

Knowledge Organisers

A Guide for Parents



ORMISTON
DENES ACADEMY



ORMISTON
DENES ACADEMY

[OAT]
Ormiston Academies Trust
AN OAT ACADEMY

What is a Knowledge Organiser?

A knowledge organiser is a document, usually no more than two sides of A4, which contains key facts and information that students need to have a basic knowledge and understanding of a topic.

Most knowledge organisers will include:

- the essential facts about the topic, usually laid out in easily digestible chunks
- key vocabulary or technical terms and their meanings
- images such as maps or diagrams
- famous quotations, if relevant.

What a knowledge organiser includes will depend on the subject.

Which Strategies Can Help?

At Ormiston Denes Academy, we are promoting a range of strategies to students in class to support their self-regulation when studying.

However, you may feel that you would like to support independent study at home.

There are five key strategies that we are going to be looking at developing with students, which are explained in greater detail in this booklet.

- Retrieval Practice.
- Spaced Practice.
- Concrete Examples
- Elaboration
- Dual Coding

What is retrieval practice?

“Retrieval practice is a learning strategy where we focus on getting information out. Through the act of retrieval, or calling information to mind, our memory for that information is strengthened and forgetting is less likely to occur. Retrieval practice is a powerful tool for improving learning.”

- Use your class notes & textbooks to make a list of the important information
- And content that you need to know across different subjects.
- Then close your books & test yourself. You can create quizzes, use flashcards or complete past exam papers. Make sure you don't use your notes!
- Retrieve as much information as you can then check your answers. It's
- important to know what you know and what you don't know ... yet!
- Use your answers to inform the next stage of your revision, focus on the
- areas that you struggled to recall from memory.

What is spaced practice?

“Start planning early for assessments and set aside a little bit of time everyday. Five hours spread out over two weeks is better than the same five hours all at once.” This is spaced practice & it is regarded as one of the most effective revision strategies.

- Divide up your revision into short manageable chunks of time .
When
- revising aim for ten to twenty minutes per session.
- **Mass practice or cramming is not effective & can be stressful.**
This is when you study for a very intense period of time just before the exam.
- You need to plan your time carefully to ensure all subjects & topics are
- covered in shorter chunks over a longer period of time.
- Dividing up your revision into smaller, manageable sections will benefit you in the long term - the revision you do for mocks will stick for the final exams!

What are concrete examples?

“Students often gain a false sense of confidence in their abilities to memorise new material. Using concrete, relevant, real life examples can help students understand abstract ideas and extend information retention.”

- Concrete examples involves finding & using specific examples to help develop & deepen understanding of abstract ideas.
- Abstract ideas can be difficult to understand & explain. Our memories find it easier to remember concrete examples better than abstract information.
- Foreshadowing can be explained with a very specific concrete example - in Romeo & Juliet the tragic ending is subtly foreshadowed in the very first act of the play.
- Look through your books & class notes searching for concrete examples that are relevant to the idea you are studying or create your own if you can.

What is elaboration?

“The term elaboration can be used to mean a lot of different things. However, when we are talking about studying using elaboration, it involves explaining and describing ideas with many details. Elaboration also involves making connections among ideas you are trying to learn.”

- Elaboration involves asking further questions & making links to help you connect new information with what you already know.
- Ask yourself questions about a topic to delve deeper. The more information you have about a specific topic the stronger your grasp & ability to recall.
- When you learn about the causes of WW1 you could ask which causes are linked together? Which causes are short or long term? What was the major cause?
- Another way to elaborate is to take two ideas or concepts & think about the various ways they are similar & how they are different.

What is dual coding?

“Dual coding is the process of combining verbal materials with visual materials. There are many ways to visually represent materials, such as with infographics, timelines, cartoon/comic strips, diagrams and graphic organisers.”

- Dual coding involves you the learner drawing images, graphs, diagrams or timelines to support your revision notes.
- When you are revising using your class materials find or create visuals that link with the information. Compare & combine the visuals with the words.
- Don't worry if you don't consider yourself an artist - it isn't about the quality of your illustrations, the focus is to improve and deepen your understanding.
- Make sure your images/diagrams are relevant. Be careful when using photos as too many background images can detract from the main points.