

Lilac Sky Schools  
School Transformation

**BE A  
BETTER  
LEARNER**

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## Planning for Improving your Learning and Performance.

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The key skill qualification
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  - the evidence you need
  - examples
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### Section 1

# Intro

## How to use this booklet

### Section 2

## Improving Learning and Study Skills.

- Skill 1** Know how to make yourself work even when you don't want to  
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**Skill 4** Make easy-to-remember notes  
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**Intro.**

**THIS BOOKLET IS  
ABOUT LEARNING  
SMARTER.**

## **About this booklet**

**The materials in this booklet will help you to improve your own learning and performance. The booklet also gives you a choice of different successful ways to learn and revise.**

**Section 1** teaches you ways of becoming an independent learner who knows what you want to achieve and how to plan. It is based on the key skill 'Improving Own Learning and Performance'. This skill can be accredited through examination boards. Some details of this are given on **page 11**.

**One skill in 'Improving Own Learning and Performance' is to be able to learn in different ways. Section 2** helps you with this.

**WANT TO LEARN  
BETTER?**

**TRY THIS.**

# **SECTION 1**

**PLANNING FOR IMPROVING  
YOUR LEARNING AND PERFORMANCE**

# Why planning helps.

## A plan will:

- **Help to keep you focused.**
- **Help you to concentrate on the things you need to do.**
- **Make sure you have enough time.**
- **Help you to think out the best ways of doing things.**

**Good plans have SMART targets.**

**WHICH MEANS THEY ARE DEFINITE AND NOT VAGUE**

**WHICH MEANS THAT YOU KNOW WHEN YOU HAVE DONE THEM**

**S**pecific  
**M**easurable  
**A**chievable and  
**R**ealistic  
**T**ime - related

**YOU DECIDE HOW LONG EACH PART OF THE PLAN WILL TAKE**

**TRY THE QUIZ ON THE NEXT PAGE. IT WILL HELP YOU WRITE SMART TARGETS**

# Planning.

Try this questionnaire.  
Think carefully about the answers.

BE HONEST, IT'S ONLY GOING TO BE SEEN BY YOU

- **Decide which of the skills opposite you are going to concentrate on.**
- **Decide which to develop first.**
- **Look at the relevant sections in Section 2 of this book.**

	JUST LIKE ME	LIKE ME SOMETIMES	NOT LIKE ME AT ALL	SEE PAGES
I KNOW HOW TO MAKE MYSELF WORK	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	14
I ORGANISE MY DAY, MY WORK AND MY FREE TIME SO THAT I CAN MEET DEADLINES	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	15
I PLAN EACH STUDY SESSION AND REVIEW MY PROGRESS AT THE END	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	18
I MAKE EASY TO REMEMBER NOTES USING KEYWORDS, PICTURES AND COLOURFUL CHARTS	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	19
I KNOW HOW TO REMEMBER THINGS	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	24
I KNOW WHAT MY OWN LEARNING STYLE IS AND I USE IT TO HELP MY STUDY	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	26
I KNOW HOW TO KEEP MY BRAIN ACTIVE AND HEALTHY	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	29
I BELIEVE IN MYSELF, THINK POSITIVELY AND REMAIN CONFIDENT EVEN WHEN THINGS GO WRONG FOR ME	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	34
I WORRY ABOUT STUDY AND EXAMS	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	35
I REVISE IN A TIDY, ORGANISED WORKSPACE	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	38
I STICK TO MY STUDY TIMETABLE	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	38
I ENJOY LEARNING	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	39

# Being Smart.

## Target

## Smart?

To work harder	<input type="checkbox"/>
To pass my A-levels	<input type="checkbox"/>
To learn the theory for the driving test exam in four weeks	<input type="checkbox"/>
To hand in all my work on time for the next six weeks	<input type="checkbox"/>
To improve my behaviour	<input type="checkbox"/>
To learn how to use spreadsheets by the end of June	<input type="checkbox"/>
To improve my time management	<input type="checkbox"/>
To do a study schedule for my mocks by the end of this week	<input type="checkbox"/>
To improve my key skills	<input type="checkbox"/>
To turn up on time for all my lessons this term	<input type="checkbox"/>
To do more study	<input type="checkbox"/>
To get a part-time job	<input type="checkbox"/>

Now check with your tutor

08

**Step 1** Read the list of targets on this page written by other people. Tick each one that you think is a SMART target.

**Step 2** Working with a partner, take two targets that are not SMART and make them SMART.

**Step 3** Now come up with at least three action points specifying (with timescales) what needs to be done to achieve the SMART targets and how you could go about this.

## Writing your own plan

What do you think would help you to learn more?

Think about what your teachers have said to you, or written in your books, or on your reports home. Also, have a look at the list on the contents page. The list contains skills which lead to good learning. Which of them are you good at?

Which would you like to be better at?

There is advice on planning on the three pages after the next one.

USE THE NEXT PAGE  
TO DECIDE WHAT YOU  
WOULD LIKE TO DO TO  
LEARN BETTER

## Writing your plan with SMART targets

WHICH SKILLS/ACTIVITIES  
DO I NEED TO DO?

WHAT DO I WANT TO  
ACHIEVE BY THE END OF  
EACH ACTIVITY?  
(WHAT ARE MY TARGETS?)

WHEN DO I INTEND TO  
START THE ACTIVITY?

WHEN DO I INTEND TO  
FINISH THE ACTIVITY?

WHAT RESOURCES WILL  
I NEED?

WHAT PROBLEMS MAY  
ARISE?

WHO WILL SUPPORT AND  
HELP ME AND WHEN WILL I  
SEE THEM?

HOW WILL I KNOW IF I HAVE  
BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN  
ACHIEVING MY TARGETS?

