Tips for Success

This booklet is aimed at providing you with information on how to plan your revision programme, how to study, how to remember what you have studied and how to write examinations successfully.

Your **first step** to success is TIME MANAGEMENT through proper planning.

You need to schedule your activities to include time for studying, assignments, sports or hobbies, and your family and friends.

In this booklet you will find a blank study timetable that you can use to plan your study time. Ensure that you give each subject sufficient study time, with a little more time for subjects with which you are having difficulty.

TIME MANAGEMENT = PLANNING = SUCCESS

In the second half of this booklet, you will find the content and tips for success in the subjects you are studying. Use the information for your seven subjects to set up your study timetable.

Your **second step** is to consider HOW TO STUDY. In this booklet there are tips on how to select and remember information, how to make effective notes and how to study.

Your **third step** is preparing yourself for EFFECTIVE EXAMINATION WRITING.

TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR LIFE AND YOUR FUTURE!

START PLANNING.

STEP 1 TIME MANAGEMENT

Plan to study daily, starting today:

- Draw up a special study schedule.
- 50-minute study blocks and 10-minute breaks work well.
- Select fixed study-times for every day including a time slot over weekends.
- Use the June-July school holidays wisely.
- Study for at least 3 hours a day in the holidays.
- Study skills and strategies become study habits only if they are **practised regularly**.
- Break up topics into manageable sections. Estimate the time needed, and then double it!

STEP 2 HOW TO STUDY

- Decide when you work best, e.g. early morning, afternoons, evenings.
- Where do you like to work? Home? Library? School? Community centre?
- Where can you work undisturbed?

Set up a place for your studying – table, chair, uncluttered work space, good lighting.

- Do you work well with others? Do you have a friend who could be your study buddy?
- How do you best remember information? Seeing? Hearing? Through action? People have different preferred learning styles, but use them all.

My 5 "C's" for Success

If / When I know my work, I will become **confident**!

My **competence** and **confidence** gives me **credibility**.

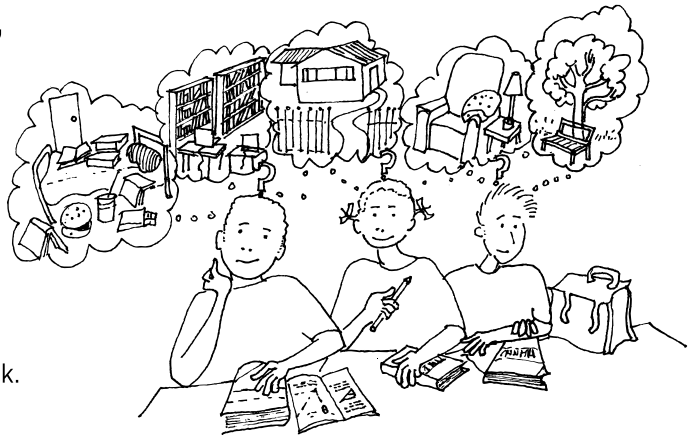
I will maintain my credibility if I am **consistent**!

I have to work hard to be **competent**. I must know my work !

I have to be **committed** to achieve Success !

Success is achieved if you adopt the 5C's

Make your studying active by using study methods, writing, drawing, summarizing, chanting or teaching your study buddy.



- Concentrate fully and try not to allow your mind to wander. This improves with practice.
- Use graphic organisers for notes.
- Avoid last-minute cramming.

Mentally prepare to study (RAVES)

- Use **R**elaxation techniques to calm your mind.
- **A**rrange goals and priorities for each study block.
- **V**isualise yourself capable of full concentration.
- **E**motional words for success: effort, enthusiasm, energy, eagerness, perseverance
- Use positive **S**elf-talk for a positive attitude.

