

Study Guide for Secondary School Students

Produced for SHINE Children and Youth Services

Acknowledgements

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Yishun Town Secondary School
Class 3E5 (2022)

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effective Note-taking



How does note taking benefit us?

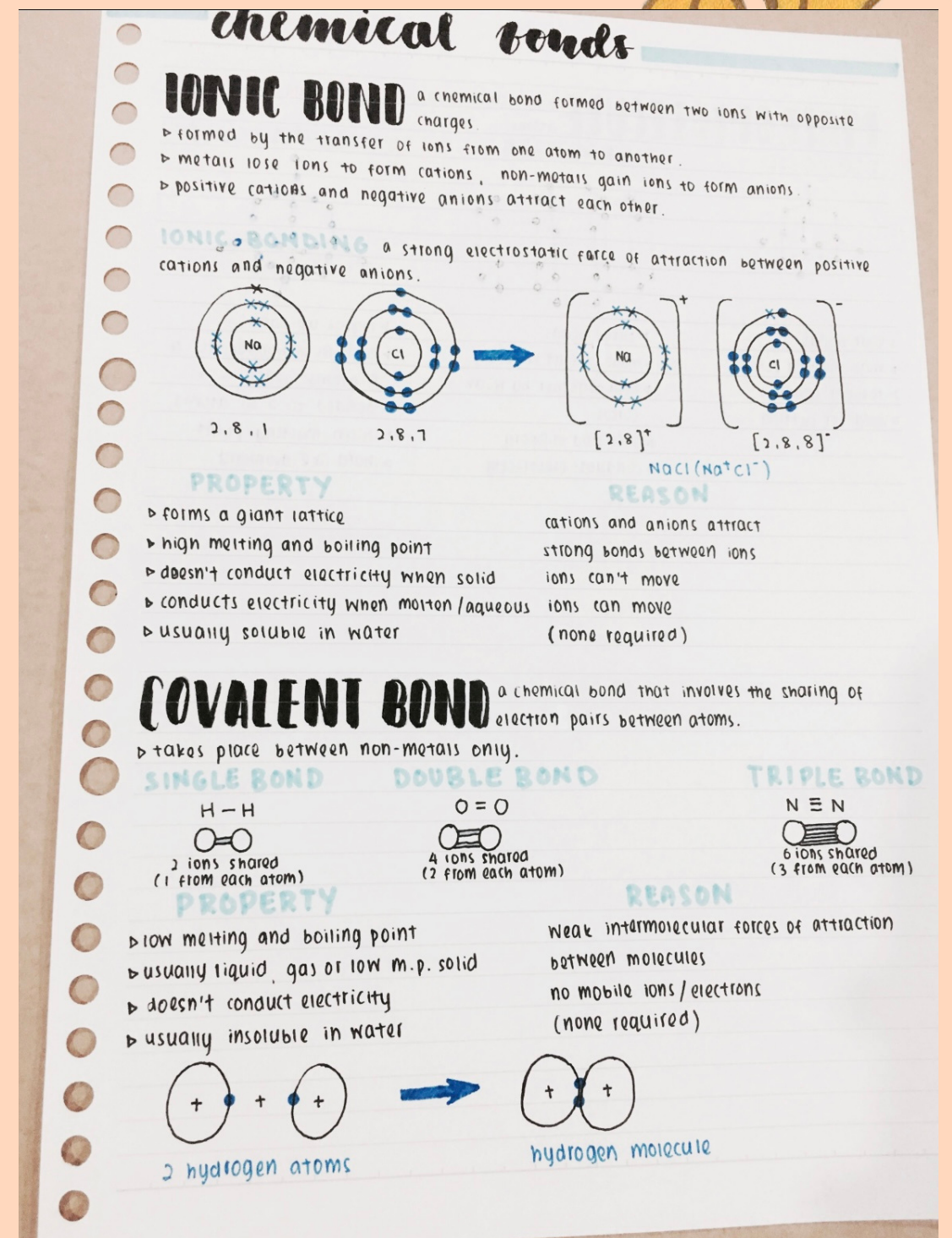
Note taking not only has benefits like allowing you to understand a topic that was taught before easier. Note taking promotes active learning, improves organisation skills and improves focus. There are also many other benefits of note taking and it helps you to get better grades.