THE TWO PAGES  
AFTER THIS HAVE  
SOME EXAMPLES ON

**Write your plan.**  
**Copy this page**  
**to write your plan**

**Ask your tutor to  
check your plan**

## Setting smart targets

### An example

<b>WHICH SKILLS/ACTIVITIES DO I NEED TO DO?</b>	<b>I WANT TO LEARN HOW TO MAKE EASY TO REMEMBER NOTES.</b>
<b>WHAT DO I WANT TO ACHIEVE BY THE END OF EACH ACTIVITY? (WHAT ARE MY TARGETS?)</b>	<b>I WANT TO KNOW TWO GOOD WAYS OF WRITING NOTES WHICH ARE EASY TO LEARN FROM.</b>
<b>WHEN DO I INTEND TO START THE ACTIVITY?</b>	<b>OCTOBER 2ND</b>
<b>WHEN DO I INTEND TO FINISH THE ACTIVITY?</b>	<b>OCTOBER 9TH</b>
<b>WHAT RESOURCES WILL I NEED?</b>	<b>A NOTEBOOK TO WRITE IN. SOME COLOURED PENS AND PENCILS. MY GEOGRAPHY BOOK, SO I CAN PRACTICE WHAT I HAVE LEARNED.</b>
<b>WHAT PROBLEMS MAY ARISE?</b>	<b>IF I'M GIVEN A LOT OF HOMEWORK TO DO IN THAT WEEK, I MAY HAVE TO EXTEND MY DEADLINE.</b>
<b>WHO WILL SUPPORT AND HELP ME AND WHEN WILL I SEE THEM?</b>	<b>I'LL TALK TO MY TUTOR IN PSE AND MAYBE TO MY GEOGRAPHY TEACHER.</b>
<b>HOW WILL I KNOW IF I HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN ACHIEVING MY TARGETS?</b>	<b>I WILL HAVE PRODUCED SOME GOOD GEOGRAPHY NOTES, WHICH I REMEMBER WELL.</b>

### A second example

<b>WHICH SKILLS/ACTIVITIES DO I NEED TO DO?</b>	<b>TO BE ABLE TO REVISE IN A TIDY ORGANISED PLACE.</b>
<b>WHAT DO I WANT TO ACHIEVE BY THE END OF EACH ACTIVITY? (WHAT ARE MY TARGETS?)</b>	<b>ORGANISE MY WORKPLACE AT HOME SO THAT IT IS TIDY, THERE ARE PLACES TO PUT THINGS AND I KNOW WHERE EVERYTHING IS.</b>
<b>WHEN DO I INTEND TO START THE ACTIVITY?</b>	<b>SEPTEMBER 10TH</b>
<b>WHEN DO I INTEND TO FINISH THE ACTIVITY?</b>	<b>SEPTEMBER 20TH</b>
<b>WHAT RESOURCES WILL I NEED?</b>	<b>BOXES TO KEEP MY FILES IN. EMPTY JARS OR TINS FOR PENS AND PENCILS ETC.</b>
<b>WHAT PROBLEMS MAY ARISE?</b>	<b>I MIGHT NEED MORE SPACE. I'LL TALK TO MUM ABOUT IT.</b>
<b>WHO WILL SUPPORT AND HELP ME AND WHEN WILL I SEE THEM?</b>	<b>MY MUM</b>
<b>HOW WILL I KNOW IF I HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN ACHIEVING MY TARGETS?</b>	<b>I WILL NOT BE SPENDING TIME LOOKING FOR THINGS. I WILL KNOW WHERE IT ALL IS.</b>

A student using this guide may decide to work first on making easy to remember notes and revising in a tidy, organised workspace. Their plans may look like this. When they have followed their plans and achieved their targets they may decide to work on some other targets.

# Following Your Plan.

**Don't forget that to achieve the Key Skill award:**

**You need to check that:**

- You are making the progress you need to.
- You are altering your plan if you need to.
- You are getting support when you need to.
- Your plan has been successful.

**To do this, keep a record (log) of:**

- What alternations you have made to your plan
- What support you have asked for and received.
- What you have learnt

**You also need to:**

- say if you were successful in your plan and give some evidence to show how you know this
- Try different ways of learning and working for short periods without supervision.

**Full details of this Key Skill award can be obtained from your teacher, or from the following website;**

**[www.qca.org.uk/qualifications](http://www.qca.org.uk/qualifications)**

**Before you decide to go for this Key Skill make sure you know exactly what you need to do!**

# **SECTION 2**

**IMPROVING LEARNING  
AND STUDY SKILLS**

# Skill 1.

**Know how to make yourself work even when you don't want to.**

## Idea 1

Have a vision of what you would like to do when you are an adult, what sort of job would you really like. Imagine yourself in that job. Imagine what your life would be like, how good it would be.

Now think of how you are going to achieve your ambition, and how your studies will help you.

Keep this firmly in your mind. Let it motivate you to work. Let it give you the energy and commitment to overcome any difficulties.

Think of the work you have planned to do. To help you get started begin with the bit you like the most.

## Idea 2

Plan some rewards for yourself - eg after I've finished this part of the work I will have my first reward. When I've finished the second part I will have a bigger reward.

**I AM THE BOSS  
OF MY OWN  
COMPANY**

## Idea 3

Try something different - a different learning style for example - see skill 4. If you are mentally tired, try a very different activity before you start working - go outside and play ball or frisbee for 15 minutes, with someone else if you can. Try a brain gym exercise see page 36.

## Idea 4

Some experts say that listening to certain types of music helps you to learn. Mozart is said to be the best see page 37.

**I'D LOVE TO WORK  
WITH CHILDREN**

# Skill 2.

## Plan your time

**YOU DESERVE TIME TO YOURSELF**

### Step 1

The best study is planned study. Before you can plan it, first look at how you spend your time now. You can do this by filling in the time plan below. Leave out school lessons but put in:

- Private study and homework
- Commitments such as sport, reading, household jobs, particular TV programmes, clubs, discos etc.
- Free time

	7-9am	9-11am	11-1pm	1-3pm	3-5pm	5-7pm	7-9pm	9-10pm
Sat								
Sun								
Mon								
Tue								
Wed								
Thur								
Fri								

Study Week Planner 1  
 How you spend your time now  
 Are you making the best use of your time?  
 Colour code your chart like this:  
 Red: study, homework  
 Blue: activities, commitments  
 Black: free time

### Step 2

Now that you can see how you spend your time, complete this table:

How you spend your time now.

	Hours, Mins, Weeks
STUDY & HOMEWORK	
ACTIVITIES & COMMITMENTS	
FREE TIME	

### Are you making best use of your time?

Things I didn't have time for:  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

How much time did I waste?  
 On what?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

### Step 3

You should now be able to work out how many hours a week you can realistically spend on study. Ask your tutor if he or she thinks it's enough.

"I can realistically spend  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 hours on study this week"

**NOW GO OVER THE PAGE**

## Step4

Next, divide this time up so that it covers all your subjects. You might need to spend more time on some subjects than on others. As each exam gets nearer, try and spend more time on that subject. Make sure that the total number of hours is the same as your realistic study time.