Memory principles

- **Be selective** when you study. Select **significant** information. You cannot learn every detail. Make your own notes, focusing on what is most important.
- **Associate** new information with what you already know.
- **Visualise.** Try to create "stories" or "movies" in your mind.
- **Recite.** Use your own words. Explain the information to a friend/family member. Go back and check for accuracy and additional details.

ABOUT MEMORISING

Memorising skills can be learned.

There are many different skills you can learn to help you remember information. Here are some examples:

- Mind maps
- Cartoons, pictures, labelling
- Rhymes and jingles – use words that rhyme to help you remember important facts
- Loci strategy - Association with the place. Helps you remember a list of items
- Word association, key words, flash cards
- Creating acronyms: e.g. RICE stands for rest, ice, compression and e levation (what to do when somebody has a sprained ankle)
- Grouping or categorising – organise the information into logical clusters

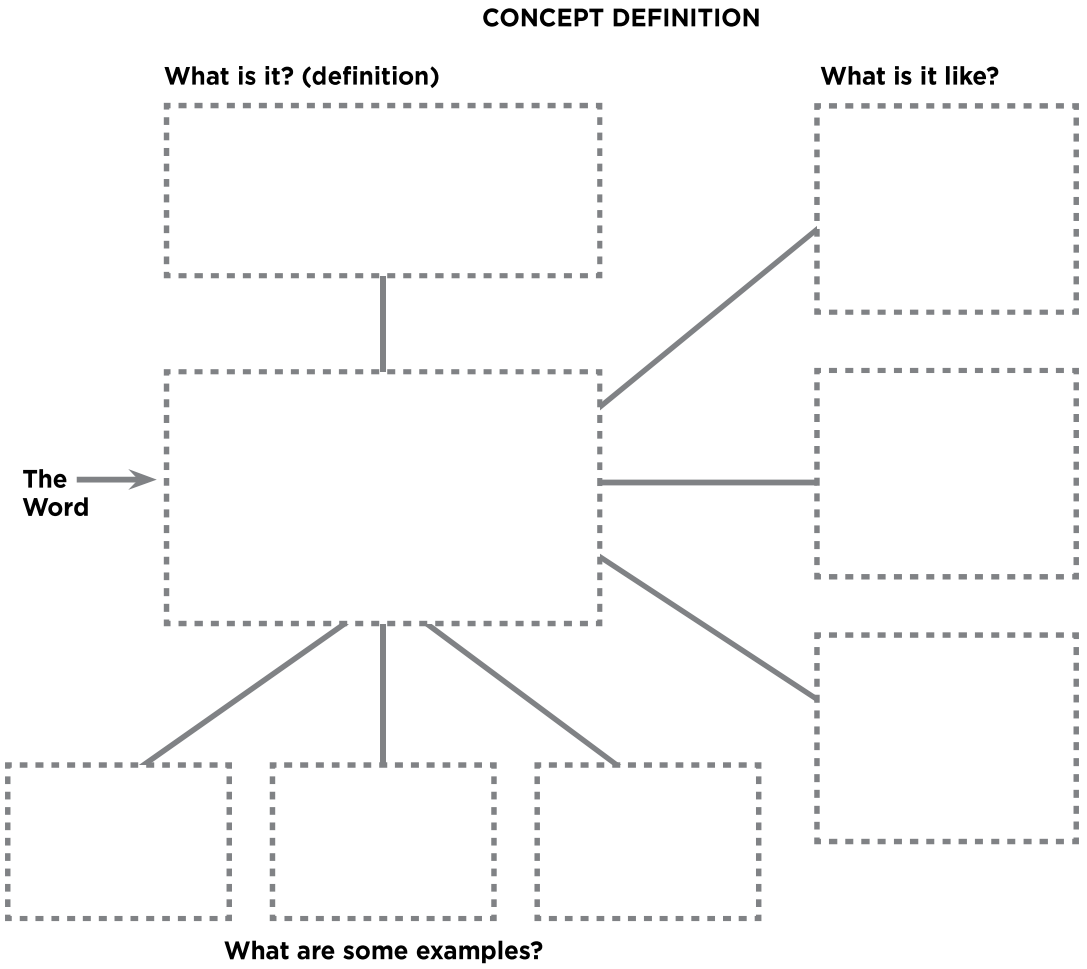
Memory – Use it or lose it!

