Make sure you have numbered the questions correctly.

9. Include all your calculations when answering Maths questions - even if the answer is wrong you can gain some marks from how you went about it.

10. If you start a question and suddenly get a mental block don’t panic. Go onto another question and come back to it later.

11. Watch the wording used in the questions. For example:

   Explain means give a clear account in detail
   Justify means give reasons to support a particular point of view
   Summarise means list and briefly explain the main points
   Prove means demonstrate the truth or falsity of something
   Outline means describe the main essential parts of an idea
   Trace means mark out major developments in some form of logical order
   State means express clearly the specific features of a given subject
How test-wise were you?

The test is reproduced below with the correct answers marked by *, and with certain key-words in italics.

1. The fribbled breg will minter best with an:
   * A. ignu  
   B. derst  
   C. sortar  
   D. morst

2. The reasons for tristal doss are:
   A. the kredges roted with the crets  
   B. the sabs foped and the doths  
   * C. few rakobs were accepted in sluth  
   D. most of the polats were thonced

3. The sigia frequently overfesks the trelsum because:
   A. all sigias are mellious  
   B. all sigias are always votial  
   * C. the trelsum is usually tarious  
   D. no trelsa are feskable

4. Which of the following is/are always present when trossels are being gruven?
   A. rint and vost  
   B. shum and vost  
   C. vost and plone  
   * D. vost

5. The purpose of the cluss in furmpaling is to remove:
   * A. cluss-prags  
   B. tremails  
   C. cloughs  
   D. plumots

6. Trassig is true when:
   A. lusp trasses the von  
   * B. the viskal flans, if the viskal is donwil or zortil  
   C. the belgo fruls  
   D. dissels lisk easily.

7. The mintering function of the ignu is most effectively carried out in connection with:
   A. a razma tol  
   * B. the groshing stantol  
   C. the fribbled breg  
   D. a frailly sush.

8. A.  
   B.  
   C.  
   * D.  

Readers should note the simple clues in the first two questions, the linking of “frequently” and “usually” in question 3, the inclusion of “vost” in all options in question 4, the linking of “cluss” and “cluss-prags” in question 5, and the overly long answer in question 6. This sort of length usually indicates a careful attempt to get the correct answer pedantically correct.

Question 7 has content which is clarified by the first question. Finally readers should have no trouble perceiving the only possible answer for question 8.
Session 6

Stress Management
Is stress always negative?

By no means. It can help you achieve what you want to do. It brings anticipation and excitements into your life as with a holiday or family celebration. It helps you to grow and change, to avoid danger and to strive for a goal.

It is possible to be under - as well as over-stimulated, as shown in the ‘stress curve’ below.

Brief and purposeful periods of over-stimulation are often necessary. However, you should aim to spend most of your time in the stress comfort zone.

The graph below shows that when stress increases, so does performance and well-being, until the stress comfort zone is reached. At the beginning of this zone extra stress is handled with ease, but be ready to use your stress management skills as you approach the point of over stimulation. The idea is to work out how much stress is right for you.
The ABC of Stress Management

What is this?

The ABC of stress management is a helpful starting point for exploring your personal stress problems and then dealing with them in ways that will improve your life. A is concerned with recognising or having an awareness of the problem. B looks at dealing with the problems by forming a balance between stress and relaxation. C finally deals with the problems by suggesting ways to increase control over your life.

A Awareness

1. Of things that cause you to feel stressed sources of stress

What are the commonest sources of stress for you? Read each item and tick the number that best reflects the degree of stress caused by that item using the following scale.