Subject	Hours
ENGLISH	
MATHS	
<b>TOTAL</b>	

**WELL DONE!**

**YOU HAVE SET YOURSELF A TARGET FOR THE WEEKLY NUMBER OF HOURS WHICH YOU WILL STUDY FOR EACH SUBJECT**

## Step5

You are now ready to fill out a weekly study timetable.

Use the full size table at the back of the book

### PLANNING YOUR TIME WILL:

- GIVE YOU A TARGET TO AIM FOR
- SPREAD YOUR STUDY OVER THE WEEK
- HELP YOU TO ESTABLISH A ROUTINE
- ENCOURAGE YOU TO KEEP UP WITH YOUR WORK

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
9.00							
10.00							
11.00							
12.00							
1.00							
2.00							
3.00							
4.00							
5.00							
6.00							
7.00							
8.00							
9.00							
10.00							

# Step6

Now fill in your month by month study timetable.

Add in all your exam dates, study leave, holidays and any other important dates. Work out the best times to study each subject. You can use different coloured pens for things like exams and study time to make your timetable clearer. Display it in the place where you will study. There are extra copies of this timetable for you to use in the back of this book.

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
April							
May							
June							

# Skill3.

## Tips on how to check your progress

**As you cover each topic, it's important to check how you're getting on. Here's how:**

**Get help at once with anything you don't understand.**

**Think carefully about the advice your teachers give you.**

**Make sure you know how to improve a piece of work that you haven't done well on.**

**Make sure you have a complete set of summary notes that you feel you can learn from as you finish each topic.**

**Make a grid like the one below for each of your subjects. It doesn't have to be exactly the same as this one.**

Topic	Date tested	By Whom	PERFORMANCE	
			OK?	Need to improve
WHOLE NUMBERS				

**TALK ABOUT YOUR PROGRESS WITH TEACHERS, FAMILY AND FRIENDS**

# Skill4.

**Make easy-to-remember notes using key words and ideas only. Using colourful charts and pictures.**

**Most people remember:**

**90%** of what you read, hear, see, say, do.

**60%** of what you do.

**50%** of what you say.

**40%** of what you see.

**30%** of what you hear.

**20%** of what you read.

**So try reading your notes aloud to yourself. Then change them into a different format like those alongside. You will be reading, seeing, hearing, saying and doing.**

**This is better than copying out notes. Although it's easy to copy out notes it is even easier to copy them out without thinking about them or learning from them. To learn from your notes you need to find ways of using your brain. A very successful way of doing this is by changing the notes into a different format.**

**Here is a list of formats in which information can be presented.**

**Formats that can be used include:**

- notes
- a story
- a newspaper story
- pictures
- a cartoon
- diagram
- flow chart
- a mind map
- a graph
- bullet points

**Only 10% of the words in a text are really necessary. The first stage of changing formats is to identify the key ideas. You might want to underline or highlight them.**

**Examples:**

**On the following page is a passage about Mount Etna.**

# Example Information:

READ THIS!

**Mount Etna is the largest volcano in Europe. It lies on the island of Sicily in the Mediterranean Sea. At present Mount Etna is 3260 metres high, and its top is often snow covered. But Etna is not a simple volcano and its height changes from time to time. On its main cone there are hundreds of smaller cones and craters. Like Vesuvius, Etna always shows some signs of life. In the last 2,500 years, Etna has erupted more than 400 times. The last time was in 1983.**

**On the lower slopes of Mount Etna, there are orange and lemon groves. Higher up, grape vines are grown. Above the farming areas there are forests. Many people live on the slopes of Etna and work on these farms and forests.**

**During the 1983 eruption, streams of lava threatened the towns and villages below. To save their houses, the people dug a deep canal to carry the lava away from their homes. Then explosives were used to try to force the streams of lava into the canal. Unfortunately, the results were only partly successful, and a number of houses and hotels were destroyed.**

TRY TO CHANGE IT INTO A DIFFERENT FORMAT. SEE HOW MANY FORMATS YOU CAN USE. ENJOY YOURSELF!

TURN TO THE NEXT PAGE FOR SOME EXAMPLES

# Ways of translating

## A Story: Mount Etna

The Ferrari family lived on the slopes of Mount Etna, a mountain on the Mediterranean island of Sicily. The mountain was their home and workplace. Lucia worked with the orange and lemon groves near the bottom of the mountain where it is warm. Maria looked after the grape vines further up the mountain.

Marco worked in the farms and forests higher up still. Leonardo took tourists up to the top - which is 3,260 metres high! The tourists had to be careful of what they wore. Even when it was hot at the foot of the mountain, the top could be covered with snow. The mountain was also dangerous because it was a volcano.

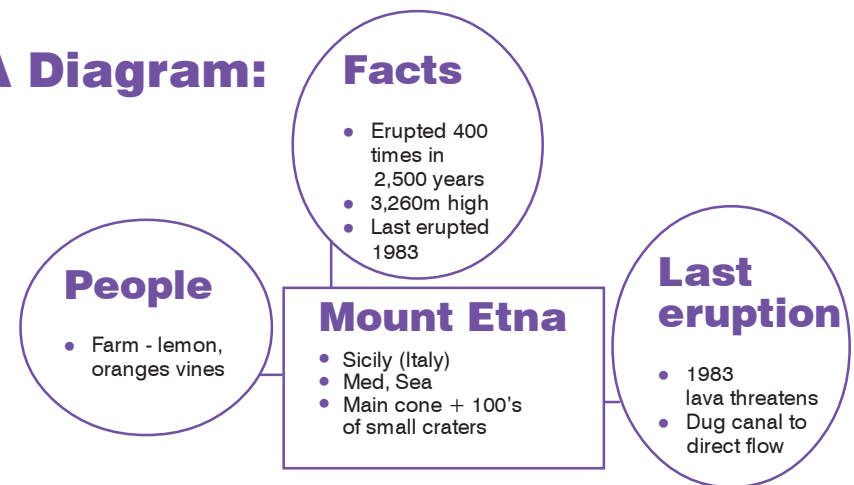
On its main cone are hundreds of smaller cones and craters. It has erupted 400 times in the last 2500 years.

One day in 1983 Mount Etna erupted. Molten lava raced down the mountainside destroying the farms, forests, vines and olive and lemon trees. It was heading for the villages. Everyone helped to dig a deep canal to divert the lava away. But the lava went past the canal. In desperation explosives were used to force the streams of lava into the canal. This was partly successful, but some lava did destroy some of the houses and hotels.