Memory strategies require practice and discipline.

How to Memorize Fast & Easily

https://goo.gl/zrq0mv

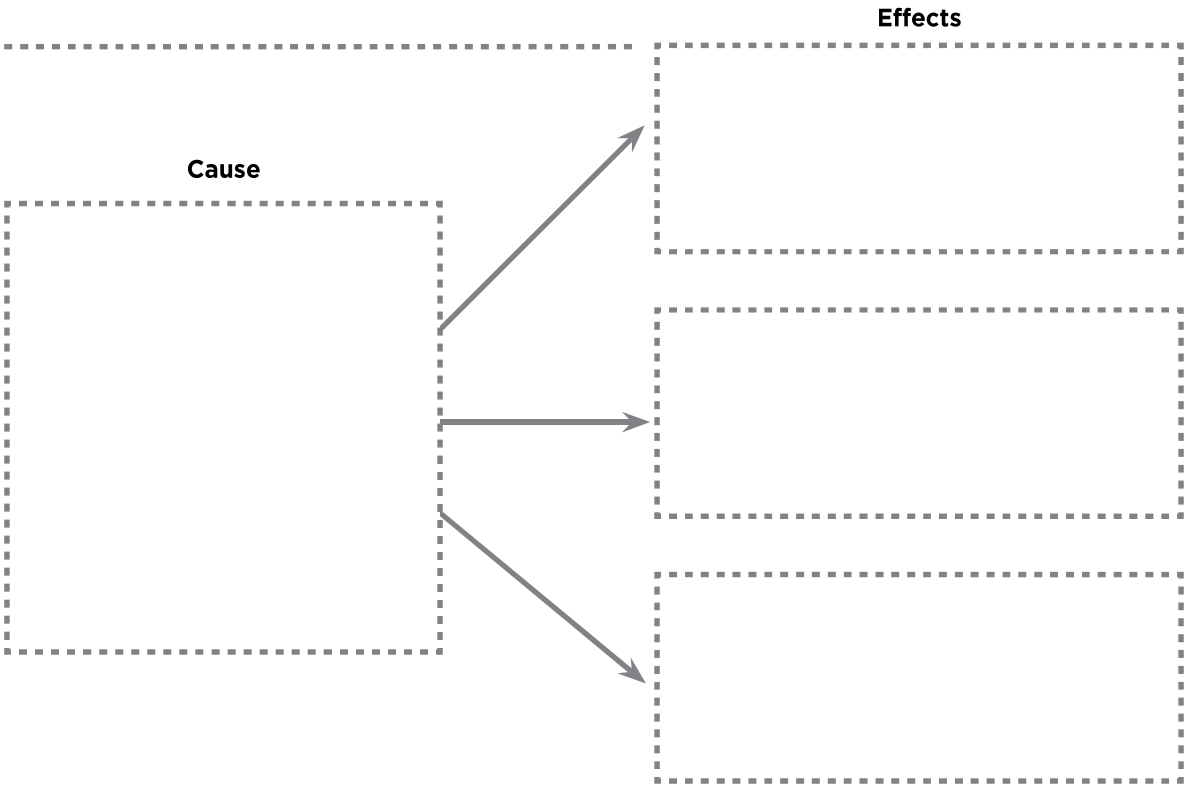
Sample Graphic Organisers



KWLS

K (What I know)	W (What I need to know)	L (What I learnt)	S (What I still need to learn)

Sample Graphic Organisers



Learning log

- You must make a 4 column chart in your books.
- As you read, you record your thinking and new vocabulary.
- What you need to know is an opportunity for you to ask questions and give you an indication of what needs to be reviewed.

