Revision Strategies

1. Mnemonics

2. Body Pegs

3. Number System

4. Imagine the Room

5. The Arch

6. Mind-maps

1. Mnemonics

Mnemonics assist the memory, using a system of rhymes, rules, phrases, diagrams, or acronyms. These devices help to remember, memorize, and recall information such as names, dates, facts or figures. They do that by turning original information into an easy, more appealing rhyme or sentence. This can be stored in your brain as an easy reference for larger "meaningful" chunks of data. Using mnemonics is one of the best learning methods out there.

Images	Rhyming
Great Lakes HOMES Huron · Ontario · Michigan · Erie · Superior This is often the easiest way to create an effective mnemonic: what does it look like? Use **Google Images** or something similar for inspiration. Also try doing web searches for "[what you want to remember]" + "looks like".	Another quick route to memorable success. Find something relevant that rhymes with what you're trying to remember. Even half rhymes will often do. Use rhymer.com or a rhyming dictionary to get large lists of rhyming words. You could also have a look in a homonym/dictionary or browse this list of homonyms. *A commonly used* **Rhyme** *of days in each month is:* ***30 days hath September, April, June and November. All the rest have 31, Fine! February 28 except when 29.***

Acronyms

If you're trying to memorise something involving letters, this is often a good bet. A lot of famous mnemonics are acronyms, such as ROYGBIV. Often the acronym alone is good enough, but you can also form a sentence based on it. There a lots of acronym generators on the Web, e.g. all-acronyms.com.

Are there any noises made by the thing you're trying to memorise? Is it often associated with some other sound? Failing that, just make up a noise that seems to fit. **SQUEAL** for writing about literature- statement quotation understand explain additional language

Tunes and poems

If you're feeling musical, this can work wonders. Tunes and poems are very easy to remember as advertisers demonstrate to the great annoyance of most people. Turn it to your advantage to remember stuff more easily. When you are creating a mnemonic (memory aid), the following things can be used to make the mnemonic more memorable:

- Use positive, pleasant images. The brain often blocks out unpleasant ones.
- Exaggerate the size of important parts of the image.
- Use humour. Funny or peculiar things are easier to remember. Rude things are also easier to recall.
- Vivid, colourful images are easier to remember than drab ones.
- Use all the senses. Your mnemonic can contain sounds, smells, tastes, touch, movements and feelings as well as pictures.

Body Pegs

In order to use this system, you must learn the 20 "body-pegs" shown on the diagram.

This may take about 10 minutes but will prove to be really useful.

You will notice that points numbered 1 to 9 start at the fingers of one hand, go up the arm, over the head and down to the fingers of the other hand. Points 10 to 20 start at the eyes and move down the body to the feet. You should practice until you are able to point to all 20 "body-pegs" without hesitation.

1 = Fingers of right hand
2 = Palm of right hand
3 = Right elbow
4 = Right shoulder
5 = Head
6 = Left shoulder
7 = Left elbow
8 = Palm of left hand
9 = Fingers of left hand
10 = Eyes
11 = Nose
12 = Mouth
13 = Ears
14 = Chest
15 = Tummy
16 = Behind
17 = Right knee
18 = Left knee
19 = Right foot
20 = Left foot
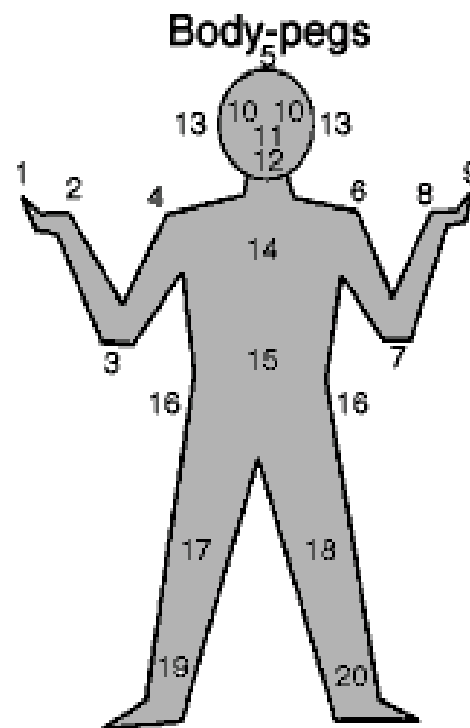
Now, for any 20 pieces of information you need to recall (e.g. 20 quotes in your anthology/ 20 equations in Science) – associate them with each part of your body.

Tip 1 – Stick sticky notes onto your body with the 20 things you need to remember written on them

Tip 2 – Stick them onto somebody else!