## A Table:

<b>Mount Etna</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sicily (Italy)</li> <li>• Med, Sea</li> <li>• Main cone + 100's of small craters</li> </ul>		
<b>Facts</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Erupted 400 times in 2,500 years</li> <li>• 3,260m high</li> <li>• Last erupted 1983</li> </ul>	<b>People</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Farm - lemon, oranges vines</li> <li>• Forests</li> <li>• Houses on slopes</li> </ul>	<b>1983</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eruption therefore lava threatens</li> <li>• Dug canal to direct flow</li> <li>• Explosives</li> <li>• Partly successful</li> <li>• Houses destroyed</li> </ul>

## A Diagram:



## Mind Maps\*

**These take time to learn, but are extremely helpful. This is because they use lots of different parts of your brain - there are therefore lots of different parts of your brain which can bring the work back into your memory.**

**The brain remembers the pattern of the mind map and the colours. Also because you have to think out what to write on a mind map, your brain is very involved, much more so than when you simply copy out notes.**

**The best way of mind mapping is:**

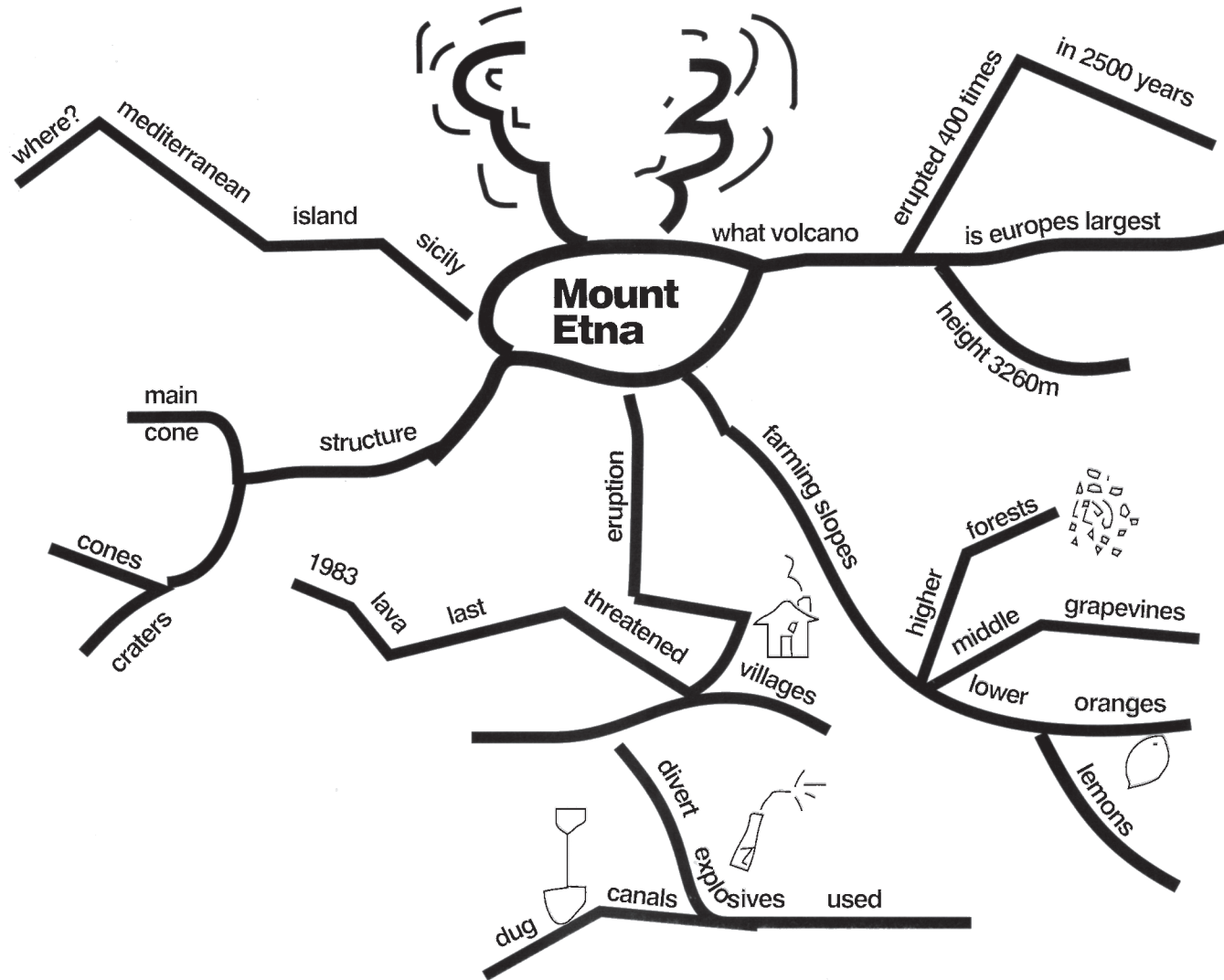
**Put the title in the middle with a picture to help you to remember it.**

**Split the topic into the main ideas, put each idea on a line radiating out from the title. Use a different colour for each idea.**

**Break each idea into more detailed ideas, one line for each.**

**Try to keep one word to each line. If you need to write more than one word, add to the line, changing its direction slightly. This stops you writing whole sentences and makes you use your brain more - which helps you to remember.**