Video to help you better understand:



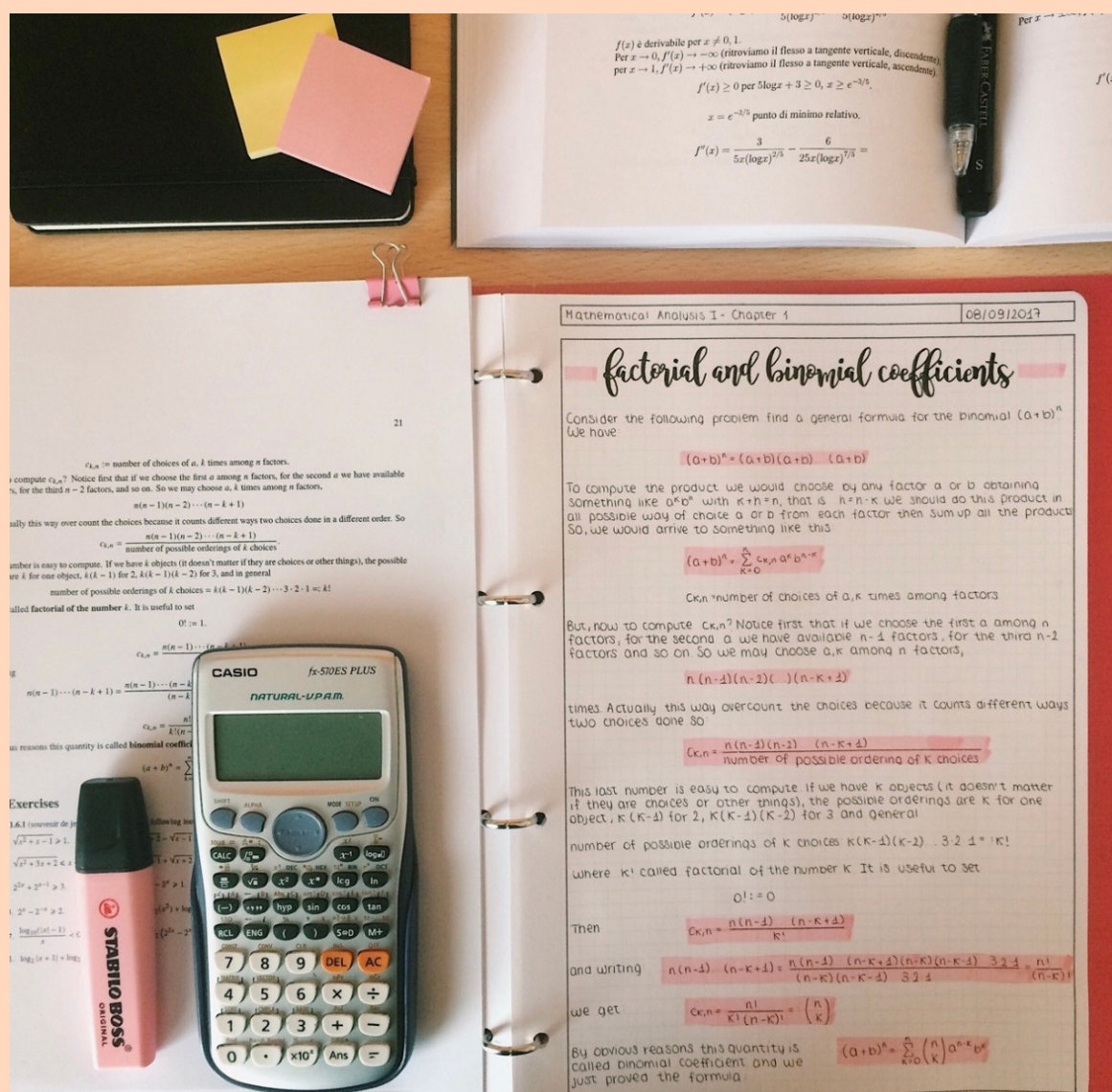
What is note-taking?

Note taking helps to simplify chunks of content, making it easier to study and memorise. Note taking summarises a topic and allows you to quickly remember the content that was taught in class. For example, you can note down different types of ions and their properties for Chemistry. This allows you to quickly know what each ion does.