The Number System

In the number system there are two possible strategies to use.

1) The first one is called 'The Number-Shape System'. The system is simple. All you have to do is think of an image for each of the numbers from one to ten. You can choose any image – aim to be imaginative! Each image acts as a reminder for the number it is associated with. See the example below – these are just suggestions!

1 – paintbrush	2– swan	3 – heart	4 - yacht	5 - hook
6 – elephant's trunk	7 - cliff	8 - snowman	9 – balloon & stick	10- bat and ball
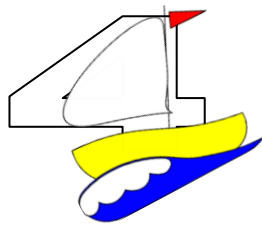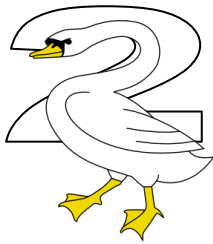
All you need to do then is associate key terms with a number. Then create an imaginative image to link the key terms to the paired numbers.

For example, if you had to remember the process of digestion for Biology, you might associate number 1 with the mouth, imagining a painter wetting the tip of his paintbrush. Process number 2 may then be using the salivary glands, which begins with the same letter as your 'swan'. Your 'heart' for number 3 is a muscle, much like the muscles in your oesophagus. This process can be used as a step-by-step process (as the one above) or just to remember 10 key terms for a particular subject.

- Don't worry about how 'good' or 'bad' your images are
- Do use colour to bring the images alive and to reinforce memory

2. The second strategy is called 'The Number-Rhyme System'. This method is ideal when you need to learn short lists of items. This uses rhyming sounds rather than associated shapes and images. The first step is to associate Number-Rhyme key words. Look at the list below as an example.

1 – bun	2– shoe	3 – tree	4 - door	5 - hive
6 – sticks	7 - heaven	8 - skate	9 – vine	10- hen

Now let's say you had a list from the subject Geography regarding the formation of waterfalls.

The first step is hard rock, so imagine a **bun** that has been severely over baked! The second step happens because of the less resistant rock, and so you could imagine a **shoe** being the harder rock on top of the weaker rock (essentially a foot). The water then runs and forms a plunge pool, and water is required for a **tree** to grow.

You get the idea.

Again, this system can be used for step-by-step processes or to remember a list of key terms.

Imagine the Room

Imagine a room that you know well - perhaps your bedroom or a classroom.

Within this room there are features and objects in known positions. The basis of the Roman Room system is that things to be remembered are associated with these objects, so that by recalling the objects within the room, all the associated objects can also be remembered.

For example, as I look around my room I can visualise the following objects: **coffee table, sofa, lamp, cabinet, bookcase, CD rack, stereo system, telephone, television, video, chair, mirror, etc.**

Now suppose you want to remember a list of World War I war poets -

- Rupert Brooke
- G. K. Chesterton
- Walter de la Mare
- Robert Graves
- Rudyard Kipling
- Wilfred Owen
- Siegfried Sassoon

To help you remember the list of poets, visualise walking into the room. On the door is an imaginary picture of a man sitting in a trench writing poetry in a tattered exercise book.
Look at the table. On the top – imagine RUPERT the BEAR sitting in a small BROOK. This will remind you of Rupert Brooke.
Someone seems to have moved furniture around and has left a chest on the sofa – it has huge letters GK on the lid. This will remind you of GK Chesterton.
The lamp is shaped like a tiny brick WALL over which a female horse (MARE) is about to jump. This will remind you of Walter de la Mare.

The Arch
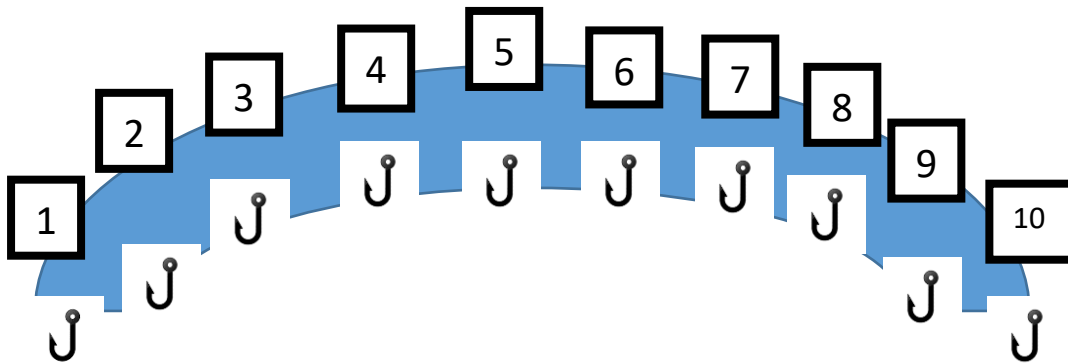
1. Draw an arch on your page.
2. Place the numbers 1 – 10 across the top of your arch (you may need more or less depending on the amount of information you need to learn).
3. Hook one piece of information to each number.
4. Think about the order in which you need to learn the information. Is it chronological, in a list or ideas that link?