0 = no stress 1 = little stress 2 = moderate stress 3 = severe stress

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Threats</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Threat of real bodily harm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Exaggerated fears or phobias</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Threat to present lifestyle e.g. threat of losing job, of marital separation, of loss of health</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Financial difficulties</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Feelings of not being worthwhile</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6. Moving home, changing schools etc</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Welcome change e.g. awards, wins, success</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Unwelcome change e.g. divorce, illness</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Short term change e.g. doing something for the first time</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Long-term readjustment e.g. bereavement, step-parent</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Many demands at once, time pressures</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Heavy responsibility</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>13. Frustrating situations e.g. traffic jams, bureaucratic red tape, unproductive meetings</td>
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<tr>
<td>14. Demanding environment e.g. overcrowding, noise</td>
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<tr>
<td>15. Lacking of stimulation e.g. repetitious job, retirement, lack of goals, social isolation</td>
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<tr>
<td>16. Lack of balance between work and leisure, stimulation and relaxation</td>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationships</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17. Difficulty in expressing feelings and thoughts appropriately</td>
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<tr>
<td>18. Rarely able to say NO to requests</td>
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<tr>
<td>19. Unreal expectations of my relationships e.g. marriage means “living happily ever after”</td>
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<tr>
<td>20. Lack of recognition or approval from others</td>
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<tr>
<td>21. Feeling under the control of someone g boss, parents</td>
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<tr>
<td>22. Loneliness, lack of support</td>
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</table>

Now select an item and work out an action plan to lessen its impact on your life.
2. Changes that occur as a result of stress - Symptoms of stress

This self-assessment exercise will help you recognise signs of distress, so that you can continue your management of stress to the point where these signs are greatly diminished.*

Read each item and tick √ the number which best reflects how often you have had that symptom in the last three months, using the following scale:

0 = hardly ever    1 = sometimes    2 = often    3 = very often

You may wish to discuss your assessment with a sympathetic friend or family member to see if they are aware of something you missed. After three weeks of regular relaxation practice, put a tick √ alongside those symptoms which have improved.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mood</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I feel nervous, anxious, ill at ease</td>
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<td>2. I feel keyed up, over-excited</td>
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<td>3. I worry excessively</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. I become confused or forgetful</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. I have difficulty concentrating</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6. I feel generally irritable</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. I become depressed</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. I feel bored or apathetic</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Other</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Muscles</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10. My hands and fingers tremble</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. I develop nervous twitches</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>12. I can't sit or stand still</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. My muscles become tense and stiff</td>
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<tr>
<td>14. I stutter or stammer when I speak</td>
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<tr>
<td>15. I clench my jaw or grind my teeth</td>
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<tr>
<td>16. I develop headaches or eye tension</td>
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<tr>
<td>17. I experience low back pain</td>
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<tr>
<td>18. I feel fatigued</td>
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<tr>
<td>19. Other</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organs</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20. I feel my heart pounding</td>
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<tr>
<td>21. I breathe rapidly</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>22. My stomach becomes upset</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>23. I perspire easily</td>
<td></td>
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<td>24. I feel lightheaded or faint</td>
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<tr>
<td>25. My mouth and throat become dry</td>
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<tr>
<td>26. I experience cold hands or feet</td>
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<tr>
<td>27. My skin becomes itchy or develops a rash</td>
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<td>28. I need to urinate often</td>
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<td>29. I have diarrhoea or constipation</td>
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<tr>
<td>30. My face feels flushed</td>
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<tr>
<td>31. My blood pressure is high</td>
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<tr>
<td>32. Other</td>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behaviour</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
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<th>3</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>33. I am short-tempered with others</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>34. I become withdrawn</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>35. I am achieving less than normal</td>
<td></td>
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<td>36. My appetite has changed markedly</td>
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<td>37. My sex drive has increased/decreased</td>
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<td>38. I sleep too long, stay in bed</td>
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<tr>
<td>39. I suffer from insomnia</td>
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<td>40. I have minor accidents/make more mistakes</td>
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<tr>
<td>41. I increase my medication</td>
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<tr>
<td>42. I use more drugs, alcohol</td>
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<td>43. I carry out useless repetitious movements e.g. foot tapping</td>
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<tr>
<td>44. Other</td>
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</table>

* Any of the above may be caused by factors other than stress.
When does stress become a problem?

- When your stresses are so big, occur so often, or last so long, that you are unable to handle them well.
- When you have been overstressed for some time and can notice effects like nervousness, headaches and insomnia
- When the energy-draining effect of overstress is noticed in extreme fatigue, poor judgement and low output for the effort involved.
- When a lowering of the natural resistance to disease is seen in increased illness.
- When friends, relatives and colleagues see signs of strain and feel concerned.

Do feelings of stress only occur because of outside events?

Not really. A lot depends on your attitude. If you often find yourself thinking of trouble, of stressful situations, of things you’ve done in the past that you feel bad about, or of unpleasant things that may happen in the future, you can practically guarantee that you will feel distress. On the other hand, you can lessen your stress by learning to think about life more positively.

