

## **Study skills**

Effective study does not mean endless hours of reading. Effective study is largely made up of organisation and productive use of time.

### **Creating a study atmosphere:**

- Study is best done in conditions similar to those in which students sit exams- a quiet warm and well ventilated room, free from distractions such as Walkman, TV, and phone. Listening to the radio while you study adversely affects long-term recall.
- Get into routine- study at particular times each day.
- Students should be organised for home study - have all books, materials, etc., ready before you begin.
- Planning your work is important. Set realistic goals for each study period. Make out a timetable for yourself.
- Study is best done in blocks, say 30 to 50 minutes, with a period of relaxation between blocks.
- Make links from one subject to another — see how it all fits together.
- You can improve your concentration by switching from reading to writing, by taking notes, by closing the book and testing yourself, by switching to another subject, by attempting exam papers, etc.,.
- Good posture and chair support can reduce neck and back pain while studying.
- Eating healthy foods, e.g. Milk, bananas, and vegetables have a calming effect and help concentration. Sugary foods and caffeine have the opposite effect.

### **Study Skills techniques:**

#### **Note taking:**

Note taking plays an important role in study, as it assists learning and retention.

- Put a title heading and a date on your notes so that the notes can be filed and found easily when required.
- Do not use descriptions and full explanations - keep your notes short and to the point. Mark points that the teacher emphasizes.
- Keep accurate notes. Use your own words, but try not to change the meaning.
- Go over your notes after class and rewrite them if necessary, this is when your

memory is still fresh.

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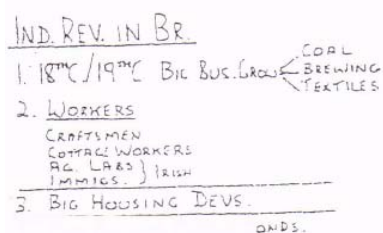
### Memory techniques:

Most people have a good memory, but we just don't practice using it efficiently. Here are some examples of memory techniques useful when studying.

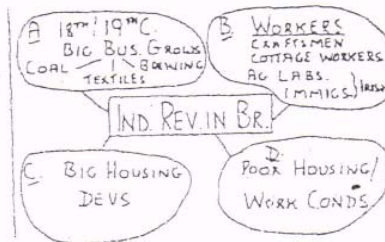
- Highlight key words and phrases by using numbers, headings, underlining, boxes and capital letters.
- Revision involves going back over materials already learned. For revision to be effective, it must be active- ask yourself questions and answer them. Test yourself on questions from old exam papers. Questions can be found at the end of chapters. Revise each week's work and then each month's work.
- You clarify your thoughts when you explain things to somebody else. When you are studying, close the book and explain it to yourself.
- You remember more of what you write than of what you read or hear. Write new words, definitions and summaries.
- When you learn something, you gradually forget. If you revise, you forget more slowly.
- Mind maps: Mind maps show the structure of a subject and links between points. The following is an example of mind mapping:
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The eighteenth and nineteenth century growth of an industrial society shows clearly in the establishment of the large organisation, in coalmining, brewing, textiles and the growth of the factory system. Craftsmen, "cottage workers", agricultural labourers and immigrants, particularly from Ireland, provided the labour force in the early factories. Large housing developments were built for the workers and they including young children, worked long hours in appalling conditions, in unsanitary, and over crowded accommodation.

### Method 2



### Method 1



## **Concentration techniques**

Some students find that they have difficulty holding concentration in order to understand material and commit it to memory. Concentration for some students does not come easily and requires effort.

Your ability to concentrate depends on:

- Your emotional and physical state: When you feel relaxed comfortable, rested and in good physical condition, your emotions are calm, and you tend to be in a positive frame of mind.
- Commitment: By focussing on one task at a time, you will improve your efficiency.
- Reward yourself: Give yourself rewards for studying or completing an assignment.
- Breaks: Study is best done in blocks of time; say 30 to 50 min slots, with a period of relaxation between sessions.
- Being unsure: If you are vague about what you are required to do, then it will be difficult to hold concentration. Try and clarify the task with your tutor or other students.
- Feeling overwhelmed: If a task is too large for you to contemplate, look for ways to break it into manageable parts. Consult with your tutor or Student Support Services.
- Study time: Find out the time of day that you study best - early morning or at night.

## **Reading techniques:**

The most popular method is the SQ4R technique.

- Survey - scan to get an overview.'
- Question - what information do I need?
- Read - skim reading with emphasis on key words and key sentences/ideas, detailed reading and making notes.
- Recite - stop occasionally as you are reading to summarise, in your own words, what you have just read.
- Review - have the questions been answered? Are the notes adequate?
- Revise - try to recall frequently.

### Blank Study Timetable

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8-9					
9- 10					
10-11					
11 - 12					
12- 1					
1-2					
2-3					
3-4					
4-5					
5-6					
6-7					
7-8					
8-9					
9- 10					
10- 11					
11 - 12					