How to take notes efficiently

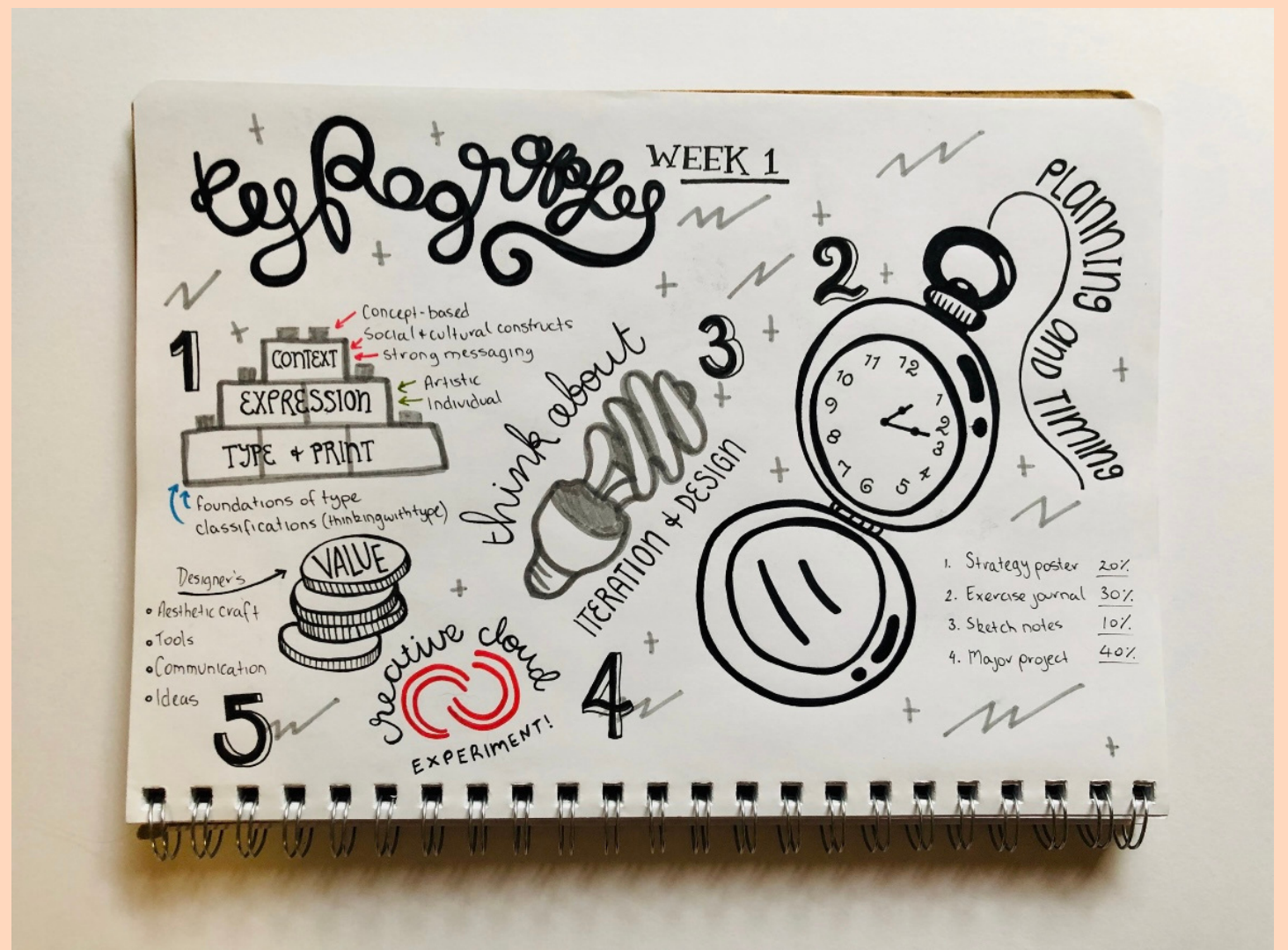
Note down and highlight the important points. This will allow you to see the most important points of the notes without having to read the previous parts. For example, in math you can highlight the important formulae that you have to memorise so that you can easily see what's important.



