**How to support children and young people to revise**

With the exam season rapidly approaching, you may be considering how best to support the children and young people you are working with to revise effectively. Learners can struggle when it comes to revising independently at home especially when considering where to start and what to do. There is always the risk that without guidance, they can revert to comforting, safe and passive revision strategies such as reading, highlighting and copying notes. Research has shown that these have little benefit on understanding or long-term recall and therefore are not the best approach.

The best revision strategies are active as they encourage long-term memory formation. Some ideas to discuss with the learners in your household are below:

1. **Closed book summaries**

Read a section of text that you want to revise (or watch a video), then on a blank piece of paper, summarise everything you can remember without looking back at the resource. Once you have written everything you can remember, review the original resource and then add anything you missed the first time around (without the resource in front of you). Repeat until you can remember the key information confidently.

1. **Closed book questioning**

Same as the above but whilst you are reviewing the resource, you should write questions about the key information. These should be specific and promote deep thinking when answering them e.g. what are the similarities and differences between two concepts. You should then remove the resources and answer the questions, check your work and then repeat the process for any questions you missed or got wrong.

1. **Concept Maps**

Summarise the key points in in a concept map. You can google these if you want to have a look at what they can look like, but best practice is to use arrows to show connections and if diagrams and drawings can be used to represent information then that’s great. It’s the process that is important, not the finished product so perfection is not necessary – messy is good.

1. **Flashcards**

These should only be used for key definitions and facts. Research suggests that fewer flashcards is better. There are loads of free ones on online too if you don’t want to make them yourself. Your teachers may be able to direct you to where to look but don’t be afraid to look online.

1. **Past paper and practice questions**

These are a favourite way to revise and have the benefit of allowing the depth and breadth of questions expected to be understood. It also helps give a taster of common themes. More than this, the process of marking them using the mark schemes provided allows for understanding of what is expected from certain command words, for the number of marks available as well as common mistakes made. If you’re not sure which exam board you are or which tier you have been entered for, please do contact your school (it’s often on the website too).

Don’t be afraid to contact the school or college for additional support around preparing for examinations, it is not too early to be considering what support can be put into place.

The Virtual School are here to support the education of all our looked-after children. Please do reach out to your Virtual School Officer if you require any additional information. Details are on the MKCC VS webpage - [Virtual School | Milton Keynes City Council (milton-keynes.gov.uk)](https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-families/virtual-school).