**Add pictures. If you have a visual learning style this will really help.**



# Skill5.

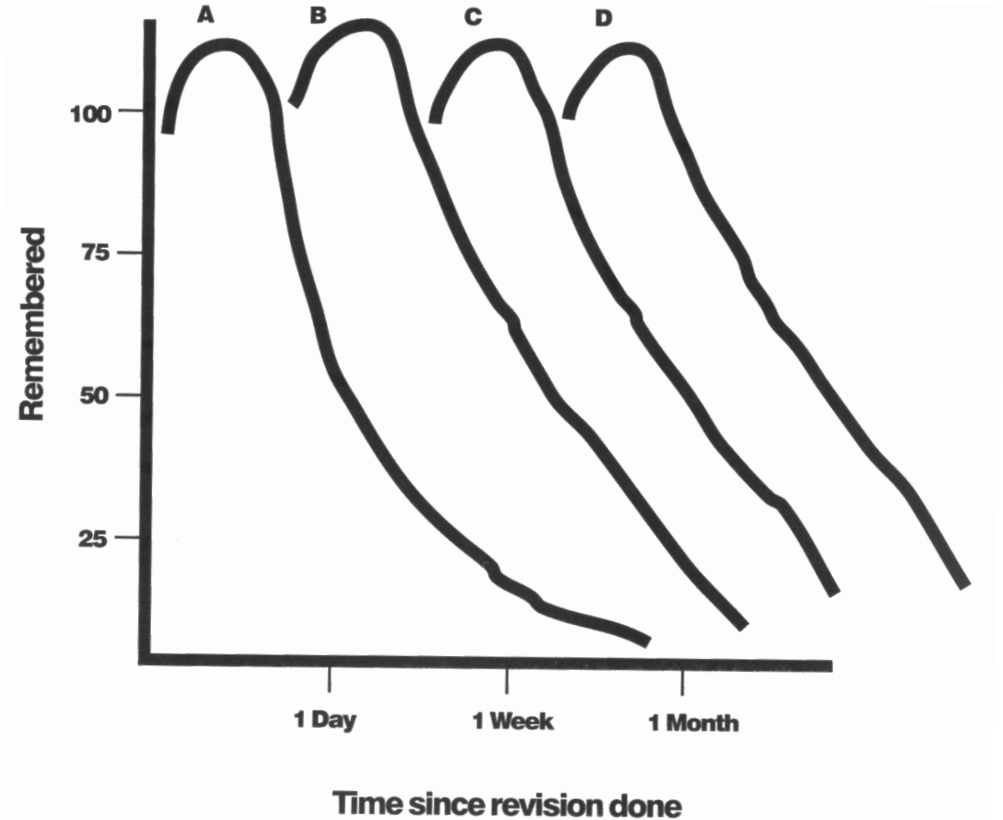
## Know how to memorise things

Here are some ideas:

- Use Mindmaps (see page 22)
- Stop after each hour's work. Quickly look over (review) what you have done. Spend roughly one minute for every hour's work you have done. This will help you remember it until the next day. (B on graph).
- The next day, review the work you did the day before. (C on graph).
- Review again after one week and after one month (D on graph).
- The graph alongside shows how long your memory lasts if you do not review your work, and how long it lasts if you do.

A. NO REVIEW  
B. REVIEW AFTER 10 MINS  
C. REVIEW AFTER 1 DAY  
D. REVIEW AFTER 1 WEEK  
ESSENTIAL TO DO B AND C

## Recall - with reviews



## Here are some more ideas

- **Next day - before you start on something new, review the previous day's work - one minute for every hour's work. This will help you remember it for the next week.**
- **One week later, review the work you did one week before. This will help you remember it for one month.**
- **Some research suggests that having music playing helps. This is only good advice if the music doesn't distract you. Mozart and baroque music such as Handel are said to be the best for stimulating the brain.**
- **The things you do at the beginning and end of a session of learning, you remember best. Having a one minute break every 20-30 minutes means you have lots more beginnings and ends.**

**A GOOD MNEMONIC IS 'RUN OVER YOUR GRANNY BECAUSE IT'S VIOLENT'. THE FIRST LETTER OF EACH WORD (ROYGBIV) GIVES YOU A WAY OF REMEMBERING THE COLOURS OF THE SPECTRUM (RED, ORANGE, YELLOW, GREEN, BLUE, INDIGO, VIOLET).**

- **Try using mnemonics. Some people use the made up word SOHCAHTOA to remind them of what a sine, cosine and tangent are (Sine = opposite over hypotenuse, cosine = adjacent over hypotenuse, tangent = opposite over adjacent).**
- **If you are getting really tired, have a longer and more different break - go outside, play ball for 15 minutes or so.**
- **The more strongly you can picture something happening, the better you will remember it. So turn what you are learning into a story. There is an idea for this in Skill4, Page 21. The more strongly you can visualise the story, the better you will remember it.**
- **If you are an auditory learner, read it out aloud.**
- **Try learning different subjects in different rooms or chairs. When you try to remember the work you studied, first think back to where you learnt it.**
- **Take a break for one minute every 20 - 30 minutes. Get up and walk about.**
- **If you are a kinaesthetic learner, build what you are learning into movements. For example if you have to remember a map or a diagram, don't just look at it, sketch it out several times - your brain will remember your arm movements. If you can, turn what you are trying to learn into a picture, try sketching out the picture several times. Or use post-it notes around your room to remember a sequence.**

# Skill6.

## Know what your own learning style is and use it to help with studying

Did you know that most people have a preferred learning style?

In this pack there are two ways of helping you identify your preferred learning style: (1) you could do the VAK questionnaire or (2) you can use the descriptions of the three styles to help you decide.

Well, were you:

V - visual  
A - auditory, or  
K - kinaesthetic

**WHAT USE IS THIS?**

**YOU MAY NEED TO PRACTICE LEARNING IN A DIFFERENT STYLE. YOU CAN USE YOUR LEARNING STYLE TO HELP YOU REVISE.**



**If you are Auditory:**

Read the text aloud and pay close attention to the way it sounds. Try reading it to yourself 'under your breath'. Work with a friend and take it in turns to devise questions to ask about the text.

Decide on the key words/concepts you need to learn. Experiment with different ways of saying the key words out loud (emphasise different parts of the word, using different voices). Make up a mnemonic to remember the important facts/concepts.



**If you are Visual:**

Draw a mind map. Represent the main facts/concepts as a diagram. Use a highlighter to highlight the keywords you need to learn. Try to visualise.



**If you are Kinaesthetic:**

Go for a walk or move around as you learn. Write out the main points on index cards and then assemble the cards in a logical order.

Using 'post-it' notes, write down the main points.

Arrange the 'post-its' on a wall to show how different areas relate to each other.

Decide on the key words/concepts you will need to learn.

Write out the words in colour and circle/underline them.

Now make up actions to go with them.

# VAK Questionnaire

THE LETTER WITH THE HIGHEST SCORE INDICATES YOUR PREFERRED WAY OF LEARNING. MANY PEOPLE DO NOT HAVE A REALLY STRONG PREFERENCE AND CAN WORK EASILY WITH ALL THREE STYLES - IF YOU HAVE ROUGHLY EQUAL SCORES THIS MAY BE YOU.

Tick the box which describes you best.

1. When you think about spelling a word, do you:

- V See the word   
 A Sound the word   
 K Write the word down to see if it looks right

2. When you are really concentrating, are you distracted by:

- V Messiness/untidiness   
 A Noise/talking/music   
 K Movement

3. When you recall specific incidents, do you:

- V Do it with pictures/images   
 A Sounds   
 K See moving pictures

4. When you are angry, do you:

- V Remain silent but seethe inside   
 A Shout loudly   
 K Clench your fists, grit your teeth, stamp about.