How can I use the stress response effectively?
Looking at relaxation

What is relaxation?

Relaxation is a way of producing a quiet body and a calm mind. This physical and mental unwinding is termed the ‘relaxation response’ and it counteracts the ‘stress response’.

People who normally live with a high degree of tension are more likely to experience problems when any extra stress occurs.

These people can lower their general level of tension by regular relaxation practice and so cushion themselves against over­stress. By doing this, more hassles can be tolerated without causing problems.

What bodily changes occur during the relaxation response?

- Mind becomes more tranquil
- Hormone production decreases
- Breathing rate decreases as less oxygen is needed
- Heart rate decreases and blood pressure drops
- Sweating decreases markedly
- Muscles relax

How can I become relaxed?

You can physically relax by letting go of tension in your muscles OR
You can mentally relax by blocking out thoughts which cause tension and turning in to non-stressful thoughts for a period of time each day (meditation).

How will relaxation benefit me?

It will help you to:
- think better and enjoy improved concentration
- feel calmer, happier and more energetic
- improve co-ordination e.g. in sporting activities
- relieve pain and physical discomfort
- lessen the risk of stress-related illness
- enjoy more restful sleep
- use your imagination more creatively
- improve your relationships, because people respond more warmly to a relaxed and friendly person

Relaxation has no side effects, feels good, costs nothing and is a skill for life!
Instructions for relaxation practices

**What methods can I use to relax?**

There are many relaxation techniques you can use. Some are mainly physical, some mental and some a combination of both. Depending on where you are and how you feel, different techniques can be used.

**R1. Relaxation: Breath Awareness**

1. Sit comfortably with eyes closed.
2. Begin to listen to sounds far away ... just moving from one sound to another. Now search for sounds close to you ....
3. Leave the sounds and bring your attention to your body.... feeling comfortable ... released ... relaxed.
4. Scan the different parts of your body from your legs to your head and release any tension you may find.
5. Take your attention to your breathing, not controlling it in any way, just observing it. Do this for 10 - 20 minutes.
6. If thoughts, ideas or images come into your mind just let them pass by and focus again on the rhythm of the breath.
7. Treat sudden sounds, disturbances or bodily discomforst in the same way.
8. When you have completed your practice, become aware of your body and your surroundings again. Move your body a little, open your eyes, and sit quietly for a few minutes.

**R2. Relaxation: A Word Repetition Technique**

1. “Sit in a comfortable position so there is no undue muscle tension and choose a quiet environment with few distractions.
2. Close your eyes.
3. Deeply relax all your muscles, beginning at your feet and progressing up to your face. Keep them relaxed.
4. Breathe through your nose. Become aware of your breathing. As you breathe out say the word, “ONE”, silently to yourself. For example, breathe IN ... OUT, “ONE”; IN ... OUT, “ONE” e.t.c. Breathe easily and naturally. The repetition of “ONE” helps break the train of distracting thoughts; attention to the normal rhythm of breathing enhances the repetition.
5. Continue for 10 - 20 minutes. You may open your eyes to check the time but do not use an alarm. When you finish, sit quietly for several minutes at first with your eyes closed, and later with your eyes open.
6. Do not worry about whether you are successful in achieving a deep level of relaxation. Adopt a passive, “let-it-happen” attitude and permit relaxation to occur at its own pace. When distracting thoughts occur, try to ignore them and return to repeating “ONE”. With practice, the response should come with little effort. Practise the technique once or twice daily, but not within two hours after any meal, since the digestive processes seem to interfere with it”.

**Acknowledgment:** The above six points reprinted with the kind permission of Herbert Benson and his publishers, William Morrow & Co., N.Y., 1975, from his book “*The Relaxation Response*.”
R3. Relaxation: Moving attention around the body

In this practice the attention flows quickly from one body part to another.

This relaxes the mind by replacing its continuous churning with a non-stressful focus.