Page	What I understand	New vocabulary	What I need to know

Adapted from: Reiss, J. 2012. ***120 Content Strategies for English Language Learners***. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Top Ten Words used in Test Questions

ANALYSE	• Explain how each part functions or fits into the whole. • Pretend you are a detective and break the material into parts. • Write the obvious as well as the hidden characteristics or meanings.
PERSUADE (ARGUE CONVINCE)	• Give a point of view! • Take a stand and defend one side of an issue. Give facts, statistics, beliefs, opinions, and your personal view. • Make sure your viewpoint is clear. • State your opinion logically. • Use facts, observations, comparisons or data to support your view.
COMPARE	• Give common characteristics, to identify how things are alike, similar or different. • How are people, events or objects the same? • Give examples to say how they are the same.
CONTRAST	• Give common characteristics that are not alike. • How are people, events, or objects different? • Give examples to say how they are different.
SUMMARISE	• Sum it up! • Give the meaning using as few words as possible. • Learners need to synthesize and restate the most important facts in a sentence or short paragraph.
DEMONSTRATE	• Have a statement saying what the instructions are for. • Give a step-by-step procedure to show how to do/make something. • Describe what is needed and how much is required. • Explain each step in detail. • Use either a bulleted list or paragraph.
DESCRIBE	• Present a clear picture of a person, place, thing or idea. • The reader should be able to visualise a picture or movie in his/ her head and translate it into words from what s/he has read.
EXPLAIN	• Give clear descriptions of an event, object, or idea. • Think about the five W's (Who, What, When, Where, Why) and H (How).
INTERPRET	• Write your understanding of a passage in your own words. • Ask yourself, "What does the _____ mean?" • Give a view from own experiences and the information you find.
INFER	• Read between the lines – the answer is not in the passage. • You make meaning from information or clues the author provides.

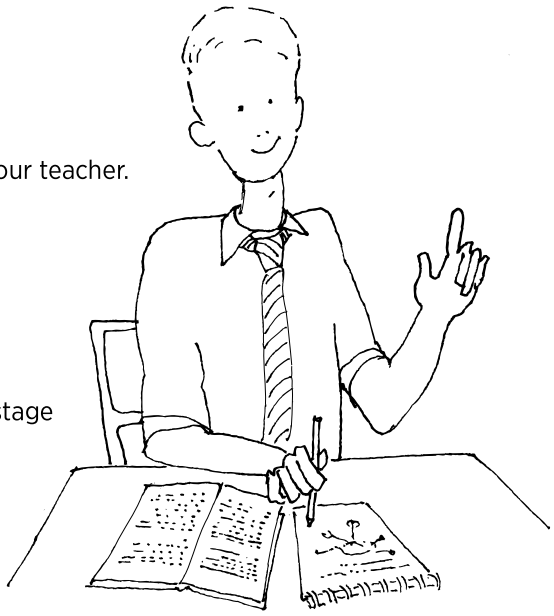
Adapted from: http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/article/top-10-terms-students-need-know-be-successfulstandardized-tests
WCED FET Literacy Across the Curriculum 2014 Written & Presented by Judi Kurgan: Literacy and Learning