How to take aesthetically pleasing notes

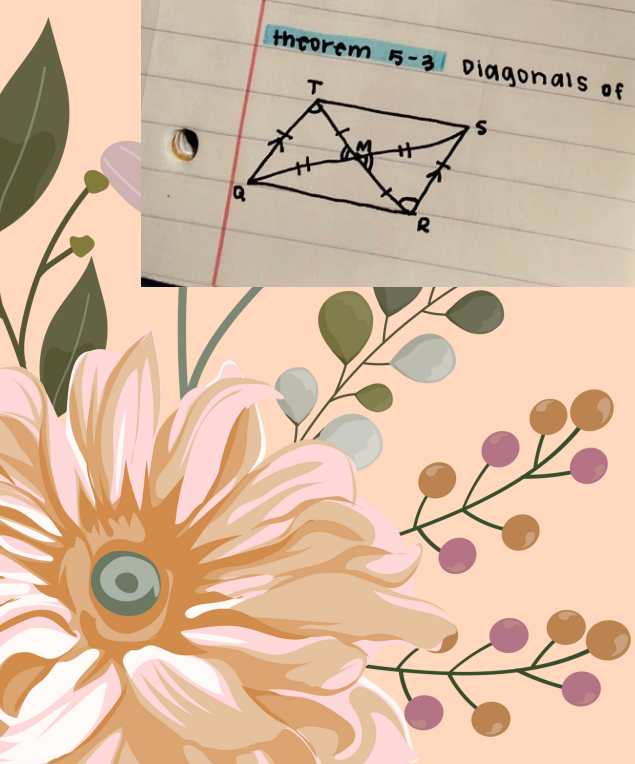
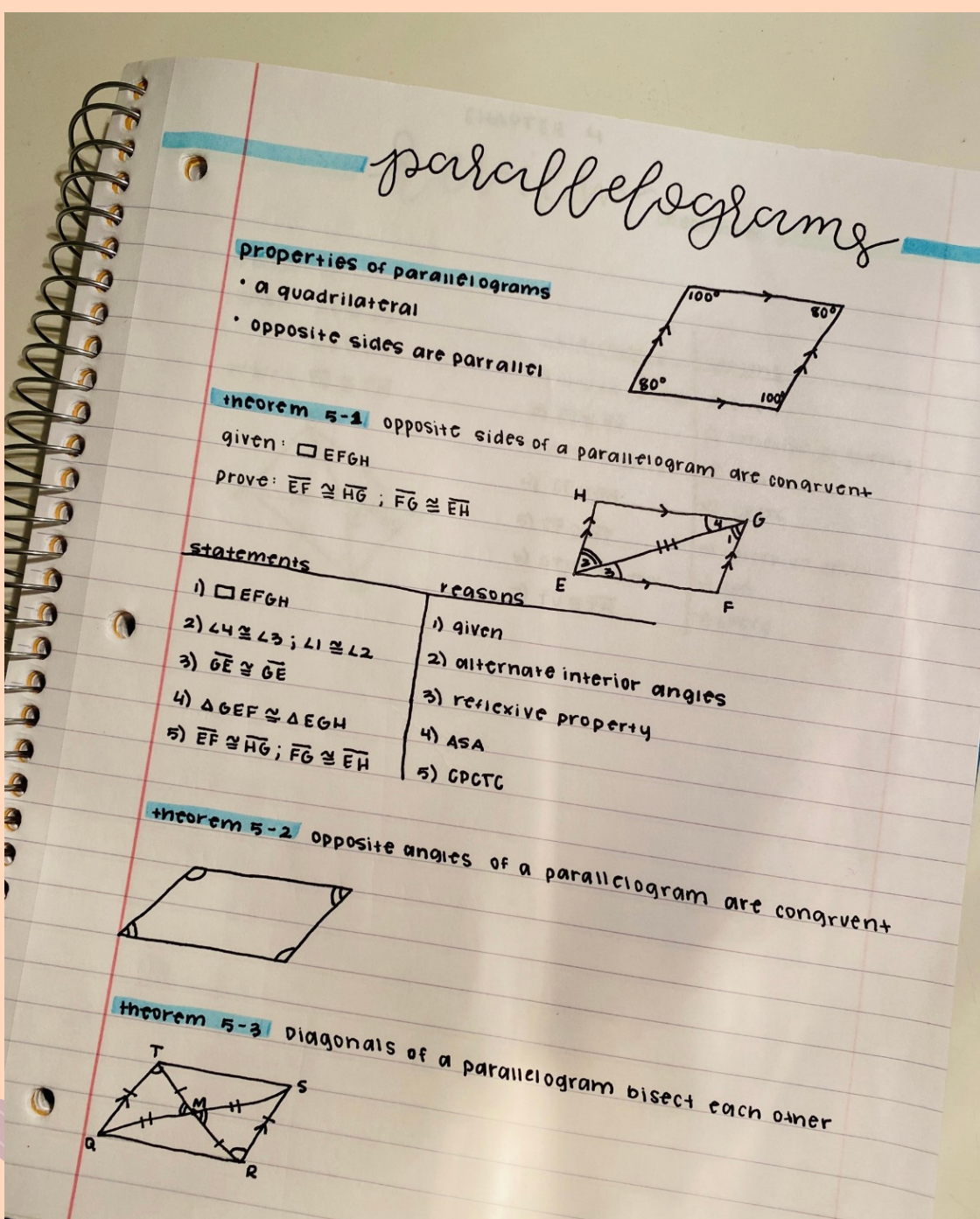