1. Lie down on your back or in a position that is suitable for you.
2. Close your eyes and begin to unwind and let go.
3. Repeat your Resolve or positive statement three times and make it come alive by imagining that you have already achieved it. (See the Resolve page)
4. Now move your attention around the parts of the body in the sequence you have learnt in the course.
   • from the fingers of the right hand, up the right arm to the shoulder and down the right side of the body to the toes; then back again to the fingers
   • repeat on the left side
   • starting with the heels, move your attention to all the parts in contact with the floor till you reach the back of the head
   • from the top of the head, move your attention along the parts of the face and chest, to the tummy
5. Prolong the practice by counting backwards with each outgoing breath.
6. Repeat your Resolve or positive statement again and imagine the desired result vividly.
7. Slowly bring yourself back to alertness.

R4. Relaxation: Using a peaceful, pleasant scene

Sit or lie in your chosen position. Take a few moments to relax and as you close your eyes, allow your breathing to continue in peaceful, easy rhythm.

In your mind’s eye, see yourself in a place where you feel very relaxed, very peaceful and very tranquil …a haven for you.

In your mind’s eye see the shapes and forms in that place, the colours, light and shade and textures.

Think of the sounds that you can hear there … comfortable, rhythmic, soothing sounds.

Take a breath to savour the fragrances there.

Think about what it feels like to be there, the temperature, the sensations on your skin, the relaxed body sensations.

For a couple of minutes just stay in that peaceful place enjoying all these sensations.

Imagine the expression on your face … enjoy seeing yourself at peace, feeling very free, feeling very good … Let the image go. Allow your mind to come back to the room you’re in. Move and stretch a little. When ready open your eyes and feel awake, alert, refreshed.

R5 Relaxation: A muscle release exercise

This practice is useful once you are confident about your ability to recognise muscle tension. You can concentrate on increasing the amount of relaxation in each area without tensing first.
Scan your body and increase the relaxation in the muscles of your face ... neck and shoulders ... arms and hands ... back, chest and tummy ... thighs, lower legs and feet.

Dwell on the feeling of relaxation so that it becomes familiar to you and you can recapture it at will.

This will help you to recognise the early build-up of unnecessary tension so you can release it before it causes problems.

Remember: Muscles need to be tensed in order to do their job - but there is no need to give them extra unnecessary tension.

**R6. Relaxation: Instant stress reduction**

For use before, during or immediately after a difficult situation.

- Take a deep and easy breath in ...
- Breathe out with a sigh and continue to breathe quietly, calmly and smoothly.
- Let your shoulders sag, your jaw go loose and your face feel calm.
- Your body and mind will relax too.

**R7. Relaxation in action**

Did you know that you can relax even when you’re on the move?

Use your legs by all means, but ease the frown from your forehead, unclench your jaw and release your shoulders.

Smiling can also help.

Whenever you are active use only the muscles needed for the job.

Notice when you tighten your shoulders while driving, when you frown while combing your hair, when your legs tense up while sitting at your desk or watching television and release this unwanted tension.

You will soon begin to do this almost automatically. It will help you feel more poised, balanced and ready to face the world.

**R8. Relaxation: Assisting the healing process**

This relaxation practice gives you the opportunity to try both a positive statement and a visual image.

1. Sit or lie comfortably. Close your eyes and allow your whole body to relax while you breathe peacefully.
2. State your positive sentence about your health goal and repeat it twice more.
3. In your mind’s eye, see the part of your body you are wanting to change. Picture it in its present diseased or uncomfortable state. (Visualise it as it really is, or in a fantasy way such as seeing a stiff knee like a rusty hinge.)

4. Now imagine your body directing its energies to overcoming that disease or discomfort. Start to see it working comfortably and well (oiling a rusty hinge will allow it to open and close fully without grating).

5. See your whole body fit and well. See the new you, strong and healthy; feeling in control of yourself.

6. Repeat your health goal three times as you vividly imagine the desired result.

7. Slowly bring yourself back to alertness.

---

**R9. Relaxation: Using a particular part of the body as your focus**

- Relax your body in the usual way.
- Let your mind dwell on the centre of your forehead, between your eyebrows.
- Keep your concentration on that point for the duration of the practice.

This technique can be just as effective using the point of the elbow, the little toe, or any other part of the body.

You can even have a moving focus, e.g. along an imaginary line from the navel to the top of the breastbone.