Vocabulary/Terminology used in Exam Questions

account for	• Explain the process or reason why something is the way it is
analyse	• Pay attention to details • Explain how each part fits into the whole
argue	• Give your personal point of view – facts, beliefs, opinions
calculate	• Use figures to work out your answer
compare	• Give common characteristics/attributes – how are people, events, concepts or objects alike/similar
comment	• Discuss, criticise or explain
conjecture	• Guess, estimate, infer
contrast	• Give characteristics or attributes about how people, events, concepts or objects are different
deduce	• Draw conclusions
define	• Give meanings in your own words
demonstrate	• Write how to do something step-by-step
describe	• Explain so the reader can visualise/understand the object, concept or events • Use adjectives to show size, shape, characteristics, colour and use
discuss	• Write/talk as if you were sharing your knowledge with someone else • Use details and examples to explain the topic
effect	• As in what effect? It is the consequence/result of an action
evaluate	• In an evaluation question you are expected to present a careful appraisal of the problem stressing both advantages and limitations
explain	• Make it clear and simple to show your interpretation and understanding • Give simple descriptions based on what you know • Describe, giving reasons
extract	• Choose relevant details
factors	• Give reasons, features, causes, influences
give a reason	• Give examples to explain why something is the way it is
hypothesis	• An opinion/theory/assumption to be proved
indicate	• Point out, make something known
interpret	• Give your opinion of the information based on your experiences and information you find in the text
justify	• Give evidence to support your point of view
list	• Write each item that applies to the topic or subject
motivate	• Give reasons and explain your answer
outline	• Organise important data/information in a logical way • Use numbers or letters to organise the information sequentially
plot	• Organise your thoughts and write on a piece of paper • Use a grid, graphic design, picture, chart, or matrix
predict	• Make a suggestion based on the information available of what the outcome would be
prove	• Give evidence, facts which explains why an argument is true
sketch	• Draw a rough outline, plan or picture to explain or show something
state	• Explain important information clearly • Give reasons and examples if necessary
summarise	• Give the meaning in as few words as possible • Retell the most important facts and essential details in as few words as you can
support your answer	• Give examples, reasons or an explanation
trace	• Put events, experiences or thoughts in order or on a timeline

Adapted from Chapman, C. & King, R. 2003. *Differentiated Instructional Strategies for Writing in the Content Areas.* Thousand Oaks: CA: Corwin Press.
WCED FET Literacy Across the Curriculum 2014 Written & Presented by Judi Kurgan: Literacy and Learning

Memory Tip ❶



Pay attention and listen carefully in class.

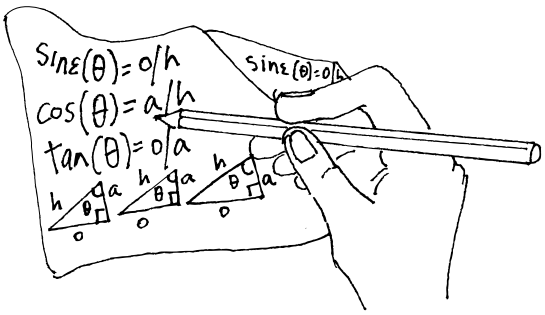
- Make sure you understand the content and concepts. If not, ask your teacher.

Memory Tip ❷

Make effective notes.

- In order for information to be stored in **l**ong-term memory, it first needs to pass through your short-term or working memory. This stage of memory is limited in the amount of information it can retain. Information you receive in class must be written down or you will forget it.
- When revising from your textbooks, seek out the **important information** and write it down. Organise it logically. Reduce it to key terms or a form that is easy to remember.

Memory Tip ❸



Remember these three Rs:

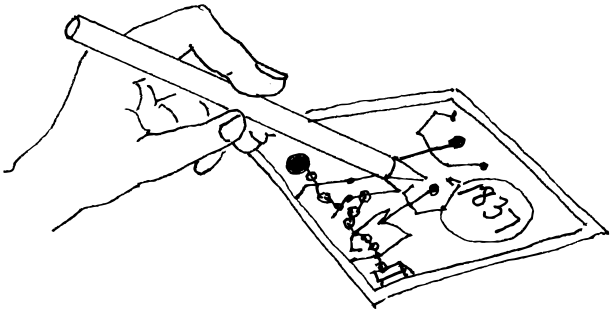
- **R**epeat, **R**epeat, **R**epeat

Memory Tip ❹

Use mnemonics.