Add simple sketches, drawings or colours around the edges of the notes to make the notes more visually appealing so that it would be more enjoyable to read. The drawings should be related to the points as it is to make it easier for you to understand and memorise the notes.



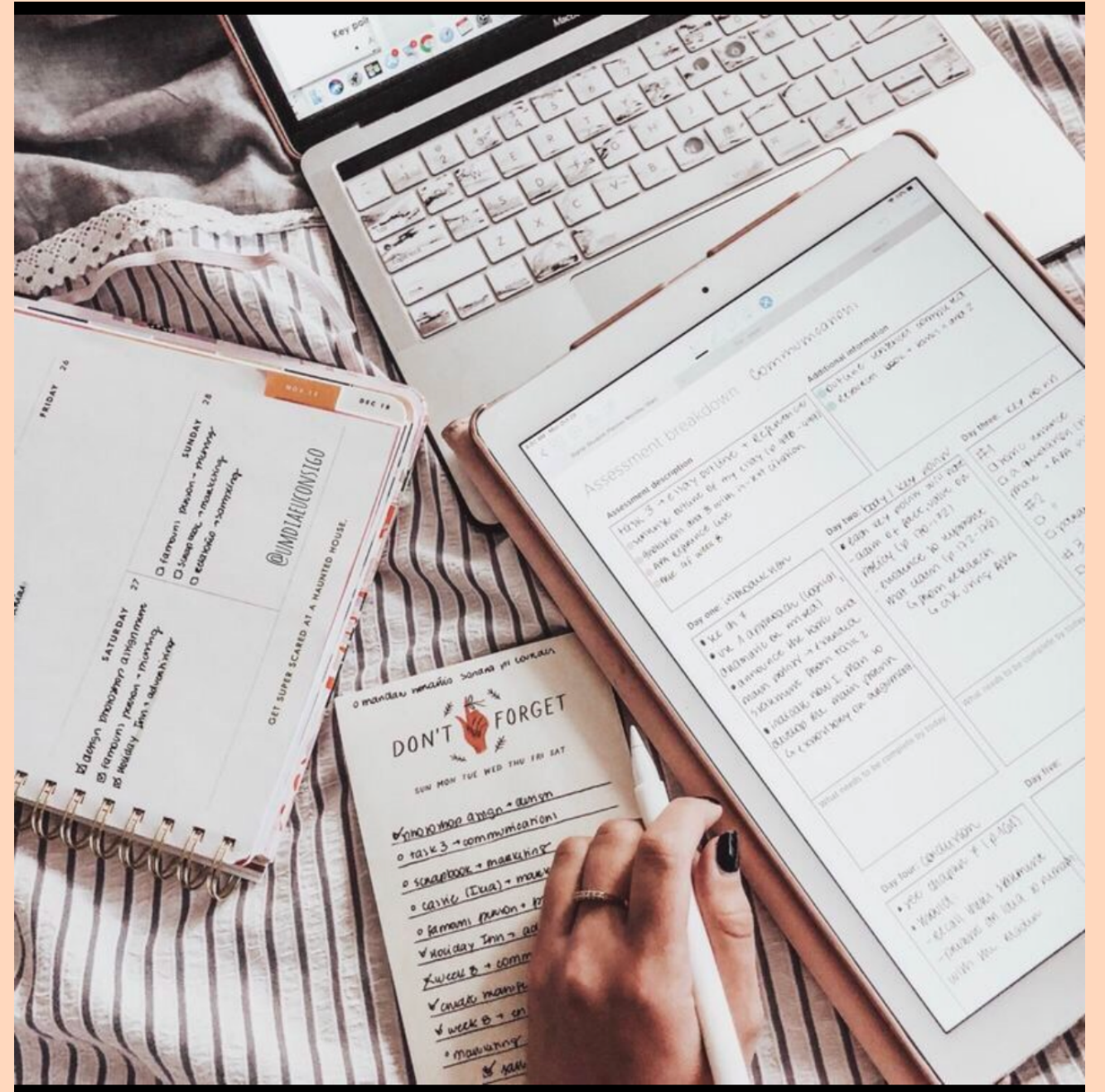
How to take last minute notes

Identify the key topics and simplify the key points. You can skip some points based on their importance while noting down the important points. This allows you to quickly know what the topic is about and allows you to absorb more content in a limited period of time.