---

**Checking out your experiences**

Having practised your relaxation during class, at home, at work or while travelling:

1. Write down the satisfying experiences you’ve had during your practice.

2. Write down any positive effects that have come about in your life as a result of your practice.

3. Write down any difficulties you may have had
   
   (a) in getting started with your practice.
   (b) during practice, or
   (c) afterwards
4. Write down ways in which you have resolved these difficulties.

Balance

People can take a good deal of stress in their stride - they bounce back when knocked over just like those dolls with a weighted base. If your stressors weigh you down so you don’t bounce back easily, you may need to take action to deal with them.

Balancing stress

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The things that push you off balance</th>
<th>Ways in which you can regain balance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Stressors</td>
<td>1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Self talk</td>
<td>2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Tension</td>
<td>3.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Firm base is due to:
- Hereditary
- Life experiences

Remember - you are constantly having new experiences which can strengthen your base!
• Using the 4 categories above, write down your own causes of overstretch on the left side of the figure.
• As you progress through the course, write down your ideas for regaining balance on the right side of the figure.

Are our beliefs necessarily the truth?

Very often not. Our picture of reality may be inaccurate or prejudiced. For instance, the arrival of a baby sister or brother may lead a child to conclude “I wasn’t good enough” whereas the truth may be “My parents wanted another child”.

Is change possible?

It certainly is. You are constantly adding to the self-talk in your belief system, changing some parts and reinforcing others. By focusing on your thinking you can make changes that will work to your advantage.

Changing self-talk becomes easier when you realise that there are only a few key words or phrases that spell trouble. Check the examples in the following list. Do any of them remind you of your own style of thinking? Can you see how thoughts can cause (or alleviate) stress?

Key words and phrases that spell trouble

1. **Making mountains out of molehills.** Stress can be exaggerated by using words like “terrible”, “awful”, “can’t stand it”.
2. **Labelling yourself** - saying “I am” instead of “I do” e.g. “I am a failure” instead of “I did not pass my test”.
3. **Overgeneralising** - saying “nobody”, “everybody”, “always”, “never” and thus letting a situation affect you more than is necessary.
4. **Jumping to conclusions** – “They’re sure to think I’m a fool”, when in fact nobody thinks anything of the kind at all.
5. **Expecting too much of yourself and others** by saying “should”, “ought”, “have to”, “must” and thus setting unrealistic standards of perfection e.g. “everybody should love me”.
6. **Living negatively in the past.** “If only I hadn’t”
7. **Living negatively in the future.** “What if ....?”
8. **Refusing to accept praise** or a compliment and so preventing yourself from enjoying something good to balance the not-so-good things in life e.g. “They’re only saying that to flatter me”.
9. **Blinding yourself to possibilities** - saying “I can’t” rather than “How can I ....?”
10. **Focusing on the possible threats** in a situation instead of looking for a challenge e.g. “I’ve lost my job – I’m ruined!” rather than .....?
11. **Reinforcing failure** by saying “That’s just like me” instead of “Next time I’ll..” when you’ve done something you’re not happy about.
12. **Blaming yourself** or others when things have not gone as you would have wished them to and thus wasting your energy on the past instead of using it to build a future “My teachers messed up my life”.

Quick and easy stress reducers

1. Have a quiet, pleasant-sounding alarm to wake up to.
2. If mornings are rushed and stressful, get up earlier so you have more time.
3. Take a deep breath and relax each time you look at your watch.
4. Try to slow down when you eat, talk, drive or move.
5. Don’t arrange to do too many things close together or at the same time.
7. Eliminate behaviours that don’t save much time, or achieve a great deal e.g. frenzied lane-changing or beating the lights.
8. Take a break from tasks to stretch, walk, relax or to enjoy the present moment.
9. Buy a packet of small blank adhesive labels. Print “R” on each and stick onto mirrors, the steering wheel of your car, the fridge etc to remind you to relax throughout the day.
10. Give time to yourself to do things you enjoy. Do them just for fun without the need to compete or be the best.
11. Learn to say NO - but not indiscriminately. People who can say NO often say YES and feel good about it.
12. Reduce anger towards others. Tolerance and acceptance are good for your health.

Overcoming stress producing behaviour

Scientists have discovered that our style of living has an important bearing on our health. This is particularly the case with high scores in the following characteristics since they are linked with heart disease.

