

**Don't Waste Time: Revise Effectively**  
**Presentation by Michele Millar to Upper School parents**

- Really important to support you son/daughter over the next few months.
- Pupils can waste time revising ineffectively.
- The teenage brain is so different to yours
  - World seen through ½-glass empty eyes – they see the problems first.
  - They find it difficult to weigh things up.
  - They think emotionally before they think logically.
  - They are risk-takers.
  - They do spaghetti thinking – everything runs away with them in terms of being a problem.
- As a parent you often feel you are the only one who struggles with the teenage brain.
- Advice – give them time to calm down – try not to give an emotional response. Try to have a conversation rather than a row.
- Where do you stand on things like mobile phones in bedrooms? – Have values changed?
- DVD clip “Inside Ford’s Moving Assembly Line”.
- Painting of Salvator Mundi by Leonardo Da Vinci worth \$450 million
  - Keep emphasising to your child that he/she is a work of art.
  - Qualifications give a pupil choices.
- ‘The only person who can learn for you is you’ – pupils need to put in the time to practise their revision skills.
- All encouraged to do at least 30 minutes of revision every day – building habits – start now – it is 4<sup>th</sup> October – they have plenty of time to build up the half hours; too late if they leave it until March. They need to be revising now.
- Success is an iceberg
  - It takes determination, hard work, failure, challenge, good habits, disappointments.
- Success is hard work, eg GB Hockey team – Olympic Gold winners.
- No magic way to study – it is hard graft and you need to keep trying.
- Practice – Practice – Practice.
- Key – when they feel something isn’t going well, discuss with them. Make sure they do not give up.
- Develop habits for excellence.

- Developing familiar, neural pathways – practice.
- Cortisol – can lock down long term revision.
- Serotonin – long term memory is unlocked.
- Advice – talk through questions – tell me one thing that you know, when they say they are stuck.
- Revise to reduce cognitive load –
- Techniques to use to move material into long term memory.
- Ideal revision session is about 30 minutes, then take a short break.
- Becoming ready will take many 30 minute stops.
- We want consistency not intensity.
- 8/10 strategies which are ineffective, eg  
Reading through  
Highlighting  
Self-testing, etc
- We all have a forgetting curve – have to keep going back to what you have learned.
- ‘Reading over’ is not revision.
- Review/revise at regular intervals – you will then retain the information.
  - Distributed practice.

### 3 Stages

1. Organise
  - Info – notes – memory map
  - Re-writing – highlighting.
2. Test
3. Distributed practice – return with decreasing frequency.
  - Mnemonics – take the information to reduce.
  - Recall flashcards – questions to learn half by heart.
  - Flashcards for understanding, eg. an exam question – they write answers on back.
  - Get them to rank topics (RAG – code)
  - Pupils always revise what they are comfortable with; they need to revise what they are uncomfortable with.

- The Leitner System (self-testing and distributed practice).  
3 shoe boxes numbered 1, 2, 3  
All flashcards in box 1 to begin with  
Box 2 – places the ones you always get right  
Box 3 – put the ones you always get right and return to less regularly.
- Phones must be switched off when revising. 11 minutes to re-focus if you are interrupted by a phone.
- Music not to be on headphones.
- Good time to start now – consistency not intensity.
- Gold/Silver/Bronze Medal  
6 sessions – Gold night ½-hour per evening will be needed towards the end.  
5 sessions – Silver night  
3 sessions – Bronze night
- Homework often has revision in it.
- All pupils have a proforma for a weekly revision plan. Pupils have learnt how to plan today.
- Get pupils to have a weekly goal.
- Rewards per week – they need to feel re-energised by time out.
- They need to identify what they can't do.
- Discuss the weekly revision plan with them.
- Pupils need to take responsibility for their revision.

NB. 'Some pupils have misunderstood the 30-minute rule. It is thirty quality minutes of revision – take a short break then 30 more minutes of quality revision'.

Social Media/phones should be switched off whilst revising effectively.