How to study your notes

Read your notes and try to memorise the main points. Read what you highlighted and refer to pictures you've drawn.



Materials you may need

- Pencils
- Notebook
- Pens
- Highlighters
- Sticky notes
- Study materials (textbook or worksheets)



Note–Making Techniques For Different Subjects

WHY SHOULD WE USE DIFFERENT TECHNIQUES WHEN TAKING NOTES FOR DIFFERENT SUBJECTS?

- More organised notes for easy revision
- Using different study techniques is more efficient
 - Information is easier to understand
- One can understand the information better instead of just memorising it

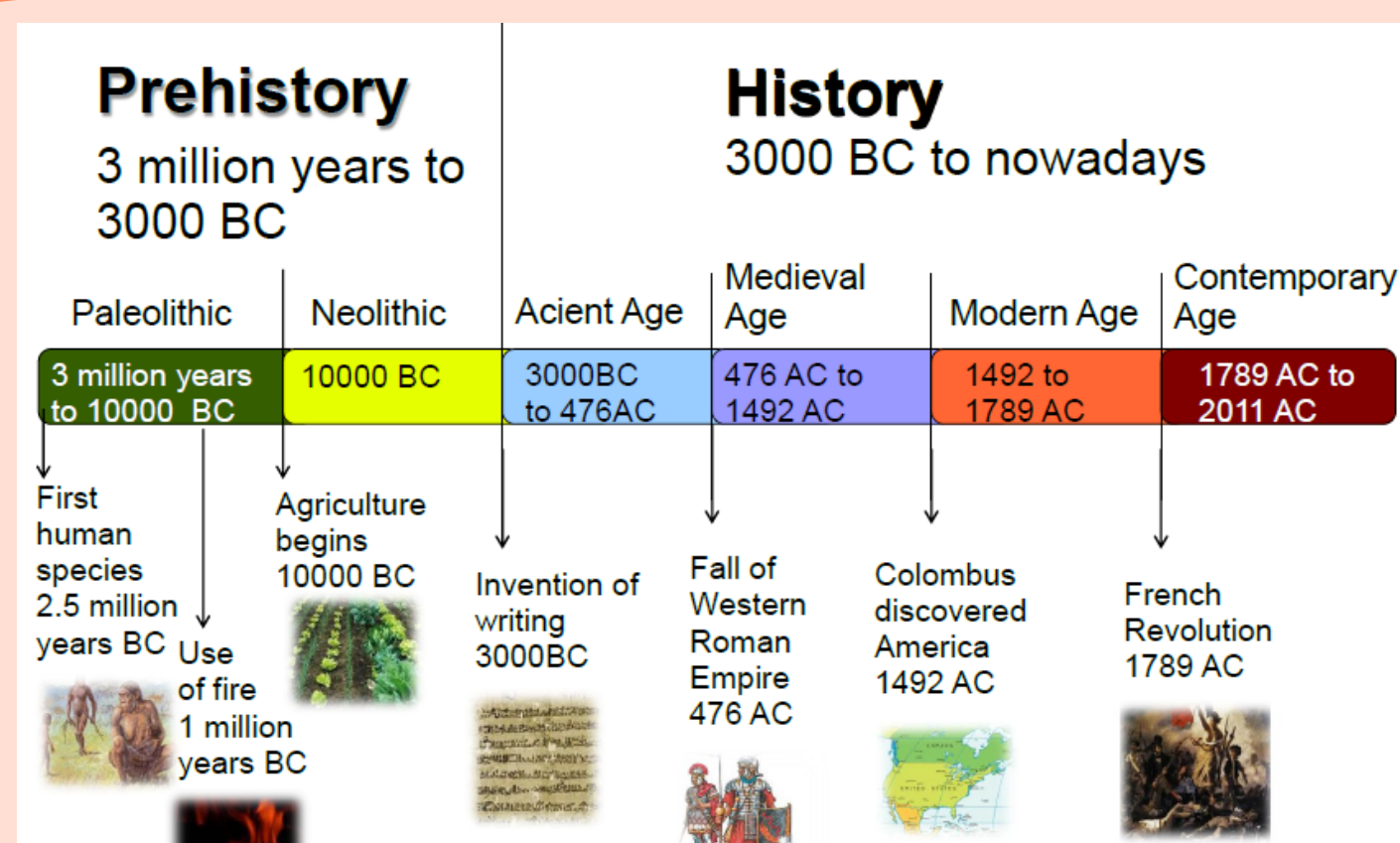


NOTE-MAKING TECHNIQUES

History

Make a timeline

Illustrates the chronology of historical events



Geography

Create a Concept Map

Helps to structure information in a clear and simplified way



Science

Cornell method

Provides a systematic format for consolidating and organising notes

Cornell Notes

- ☐ Main Idea
- ☐ Key Question (after notes are completed)
- ☐ Key words & ideas
- ☐ Important dates/people/places
- ☐ Repeated/Stressed Info
- ☐ Ideas/brainstorming written on board / overhead projector