Examine the items below and circle the number that best describes your behaviour. Tick √ a high number means that item describes your behaviour very well.

| 1. Getting angry or agitated when having to wait in a queue or for an appointment | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2. Always feeling rushed | |
| 3. Being very hard-driving and ambitious | |
| 4. Having a strong need to be the best | |
| 5. Feeling angry and hostile a lot of the time | |
| 6. Being forceful and dominating | |
| 7. Eating or talking quickly | |
| 8. Being very competitive | |
| 9. Being impatient for other people to get on with what they are trying to do | |
| 10. Trying to do two or more things at once or thinking about what to do next | |

The above behaviours fall into the categories of anger, hurry, drive and competition. There is nothing intrinsically wrong with these behaviours, in moderation. For instance, anger can be the first line of defence against exploitation and competition can be enjoyable and exhilarating.

- Look at behaviours in which you have a high score.
- Decide whether they reflect the way you want to live or not.
- If not, work out what steps you can take to modify them.
Shrinking your worries

Read this list and circle the items you find valuable for you. Write out the items you circle and place these in a conspicuous spot to remind you of these new habits.

- **Question it**
  Is it really your problem?

- **Talk it out**
  Share it with someone else, others will welcome your trust.

- **Write it out**
  Put it on paper. It’s easier to see it in perspective.

- **Shrug it off**
  Raise your shoulders, then drop them. Relax your whole body.

- **Breathe it away**
  Inhale deeply, exhale with a sigh a few times. Let your tension go as you breathe out.

- **Set a worry session**
  Give yourself 15 minutes to concentrate on your worry, then firmly leave it behind.

- **Work it off**
  Do something physical. Give your tension an outlet.

- **Laugh it off**
  Look for some humour in the situation.

- **Distance it**
  Imagine it a few years from now. How much will it matter then?

- **Balance it**
  Find a good side as well as the bad.

- **Exaggerate it**
  Picture the worst that can really happen. How likely is it?

- **Hold it**
  Say “Stop”, pause and steady your thoughts. Now take a fresh look.

- **Escape it**
  Notice something enjoyable around you. Get into the present.

- **Plan for it**
  Get up earlier to prepare to face it.

- **Make it positive**
  Surround yourself with joyful colours, sounds and use your strengths.

- **Attack it**
  Take the first step to solving the problem.

- **Asserting yourself for it**
  Believe in your rights; say “no” when needed.
Control

2. Goal-setting

Imagine you are a juggler. The balls represent areas of your life, like a sport or hobby, friendships or family, money or work, spirituality or community service.

The balls in the air are those you are currently juggling.
The balls on the ground represent activities that you are not currently involved with.
The rest are in the process of being dropped or picked up.

Think about the different aspects of your life.
Label the balls on your picture then answer the following questions.

- How do I feel about juggling?
- How much control do I have over the balls?
- Do I want to drop some? Which?
- Those on the ground - shall I pick them up?
- Do I need to learn some skills or make some lifestyle changes to make the juggling easier?

**Action Plan:** To make my life more pleasant and fulfilling I plan to
Stress Management Program Tension Relieving Exercises

1. The Strength Instructions
   • Stand with your feet 45 centimetres apart
   • Put your arms straight up over your head
   • Stand on tip-toes and stretch as if you were trying to touch the ceiling
   • Hold for 10 seconds, then relax (5 times)

   **Benefits**
   Exercises your muscles
   Relieves tension

2. The Chest Rest Instructions
   • Sit on front of a chair, feet flat on the floor, back straight, chin resting on chest
   • Clasp your hands behind your back
   • Gently push your arms and shoulders backwards
   • Hold for 5 seconds, then resume first position (5 times)

   **Benefits**
   Relaxes chest, shoulder and neck muscles
   Reduces mental tension, physical fatigue

3. The Elbow Point Instructions
   • Sit down - back straight, feet flat on the floor
   • Clasp your hands on top of your head
   • Bend to the left, raising right elbow as far as you can
   • Sit up straight again and then bend in opposite direction

   **Benefits**
   Stretches the back, underarm and neck muscles
   Relieves mental stress, physical weariness

4. The Hip Rolls Instructions
   • Stand with your feet 45 centimetres apart, hands on hips
   • Keeping your feet flat on the floor, push your hips forward
   • Roll your hips slowly to the left, then to the back, then to the right - in a circle (10 times)

   **Benefits**
   Loosens muscles in the stomach, lower back and upper thighs
   Provides instant relaxation of tension

5. The Head Roll Instructions
   • Sit straight in your chair
   • Drop your head forward, keep it down
   • Roll it slowly to the left, then to the back, then to the right in a circle
   • Keep your shoulders down, your back straight (15 times, reverse halfway through)

   **Benefits**
   Stretches neck and shoulder muscles
   Relaxes the mind
Worksheet 1 - Stress

Instructions: Working in groups complete answers to the following.