- Mnemonics are devices, using arbitrary, easy-to-remember associations, to help you remember information. Examples:
  - **sohcahtoa** (used in trigonometry to memorize important information about the sine, cosine, and tangent)
  - **roygbiv** (the colours of the rainbow in their correct order – **r**ed, **o**range, **y**ellow, **g**reen, **b**lue, **i**ndigo and **v**iolet)

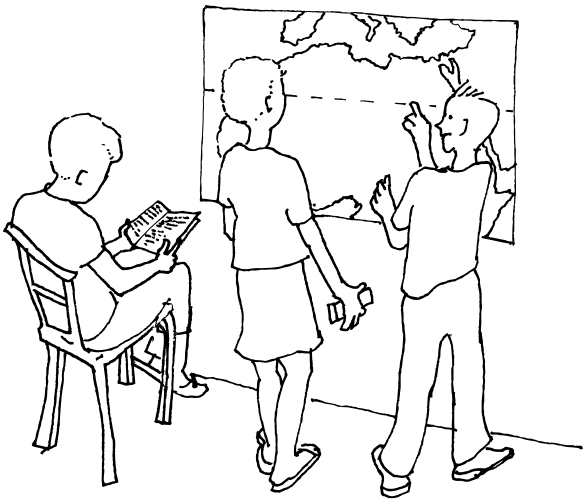
Memory Tip ❺



Generate examples.

- A very effective way of checking your own understanding is to generate examples of related concepts, situations, relationships, events or case studies. If you cannot do this, it is likely that you do not fully understand this aspect of the syllabus. Ask your teacher for help.

Memory Tip ❻



Use visual imagery.

- Visualisation of a concept, situation, relationship or sequence of events can be a very powerful way to learn. Create stories or movies in your mind, or make your own drawings, stick figures or cartoons.

Memory Tip ❼

Make associations.

- Make connections between the new information and something familiar to you.

Memory Tip 8

Use rehearsal strategies.

- Practise retrieving information by reciting key ideas, predicting questions, practising problem-solving and testing yourself by using previous exam papers.

Applying memory

Once you have memorised information, rather than just restating that information, you need to be able to use it. You should do the following:

- Analyse the information.
- Identify exactly what the examination question is asking for.
- Decide what information is required by the question.
- In some cases, apply the information in a context.
- In some cases, develop a well-reasoned argument.
- Present information logically and coherently.

The 9 BEST Scientific Study Tips
https://goo.gl/Bcx9f5

13 Study Tips
https://goo.gl/vPqDv5

Enjoy the challenge of having your knowledge tested and do not panic.

REFERENCES

Learning resources (Academic Support Centre, University of Alberta)
Smart study: a guide to skill yourself to be a better student (Edumedia, 2005)
Fleet, J, Goodchild, F, and Zajchowski, R, ***Learning for success*** (Harcourt Brace and Company, 1999)

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Don't bring your cellphone into the exam room.

>>> Do the right thing! In the exam room:

DO:	DON'T:
• Work out a study programme • Study hard • Make good notes • Get enough sleep • Review work • Eat well and healthily • Check your timetable every day • Bring your admission letter to the examination room every day • Have all necessary stationery (pen, pencil, eraser, extra pen, non-programmable calculator, ruler, specialist subject equipment where required) • Be early at the examination venue (at least 40 minutes before the start of the examination) • Listen to the instructions of the principal, chief invigilator and invigilators	• Take drugs or any medication to keep you awake • Leave studying to the night before the examination • Try to find out what will be in the examination paper in advance • Bring notes, memoranda or any other material that could be used to assist you unfairly into the examination room. • Copy from another candidate • Communicate with another candidate • Pose as someone else in an examination • Behave in an unruly manner in the examination room • Disobey the instructions of the chief invigilator • Remove your script or any answer sheet from the examination venue

COPYING IS A SERIOUS OFFENCE!
If you are found guilty of copying, your result in the subject will be declared null and void. You will also be barred from writing NSC examinations for the next three years.

STEP 3 EFFECTIVE EXAMINATION WRITING TECHNIQUES

Exam Writing Tip 1

Arrive early and ready to begin.