   - How does Sheila change across the play *An Inspector Calls*?
   - Ten Steps to World War Two
   - Photoshop Techniques checklist and guide
   - The Digestive System

5. As you hang each piece of information onto the arch add colour and images to help you remember.
6. When you get into the exam you will be able to visualise the arch and recreate it quickly at the top of your page.

Mind Maps

A mind map – a kind of diagram which represents all the information you need to learn, present or analyse, in a visual manner – enables you to get to grips with a large body of information, increase memory retention during the revision process and even boost your creativity.

The use of mind maps works with the natural human tendency to scan an entire page in a non-linear manner. Studying from written texts, on the other hand, forces us to read from left to right, a process we can find tiring and resulting to a loss of interest and focus. Mind maps, on the other hand, allow us to capture and comprehend the associations that can arise from one topic.

Advantages of mind mapping:

Mind maps enable us to organise information better visually, through the use of branches and sub-branches.

They encourage idea generation, since the process is a highly creative one that encourages us to view ideas and topics from fresh perspectives and to think in a non-linear fashion.

Mind maps allow us to organise massive volumes of information, encouraging us to focus on the ideas and facts that really matter.

They can be used for much more than revision; they can aid us in carrying out various tasks, including planning projects, making negotiations and presentations, problem solving, project management, collaboration, brainstorming and note taking. Mind maps can even be used to help us make personal decisions.

Mind maps make facts easier to remember thanks to the colours and images they contain, which are easier for the brain to retain than linear text.

They encourage us to use analytical left brain by training us to search for key words and ideas.
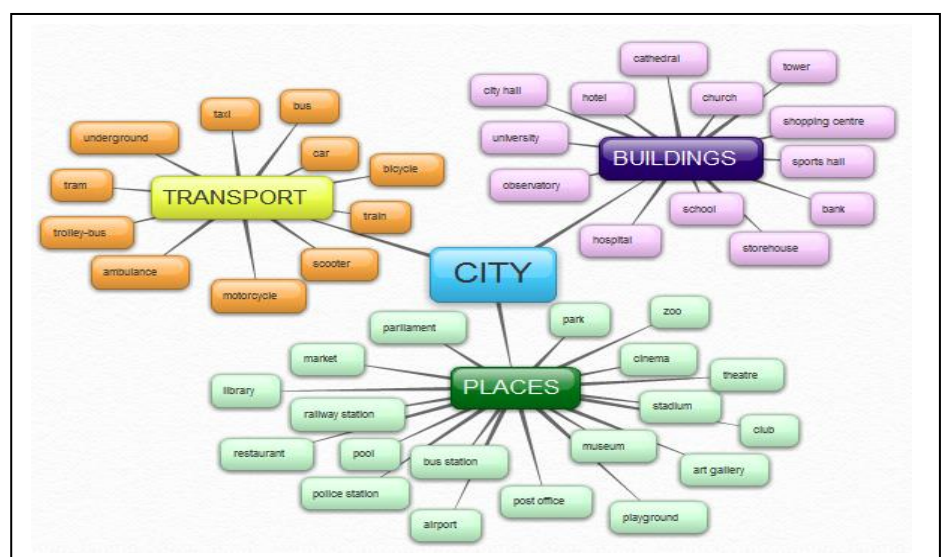
How to use a mind map effectively for exam revision:

You have two choices when it comes to making your own mind map: you can either draw it by hand or use a wide range of interesting software options which are ideal for collaborative projects. Regardless of which type you choose to work with, a few basic principles to follow when using mind maps for revision include:

1. Start at the centre of the page with a circle or square indicating the main topic.

2. The main ideas that make up the topic should be represented by thick branches that emanate from the central node. Your branches should have one word or two for the purpose of clarity. Think of each branch as a heading in an essay or a book.

3. Create smaller sub-branches which extend out from every branch. Think of these as sub-headings.

4. At the end of each branch, write out one key word or concept. This will make it easier to remember key concepts during revision.

5. Find images or pictures which illustrate your ideas and paste them onto key areas in your diagram.

6. Try to find connections between the various branches and sub-branches; this is a crucial aspect of critical thinking.