1. What is stress?

2. Give three examples of how we can recognise stress.
   (i)
   (ii)
   (iii)

3. In your life what situations bring about stress?

4. What happens if stress is prolonged?

5. Why is it important for senior students to be aware of stress?
## Worksheet 2 - Stress

1. Why is relaxation important?

2. How can a person begin an effective process of relaxation?

3. What is visualisation? How does it work as a relaxation technique?

4. Describe an effective relaxation technique.
Fitness

Physical Fitness

Don’t make drastic changes in your exercise near exams. It’s not the time to decide to run a marathon for the first time.

Take it easy but do some exercise. Take a gentle jog or brisk walk around the block or maybe try some simple stretching exercises.

Sleep

Skimping over sleep long term will affect your studies - it will take its toll.
Don’t despair if you toss and turn all night before an exam.

Learn relaxation techniques.
   Learn them soon and use them lots.
   Get good at it.

Emotional

You will feel uptight when studying but try to avoid situations such as:
   Breaking off a long term relationship.
   Making a large purchase.
   Making a big commitment to friends or family in terms of time or emotion.

It’s OK to feel stressed - a little stress helps you to focus but a lot has the opposite effect.
Don’t hesitate to ask for help from teachers, peers, a counsellor, or a senior student.

Diet

We are what we eat  good food ➔ fit person ➔ more on task

Steer clear of
More than 4 - 6 cups of coffee over 4 hours as your concentration will be affected.
Anxiety reducing drugs - they will make you sluggish.
Exam Anxiety

1. How big is exam anxiety a problem to you?

dwarf get tense huge-fall apart

2. Do I have a good reason to be worried? Answer YES or NO to the questions below.

| YES | NO |
|----------------------------------|
| I attend all my classes          |
| I always catch up on work I miss |
| I keep up with my work           |
| I understand all the work        |
| I ask for help if I don’t understand |
| I hand in assignments            |
| I allow enough time to prepare for exams |

3. Describe what happens when you get anxious about the exams. Write down in detail what triggers your anxiety. When does it start? What feelings do you experience? What thoughts do you have? Where do these triggers come from - you, your teachers, your parents, other students etc.

4. Look at what you have written and rank each item in order of intensity, the first being what causes you the least stress.

5. Using the relaxation script we learned earlier - go into your peaceful place and then, when you feel calm, think about one item on your hierarchy. Imagine that you have the power within your peaceful place to destroy this stress item and watch it happening. Work through each issue in your hierarchy using the same technique. When you have destroyed each of the stress items, focus on your goal for the exams - what is it you want to achieve? Imagine yourself achieving this goal - concentrate on this picture and think about the work you have done to make this happen.

6. Repeat the relaxation exercise once or twice a day until the exams. If you are having difficulty remaining relaxed when you think about the exams, ask for help.
Evaluation
Final Assessment & Evaluation of Sparks

Personal Assessment
I have been pleased with my participation and progress in SPARKS.

Is senior school what you expected? Why or why not?

I believe that I have set some clear directions for my learning for the remainder of my senior schooling.

What things have happened at school this year that were not what you expected?

Can you think of any reasons for this?

Overall I think this program has prepared me for the following things.
If I were talking to a Year 10 student right now I would say the following:

Any further comment?

About this program

What has been the best thing about this program?

What could be improved?

What things have helped or worked well for you?

I would recommend this to next year's Year 11. Yes No √ answer

Any further comment?

Student's Signature Date
I'M IN CONTROL

My concentration has improved - I know how I can keep it up

Whatever others are saying or doing is irrelevant to what I am doing

The past is irrelevant - I am working well with new techniques - it's a new beginning

I have a good plan - I know how to keep to it

I'm fired up to go

I'm moving on up