5. When you forget an incident that has happened or a person you've met, do you:

- V Forget names but remember faces   
 A Forget faces but remember names   
 K Remember only where you were and what you did

6. When describing an object, for example your front door, would you:

- V Picture it in you mind   
 A Describe it with words   
 K Think how it feels, sounds, opens etc

7. When you are learning, do you prefer:

- V Work that is written down in many colours   
 A Listening to a person talk or give instructions   
 K Participating in activities, making and doing

8. When you do leisure activities, do you prefer to:

- V Watch TV, read, play on a computer   
 A Listen to music   
 K Play sports and games

9. When you are talking, do you:

- V Talk little and are reluctant to listen for too long   
 A Like to listen and talk as well   
 K Talk with your hands and gesture a lot

10. When you receive praise or a reward, do you prefer to:

- V Receive a written notice or certificate   
 A Hear it said to you   
 K Be given a 'pat on the back' or a handshake

TOTAL NUMBER OF V's  
 TOTAL NUMBER OF A's  
 TOTAL NUMBER OF K's

# What is your preferred Learning style?

## Are you a Visual learner?

- Do you tend to sit up straight in lessons and always try to look the teacher in the eye?
- Do you prefer reading than being read to?
- Are you the kind of person who always remembers a face?
- Do you use maps rather than relying on instructions given by others?
- Do you take care to co-ordinate your appearance?



If you answered 'YES' to most of these questions, then you probably rely on your eyes most.

## Are you a Auditory learner?

- Do you find yourself repeating the words being used by a teacher or nodding when someone is speaking to you?
- Do you daydream while you listen to thoughts in your head?
- Do you like listening to music and to the radio?
- Are you the kind of person who always remembers a name?
- Are you happy to rely on verbal instructions?
- Do you tell jokes and enjoy a good debate when solving problems?
- Do you enjoy using the telephone?



If you answered 'YES' to most of these questions, then you probably rely on your ears most.

## Are you a Kinaesthetic learner?

- Do you often slump into your chair during lessons and want to get up and walk around?
- Do you play with your pen, with a rubber or with your books while the teacher is talking to you?
- Do you like outdoor activities?
- Do you tend to remember what happened rather than someone's name or even face?
- Are you the kind of person who wants to do it rather than talk about it?



If you answered 'YES' to most of these questions, then you probably rely on your body most.

# Skill7.

## Know your brain

**Which of these is True or False?**

**(Mark T/F alongside)**

1. You think it's possible to carry on learning until you die.
2. You think that bigger brains are better brains.
3. You think that colour and music can actually change the way your brain works.
4. You think that some people are just born 'brainier' than others.
5. You think that brain is made up of mostly water.
6. You think your brain likes chips and other fatty foods, sugary drinks and cigarettes.
7. Brains can be exercised.
8. You think this exercise will help with your study.
9. You think that your brain can only do one thing at a time.
10. You think your brain works better in the morning.

**NOW CHECK YOUR ANSWERS AGAINST THOSE OVER THE PAGE**

# Answers:

**1. True** - yes, 'use it or lose it', just as you exercise to keep your body fit, you can keep learning as long as your brain is stimulated.

**2. False** - it's not the size of your brain that's important, it's how you use it that counts! Apparently Einstein had a relatively average-sized brain - we all have an amazing capacity to learn.

**3. True** - when stimulated with colour and music the appearance of the brain alters, with certain areas lighting up on brain scans. Try using lots of colour and experiment with playing certain types of music when you are revising - it might help you to make connections that will aid your recall.

**4. False** - although we don't fully understand the relationship, we do know that nurture (not nature) has a huge impact on our brainpower and how we learn - in fact some scientists believe you can learn how to be more intelligent.

**5. True** - and to function at its best the brain needs lots of water. Drink plenty of fresh water rather than tea, coffee or coke which actually dehydrate the brain. If you feel thirsty you are already dehydrated.

**6. False** - you may like these things, but as an organ your brain will be healthier and work better on a diet of fresh fruit, vegetables and protein. As for smoking, the brain uses 20 percent of the body's oxygen and people who smoke actually cut brain function about 25 percent.

**7. True** - just as exercising will keep your body fit and well, there are exercises called Brain Gym® that will help wake up your brain and help the two hemispheres to work together effectively.

**8. True** - it should help you to know about your brain and how it works. It is also useful to be active when you're learning as you are helping to get more oxygen to your brain and you are more likely to remember learning in which you are actively involved.

**9. True** - your brain can do many things at once. It can take in information from lots of different sources and process parts and wholes at the same time. It takes in some information even if you're not concentrating on it!

**10. True** - your brain will learn new things better in the morning - use this to your advantage when studying or revising.

**HOW MANY DID YOU GET RIGHT?**

**MORE THAN 8 - BRILLIANT!**

**6 - 8 - GOOD - YOU KNOW HOW TO KEEP YOUR BRAIN HEALTHY.**

**UNDER 6 - NOW YOU'VE LEARNT HOW TO KEEP YOUR BRAIN HEALTHY YOU WILL NEED TO PUT YOUR KNOWLEDGE INTO PRACTICE.**

# How much do you know about your brain?

## BRAIN FACT

Your brain can do many things at once. It can take in a range of different stimuli from lots of different sources. It is a parallel processor, using left and right sides of the brain at the same time.

## STUDY STRATEGY

Good study uses both sides of the brain at once. Try to build lots of variety into your study. Use as many different senses as you can and use music, movement and pictures as much as you can. Mind mapping is especially good for this.

## STUDY STRATEGY

Make sure you know how the bits of your study fit together. Figure out the big picture, then break it down into smaller pieces that you need to learn.

## BRAIN FACT

Your brain processes parts and wholes at the same time. It likes to be aware of the big picture while focusing on the small steps it needs to take to get there.

## BRAIN FACT

Your brain will automatically focus on what it knows, but at the same time will be searching for things that are new.

## STUDY STRATEGY

Work from what you know, but also introduce new information - your brain is hungry for it!

## STUDY STRATEGY

Give yourself regular breaks and time to reflect and think back over what you've done. Sleep is really important too - make sure you get enough sleep.

## BRAIN FACT

Emotions are really important. You won't learn much if you are stressed, angry, upset or tired. Your brain will learn best when you are feeling happy and enthusiastic.