- ☐ Info from textbook/stories
- ☐ Diagrams & Pictures
- ☐ Formulas

Name
Date
Class
Period

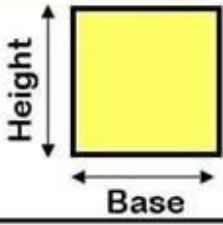
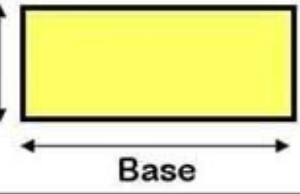
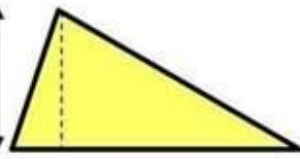


NOTE-MAKING TECHNIQUES

Math

The Charting Method

Divide information into different columns and rows for easy review

Shape	Name	Formula for Area
	Square	Base x Height
	Rectangle	Base x Height
	Triangle	Base x Perpendicular Height ÷ 2

English

The Sentence Method

Use line spacing to separate thoughts, concepts, and ideas from one another

- 1 Define a Topic**
Make sure when defining a topic, it is not too large.
- 2 Condense point**
Take the point that the teacher, lecturer or book is trying to make and summarise it.
- 3 Write sentence**
Take the mental summary and write it out as a single sentence under the topic heading.
- 4 Repeat**
Do this for each topic covered.

TOPIC	Sentence describing a key point in the topic.
	Sentence describing a key point in the topic.
	Sentence describing a key point in the topic.
	Sentence describing a key point in the topic.
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Literature