Exam Writing Tip 2

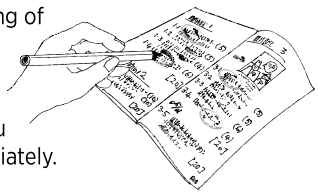
Read and understand the instructions.

- Check that you have received the correct examination paper.
- ALWAYS carefully read the INSTRUCTIONS at the beginning of the question paper. Many students do not take the time to do this and discover later that they answered the wrong questions. Are you required to answer a certain number of questions or do you have to answer all of them? Ask if you are unsure.

Exam Writing Tip 3

Preview the question paper and allocate your writing time appropriately.

- Read through the whole examination paper before you start writing. Note the number of questions and the marks they are worth. Reading over the questions before you start writing will assist in activating your memory. Decide which questions will be easier to do and which ones will take more time. Identify where you have choices among questions and **within** questions and decide which questions to answer. Allocate time for the answering of each question. Also allow for time to go over your answers and to make corrections. If you think of something as you preview, write it down immediately.



Exam Writing Tip 4

Tackle each question systematically.

- Read each question carefully, underlining key words, especially the verbs that tell you what to do.
- Is it a one-part or a two-part question? What are you being asked to do? Identify what you have and what you need. Plan the way you will answer the question and make a few notes on the steps you will take. This will provide you and the person marking the exam with an idea of how you attempted the question. This will also assist you with finding and correcting your mistakes.
- Some questions may ask you to **apply** your knowledge. Write your answer in the format required, e.g. an essay, a programme, a review, an interview, a letter, a calculation.

Exam Writing Tip 5

Write down something for every question

- If all you can do is provide a definition, then do so. If you are running out of time, answer in point form, instead of complete sentences. Write down anything you know that is related to the question.

Exam Writing Tip 6

Set out your answers clearly.

- Write legibly so the marker can read it easily. Leave spaces between questions and always start a new **section** on a new page. Make sure you number your answers correctly according to the numbering on the question paper.

Exam Writing Tip 7

If you feel you are unable to answer a question, don't panic and allow anxiety to affect how you are going to fare in the exam.

- Ask yourself "What do I need to **know** to answer this question?", and start writing down your thoughts. Avoid negative self-talk. Focus on the task instead of yourself.

Exam Writing Tip 8

Review and make corrections.

- Take time to go over your answers. Do not change anything unless you are quite sure it is wrong. Check mathematical answers by performing reverse calculations. Look at the processes you used. Make sure you have written down everything that was asked for.

