

Two secrets to learning success...

(Yep – just two!)

Many of us return to classes at school this week. Your teachers are keen to see how much you've learned. If you have two more weeks learning at home, then you should now be revising your work. You want to remember it later!

What are the best ways to go over your work? For senior students, what is the secret to test and exam revision?

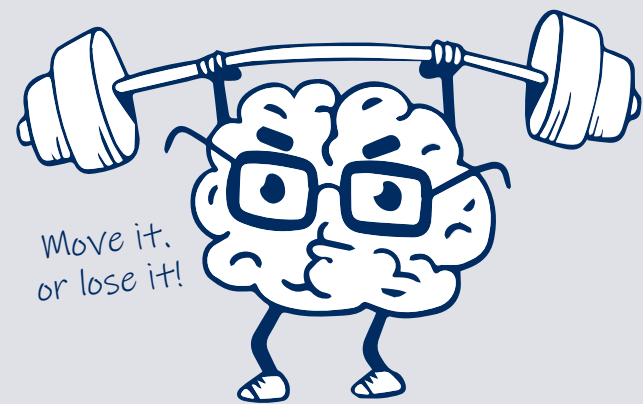
1 It's all about memory!

Your memory is a like a muscle, not a computer.

It's not storing everything, waiting until you need it.

Memories are like muscles; when you exercise them, they get stronger.

There is LOTS of science that says that every time you recall something from memory, we remember it a little bit more. This is called "retrieval".



The BEST recall, or retrieval, tricks



Priming

Asking yourself as you start, what do I remember about this or what do I already know?

For example, as the teacher is welcoming you to the lesson, think about yesterday's lesson, or last night's reading.



Use practise tests and questions.

Check on your own knowledge and understanding. This is call "retrieval practice".



Set your own questions.

You are forced to think at a deeper level rather than just answering a question set by someone else.

Distribute practice over time



- **When information is quickly learned, it's often quickly forgotten.**
It can be much more difficult to remember the information weeks or even months later.
- **Spacing learning across multiple days leads to much higher achievement than studying the same amount of information all in one session.**
Both approaches involve the same amount of time learning, but differ in how that time is scheduled.
- **Spaced practice benefits students of ALL ages**—from young children learning their first letters of the alphabet, all the way to university students.

Practice doesn't have to be boring!

Flashcards are useful for you to create and then test yourself, or a friend. Make it a competition, if you like!

2 Now you need to “transfer” that knowledge!

You need to practice using your knowledge in new contexts and situations;

Can you recall the knowledge in different forums?

- answer a short question
- use the knowledge to explain the “why” of something more complex?

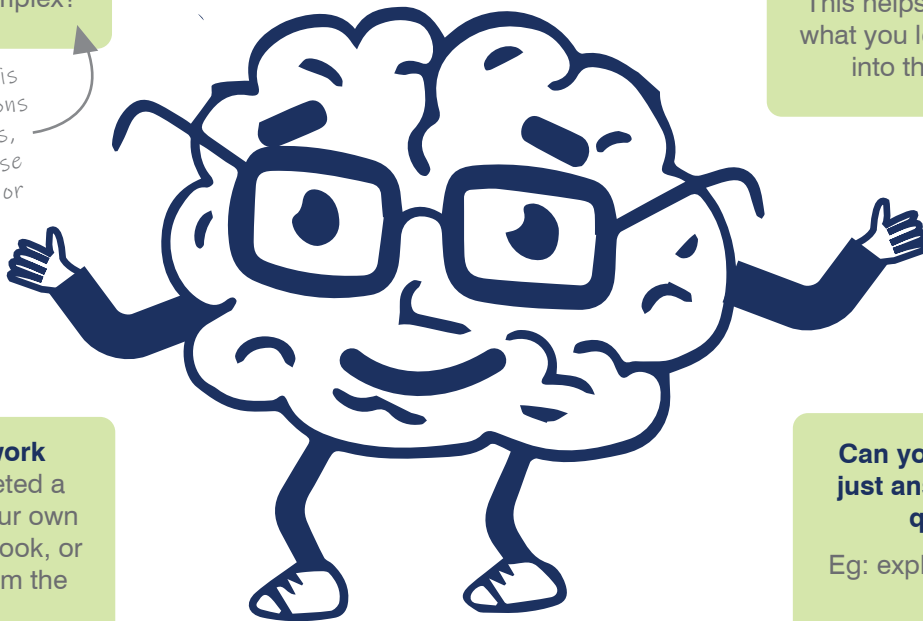
For **senior students**, this is the key to VCE examinations – remembering the facts, but then being able to use them to write an essay or solve a new problem.

Can you retrieve knowledge broadly across topics?

Eg: Knowing if developments in the world of science have changed society or our history?

Do you read over your feedback from your teacher on past projects/tests before beginning a new task?

This helps you to transfer what you learned last time into the new task.



Mark your own work

After you've completed a task or test, mark your own work, using the textbook, or an answer sheet from the teacher.

Can you do more than just answer the “what” questions?

Eg: explaining “why” and “how”?

Structure your notes

For senior students, think about structuring your notes (from class or chapter summaries) with boxes that extract the “**big ideas**” or “**key concepts**” that you can transfer later.

How does this fit in?

Ask your teacher how your previous learning is relevant to the next thing you're starting.