

OXFORD

EXAM

Survival kit

AN ESSENTIAL GUIDE FOR GRADE 12
EXAM SUCCESS



Teacher's Hotline
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The cardinal rules for crunch time

Share these tips with your learners well before exams are on the horizon.

Get organised

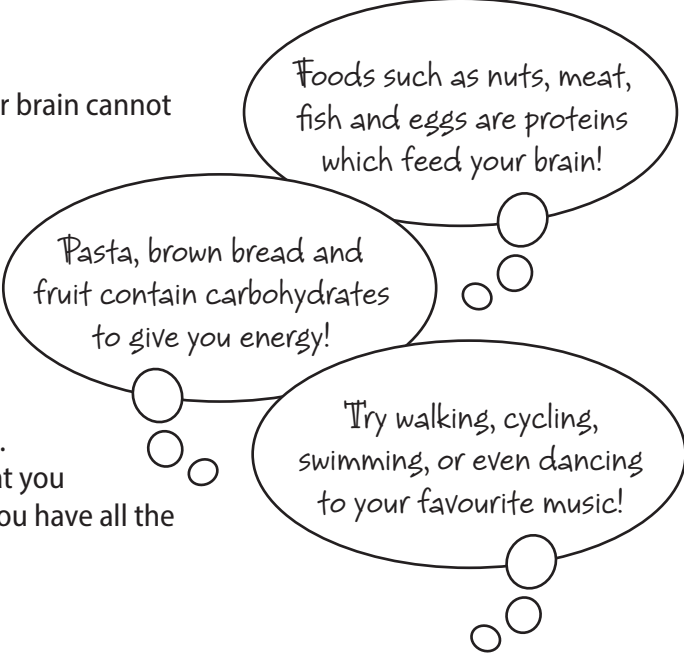
- ✓ Organise your study material: ensure that your work is complete and up to date, and that it is in the right order.
- ✓ Make a study timetable to ensure that you allow enough time to revise all the work you have covered in each subject. Use the photocopiable template on page 5 for each subject.
- ✓ Study actively: instead of simply trying to memorise information, use techniques such as making mind maps, writing key words on cards and practising drawing and labelling diagrams.
- ✓ Test yourself: practise answering questions from old test and exam papers. Invest in good study guides, which contain practice exam papers with answers to ensure that you are thoroughly prepared for your final exam.
- ✓ Give yourself a break: Don't study for longer than two hours at a time, and take regular breaks of about 10 to 15 minutes every hour.

Find the right place and time

- ✓ Find a quiet place to study, away from noise and other distractions.
- ✓ The room should be well lit to avoid eyestrain, and well ventilated so that you breathe in fresh air to keep you alert.
- ✓ Sit at a desk rather than lying on the floor or on your bed – these positions are too relaxing and will make you lose concentration. A desk or table is the best surface for writing your study notes and summaries, and answering revision questions.
- ✓ Study when you are fresh and alert. Studying at night just before you go to bed is probably not the best time. Rather make time for studying in the afternoons after you have had something to eat and if possible, a rest.

Stay healthy

- ✓ **Get enough sleep** – at least 8 hours a night. Your brain cannot work at its best when you are tired.
- ✓ **Eat well** – breakfast is essential, and it is also very important to eat healthy snacks while you are studying to keep your energy levels up.
- ✓ **Exercise** to improve your circulation and reduce tiredness – it will help you to study more effectively.
- ✓ **Reduce stress** by making time for relaxation – listen to music or go for a picnic with some friends.
- ✓ Reduce stress on the exam day by making sure that you know when and where your exam is, and ensure you have all the materials you need for the exam the day before.



Pasta, brown bread and fruit contain carbohydrates to give you energy!

Foods such as nuts, meat, fish and eggs are proteins which feed your brain!

Try walking, cycling, swimming, or even dancing to your favourite music!

Quiz: are your learners fully prepared?

Before the exams start, have your learners complete this checklist to see how well prepared they are:

1. Do I know exactly which work I need to study? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Sort of
2. Is all my work up to date? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Sort of
3. Have I made a revision timetable? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Sort of
4. Have I planned how much work I aim to cover in each study session? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Sort of
5. Have I allowed time for breaks in each study session? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Sort of
6. Am I making notes, writing key words, and summaries while I study? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Sort of
7. Have I practised making different types of summaries? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Sort of
8. Am I keeping to my planned revision programme? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Sort of
9. Have I worked through revision questions and past exam papers? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Sort of
10. Have I practised answering different types of exam questions? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Sort of
11. Am I getting enough sleep? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Sort of
12. Am I eating well? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Sort of
13. Am I doing some exercise every day? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Sort of

How did your learners do?

If they answered 'Yes' to ten or more questions, they have prepared well for the exams.

If they answered 'Sort of' or 'No' to five or more questions, they are not well prepared enough.

Keeping cool on exam day

Encourage your learners to follow these guidelines to minimise their anxiety on exam day:

- ✓ Be on time, or if possible, early.
- ✓ Ensure you have the necessary stationery, such as pens, a pencil, a ruler and a highlighter.
- ✓ Don't sit with friends who may be panicking! Reduce stress by sitting quietly on your own and staying calm.
- ✓ Don't try any last-minute cramming. Remember: "Last in, first out!"
- ✓ Keep an eye on the time throughout the exam, and work out before the exam how much time you should spend on each section.
- ✓ Before you start writing, and whenever you start to feel panicky during the exam, take a few deep breaths to help you to relax.
- ✓ If you go blank, do what you can and then leave the question. Come back to the problem area later, when you have built up confidence by answering other questions you find easier.

Understanding exam instructions

The instruction words below are often used in test and exam papers. Learners should ensure that they understand what each word means.

Instruction word	Meaning
Analyse	Look at something carefully, break it up into logical parts, and explain these parts in a systematic and critical way, giving strengths and weaknesses
Apply	Use your knowledge on a topic to address a problem or situation. Often in case studies you have to apply what you have learnt to the case study as a particular example
Classify	Group together things that are the same in some way
Compare	Describe what is similar and what is different between two or more things
Conclude	Give a short interpretation of results or give a summary
Debate	Research and then listen to and discuss all sides of an issue. Give and defend your own view
Define	Give the full meaning of something accurately, as in a dictionary
Describe	Give the details and facts of something in full sentences without giving reasons
Differentiate	Show how something is different to another thing
Discuss	Talk or write in detail about something, giving different ideas and arguments about the topic
Evaluate	Look at the facts carefully and form your own conclusion
Explain	Give the details of something in full sentences and give reasons
Interpret	Work out the meaning
Justify	Support or prove what you are saying, using reasons and examples
Motivate	Show to be true by giving reasons or examples
Outline	Give the main points only
Recall	Remember and give the information again
State	Give, say, or write down the information asked for
Suggest	Give ideas, solutions or reasons for something
Summarise/ Sum up	Give the main points only and in brief, using sentence form, bullets or a visual tool like a mind map
Tabulate	Arrange information in columns and rows on a table, using very brief wording

Study timetable template

WEEK BEFORE EXAM	CONTENT TO BE REVISED	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
12								
11								
10								
9								
8								
7								
6								
5								
4								
3								
2								
1								

Make a copy for
each subject!