## STUDY STRATEGY

Try to be positive about your study. Focus on what you have achieved rather than looking at things in a negative way. Talk to people to get feedback on what you're doing. Try to find ways of getting yourself into a positive frame of mind. You can do it! Try relaxation techniques.

## BRAIN FACT

Learning involves conscious and unconscious processing. Your brain needs 'down time' to sort through and make sense of what you're revising.

## STUDY STRATEGY

Have regular breaks - these need not to be big breaks, but every 20 minutes or so make sure you stretch, do some Brain Gym or think about something completely different.

## BRAIN FACT

The average concentration time is 20 minutes. After this your brain will not be as receptive.

**BRAIN FACT**

Your brain is the hungriest organ in the body, taking up 20 percent of the oxygen in your blood.

**STUDY STRATEGY**

Get plenty of exercise. A healthy mind needs a physical exercise as well as mental stimulation. Get plenty of sleep.

**STUDY STRATEGY**

Try to find patterns in what you are learning. Use memory tricks like mnemonics and make up stories to remember things.

**BRAIN FACT**

Your brain makes sense of information by making patterns and links between things.

**STUDY STRATEGY**

Eat sensibly, try to avoid a lot of fatty foods and eat lots of fresh fruit and vegetables. Drink plenty of water try to avoid tea, coffee and coke as they have high caffeine content that will dehydrate you.

**BRAIN FACT**

Thirst and hunger affect learning. The brain is made of mostly water.

**STUDY STRATEGY**

Make sure you understand why you need to learn something - what's the reasoning behind it? Why is it important?

**BRAIN FACT**

Your brain will take on new information better in the morning.

**BRAIN FACT**

Your brain needs to know why you're asking it to remember things - how is it relevant?

**STUDY STRATEGY**

Use the morning to work on things that are new or things that you find hard. Use the afternoon to go over things you've already learnt

**BRAIN FACT**

Music can affect the brain waves. Certain types of music are especially good for creating a state of relaxed alertness. The most effective is that which has 60-80 beats per minute, which is very much like the beating of a human heart at rest.

**STUDY STRATEGY**

Try playing music when you are reviewing something you've already learnt. It helps absorption and storage of information. Music without lyrics with about 60-80 beats per minute is best.

**BRAIN FACT**

Your brain will take in information from all around you, even if you're not concentrating on it.

**STUDY STRATEGY**

Display mind maps, diagrams, important facts etc. around walls above eye level.

# Skill8.

## Believe in yourself

In order for you to succeed, you have to believe in yourself and in your abilities. Here's a true story to help illustrate this idea:

For years, there was a genuine belief by all athletes that nobody could run a mile in less than 4 minutes. 'The four-minute mile' was seen as the fastest as anyone could achieve. People wrote books about it - Amazon.com offers at least 6 books about it. 'Bannister and Beyond: The Mystique of the Four Minute Mile' by J. Denison, for example. Roger Bannister believed he could run a mile in less than four minutes and eventually 50 years ago - 6th May 1954 - he did! Since then many other athletes have managed a mile in less than four minutes. 50 runners did it in the next 2 years!

If you are interested, try:  
[www.bbc.co.uk/solpda/ukf-sport/hi/newsid](http://www.bbc.co.uk/solpda/ukf-sport/hi/newsid)

Whether you're an athlete preparing for competition or a student tackling a difficult subject, it's important that you believe in yourself. You must recognise the talents and abilities that you possess, and you must know, and believe, that you can succeed.

**"MANY OF LIFE'S FAILURES ARE PEOPLE WHO DID NOT REALISE HOW CLOSE THEY WERE TO SUCCESS WHEN THEY GAVE UP".  
THOMAS EDISON**

Take a minute now and write down the courses you're currently taking in the grid below. Then in the 'Grade' column, write down the highest grade you think you can earn in each course this grading period.

COURSE	GRADE

**"TO SUCCEED, WE MUST FIRST BELIEVE THAT WE CAN".  
MICHAEL CORDA**

Think of these grades as your academic goals for this grading period. Believe in yourself, and believe that you can achieve these goals.

# Skill9.

## Stop worrying about study and exams

**Stress or worry is a natural reaction to some things. The oldest part of the brain (in evolutionary terms) is used to ensure survival.**

**The brain has four responses to stress - the four Fs.**

### **Fight Behaviour**

- **Resists any change.**
- **Prefers what is safe and feels familiar.**
- **Unlikely to take any sort of risk.**

### **Flight Behaviour**

- **May avoid something by doing something else, even something disliked.**
- **May pretend to be ill or tired.**
- **May do safe things again and again.**
- **May stay on the edge of groups.**

### **Freeze Behaviour**

- **Unable to speak or do anything when put on the spot in some way.**
- **Goes blank when asked question to which the answer is known.**

### **Flock Behaviour**

- **Wants to be with friends.**
- **Wants to be like friends, not stand out in the crowd.**
- **Can lead to dumbing down: 'it's not cool to be keen'.**

**One of the main obstacles to learning is too much anxiety and to make matters worse - as far as the brain is concerned - there is no difference between how it responds to a real or imagined threat.**

**Reducing anxiety will help you learn better! So what can you do?**

### **Take a break:**

**get up,  
walk around,  
get some fresh air or  
try another room or space.**

**Research showed that out of 500 students studied, those who spent an hour a day at a gym exercise class got higher grades.**

# Do some Brain Gym™

## **Nose/Ear Change**

Hold your right ear with your left hand and then hold your nose with your right hand. Then switch so that you are holding your left ear with your right hand and your nose with your left hand. Try to speed up (without punching yourself!).

## **Cross Crawl**

From standing, begin to march in time. As you raise your knees touch them with the opposite elbow.

## **Double Doodle**

On a large sheet of paper, draw large, continuous and overlapping mirror shapes using both hands simultaneously. Using felt pens, continue to draw in easy looped movements. Begin with large simple shapes like circles, eights, squares or triangles. Be aware of the mirrored movements and graduate to more detailed drawing. This activity connects left and right brain and helps establish directionality and orientation in space. By exercising hand-eye co-ordination it will improve graphicacy and writing skills. It can be very relaxing.

## **Rub a Dubs**

Gently rub your hands in a circle on your tummy. Stop, then pat your head with your other hand gently. Now do both at the same time and at a similar pace. You should be rubbing your tummy whilst patting your head. Try to maintain the difference in each movement. Swap around - pat your tummy whilst rubbing your head. This activity connects left and right brain and is pure fun! It helps co-ordination. It focuses attention and can take your mind 'off' whatever was preoccupying it beforehand.