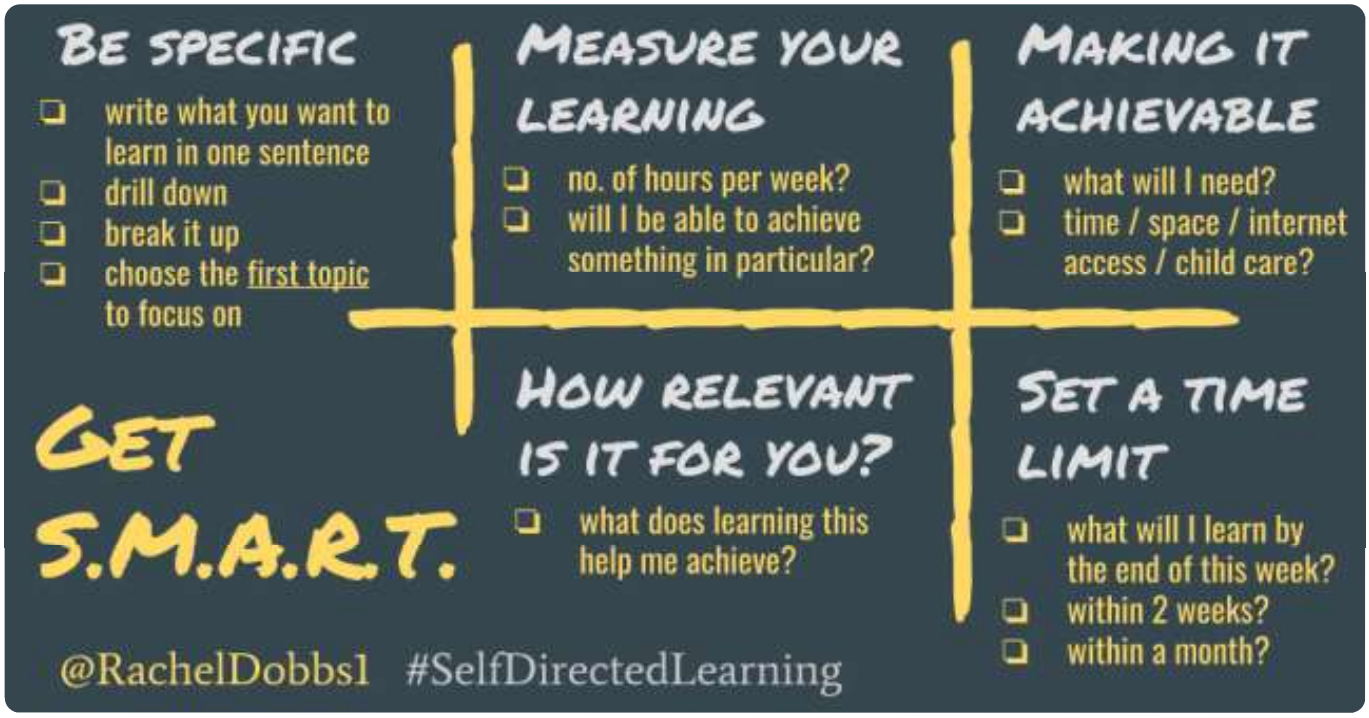
Exam Writing Tip 9

Stay until the end.

- Don't leave the exam before the time elapses. Sometimes, it takes a little more time for the information in your memory to "surface". So use all the time you are given. Check that you have answered all the required questions. Read your answers over again and again.

Remember when writing exams:

- Take note of the key verb at the beginning of each question which should guide you in your response to the question.
- Read instructions to questions/ activities to ensure you know what is being asked.
- Always write neatly and legibly. The **marker** of your Grade 12 examination papers must be able to read your handwriting.



5 Step DIY Self-Directed Learning Plan

#1: Understand your motivation

Start with **why** you really want to learn a new skill – understanding your own motivation for learning will stand you in good stead when you feel like giving up

#2: Be clear & S.M.A.R.T. about what you are planning to learn

- **S** – Get Specific
- **M** – Measure your learning
- **A** – set Achievable learning goals
- **R** – create a Relevance to your studies. Why do I need to study this?
- **T** – Set a Time by which you aim to have completed a section of work

#3: Get organised with your time & tracking your learning

Part of the attraction of learning in a self-directed way or learning online may well be that you can engage with learning at your own pace. You might want to make a regular appointment with yourself – for example "I am going to spend 1 hour learning about [X, Y, Z topic] on a Wednesday.

#4: Make a public commitment to your learning & buddy up

Making a public commitment to your learning is a good first step – tell other people what you are intending to do. This might be a friend or a family member. Ask them to check-in with you on your learning, and perhaps to remind you to stay on track with your goals when they see you getting distracted.

You can take this a step further by buddying up with someone you know to commit to learning a new skill together, or to learn new things alongside each other – agreeing to check-in with each other regularly, to hold each other accountable and share what you are learning.

#5: Apply what you are learning in real-world projects

Find a way to make your learning practical – if what you are learning helps you to solve a real-world problem, it will help you maintain your motivation and test out your new skills & knowledge.

https://rachel.we-are-low-profile.com/blog/5-step-self-directed-learning-plan/