# Try some relaxation exercises

## Relaxing the Parts

Firstly close your eyes and then one stage at a time relax each part of your body. Breathe evenly and gently. As you progress, repeat to yourself in a progressively slower monotone:

now I relax my eyes  
now I relax my mouth  
now I relax my neck  
now I relax my shoulders  
now I relax my arms  
now I relax my chest  
now I relax my stomach  
now I relax my legs  
now I relax my feet.

Another way is to tense the muscles in one part of your body - say arms - then breathe out and relax these at the same time.

## Belly Breathing

Sit or stand in an upright position. Place your clasped hands on your stomach. Breathe evenly and gently. Breathe from your belly first, filling up your stomach and chest like a balloon. Continue to breathe as your chest rises. Continue to breathe into your throat.

## Visualisation

Visualise something nice like the waves lapping on the seashore - smell the salt air, listen to the gentle noise.

## Use Music

Music can be used to energise and relax. By turning the volume down to a point where it is just perceptible when there is quiet in the room, 'white noise' - the hum of lights, heating systems etc. - can be overcome and a supportive calm ambience generated. Generally it is best to use instrumental music, with music with lyrics confined to special breaks or energisers.

## Energise or relax:

Hallelujah Chorus: **Handel**  
William Tell Overture: **Rossini**  
New World Symphony: **Dvorak**  
Trois Gymnopedies: **Satie**  
Prelude a L'Après-midi d'un Faune: **Debussy**

## Focus concentration and enhance imagination:

Violin Concertos nos 1 and 3: **Mendelsson**  
Optima learning nos 1 and 2: **Barzakov**  
Relax with the Classics: **LIND Institute**  
Watermark: **Enya**

# Skill 10.

## Having a tidy, organised workspace

- Buy some different coloured folders to keep your work in.
- Label each one with the name of the subject.
- Use a different colour for each subject.
- Use file dividers to separate your work into sections.
- Keep your folders tidy - on a shelf or in a box.
- When you have finished your work put it all away in the right place. Then organise what you need for tomorrow.

# Skill 11.

## I stick to my study timetable

- Tell everyone your schedule so that you won't be disturbed.
- Remember, 1 hour of quality study time is better than 3 hours of poor quality time. A good evening's study might contain 2 blocks of 1 hour with a break in the middle. You'll soon work out the best time table for you.
- Find somewhere quiet to study where you can keep all your books and files. If this is difficult, then school or a local library can be good.

# Skill 12.

## Enjoy Learning

What has been your most enjoyable learning in life so far?

Example:

When:

Where:

How:

Why:

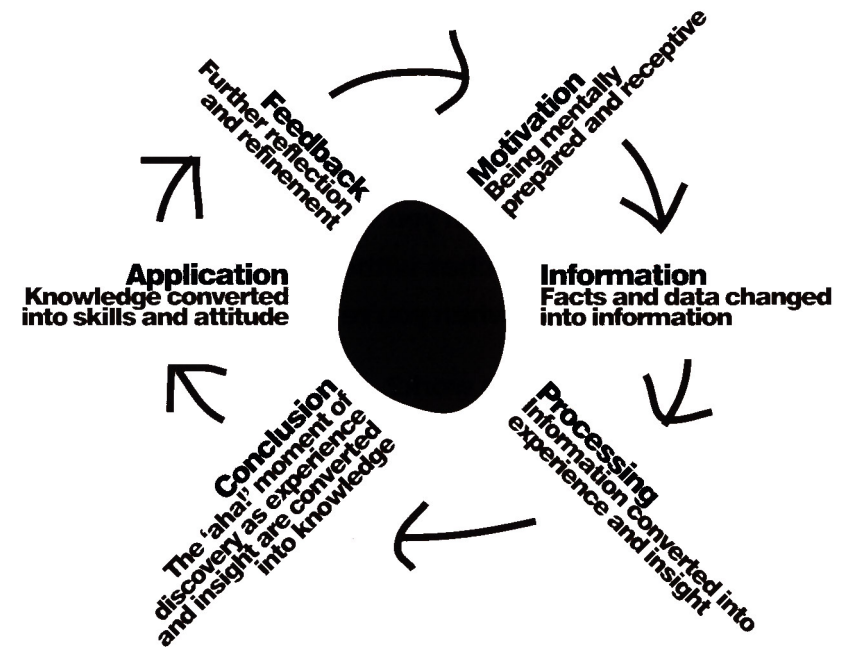
You will by now have worked at your preferred learning style - but other things affect your learning.

Where do you most like to learn?

Are there times when you learn best?

Do you prefer to work alone or with others?

All learning is an active process and the expert on learning, David Kolb, defined a learning cycle.



## ENJOY LEARNING (CONTINUED)

**For real learning lots of things are important, but the motivation needs to be within yourself.**

**Motivation is the key to enjoying learning. You need to decide what motivates you.**

- 1. Do you know you're doing a particular piece of work?**
- 2. Do you know why you're studying for an exam?**
- 3. Do you reward yourself when you work?**
- 4. Do you work for long stretches without a break?**
- 5. Does your mind wander when you're trying to study?**
- 6. Do you get distracted from work?**
- 7. Do you worry about failing or getting low marks?**
- 8. Are you able to do work you don't enjoy because you see it as important?**

### Score check: Motivation

	Almost Always	Sometimes	Almost never
<b>1</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>

**Scores from 55 to 80 mean that you don't appear to have many problems in getting down to work and keeping at it.**

**Scores from 35 to 50 mean that you can sometimes get down to work but you can be distracted. You probably could benefit from learning some techniques to help you get down to work more consistently and keep at it.**

**Scores of 30 and below signify that you really do have problems getting down to work. Unless you develop skills in this area, you're likely to have many unsatisfactory experiences as a student throughout your life.**



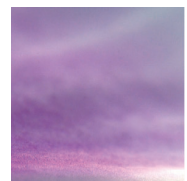
**GOOD LUCK!**

# Monthly Timetable

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
April							
May							
June							

# Weekly Timetable

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
9.00							
10.00							
11.00							
12.00							
1.00							
2.00							
3.00							
4.00							
5.00							
6.00							
7.00							
8.00							
9.00							
10.00							



# Lilac Sky Schools

## School Transformation

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