The Outline Method

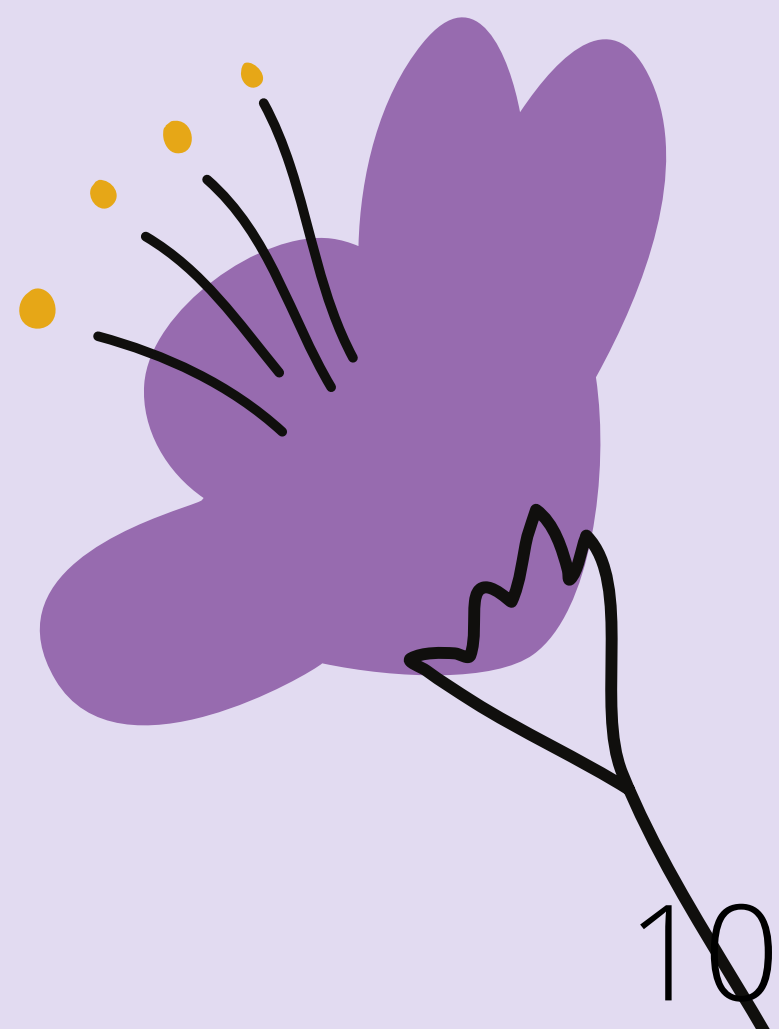
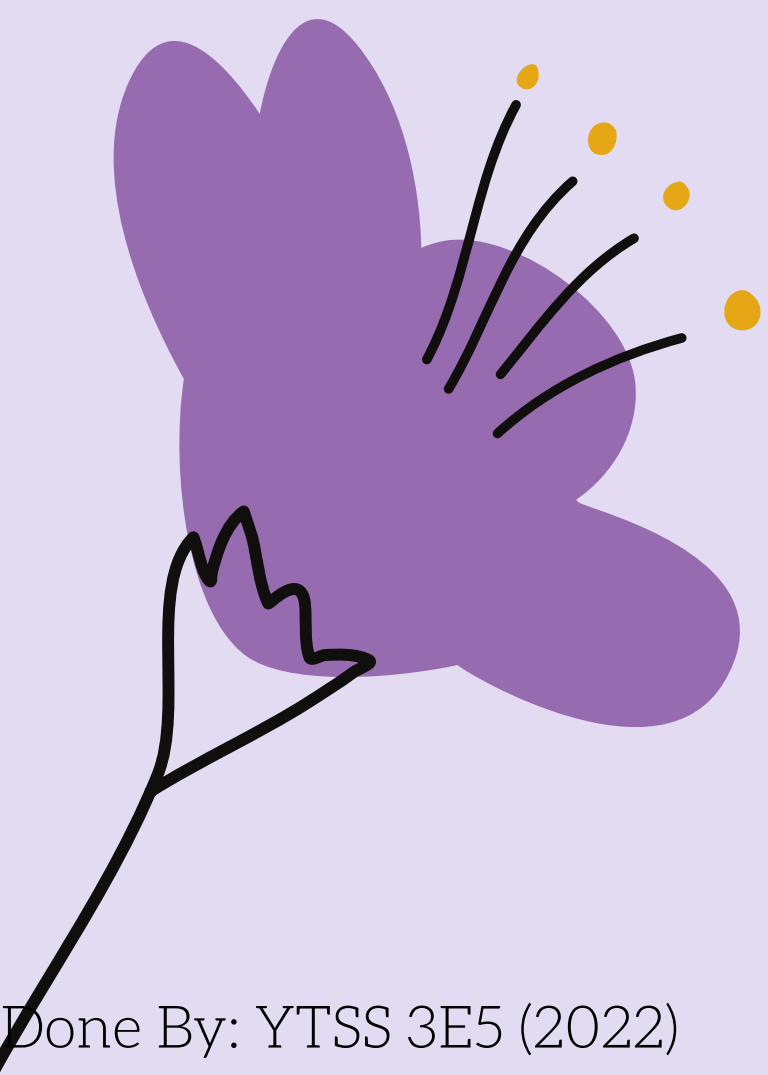
Organise information in a structured and logical manner

The Outline Method

- This is a main topic
 - This is a sub topic
 - This is a thought or supporting fact

line spacing to separate thoughts, concepts, and ideas from one another

CREATING MINDMAPS



HOW DO MINDMAPS HELP US?

Helps you to learn new concepts

Mindmaps encourage you to make new connections between new and existing knowledge

Makes complex ideas easier to understand

Mindmaps help you to plan your work effectively, improving the quality, structure and coherence of your written work

Improves your ability to recall information

Mindmaps with vibrant presentations help bring concepts to life, getting your point across more effectively

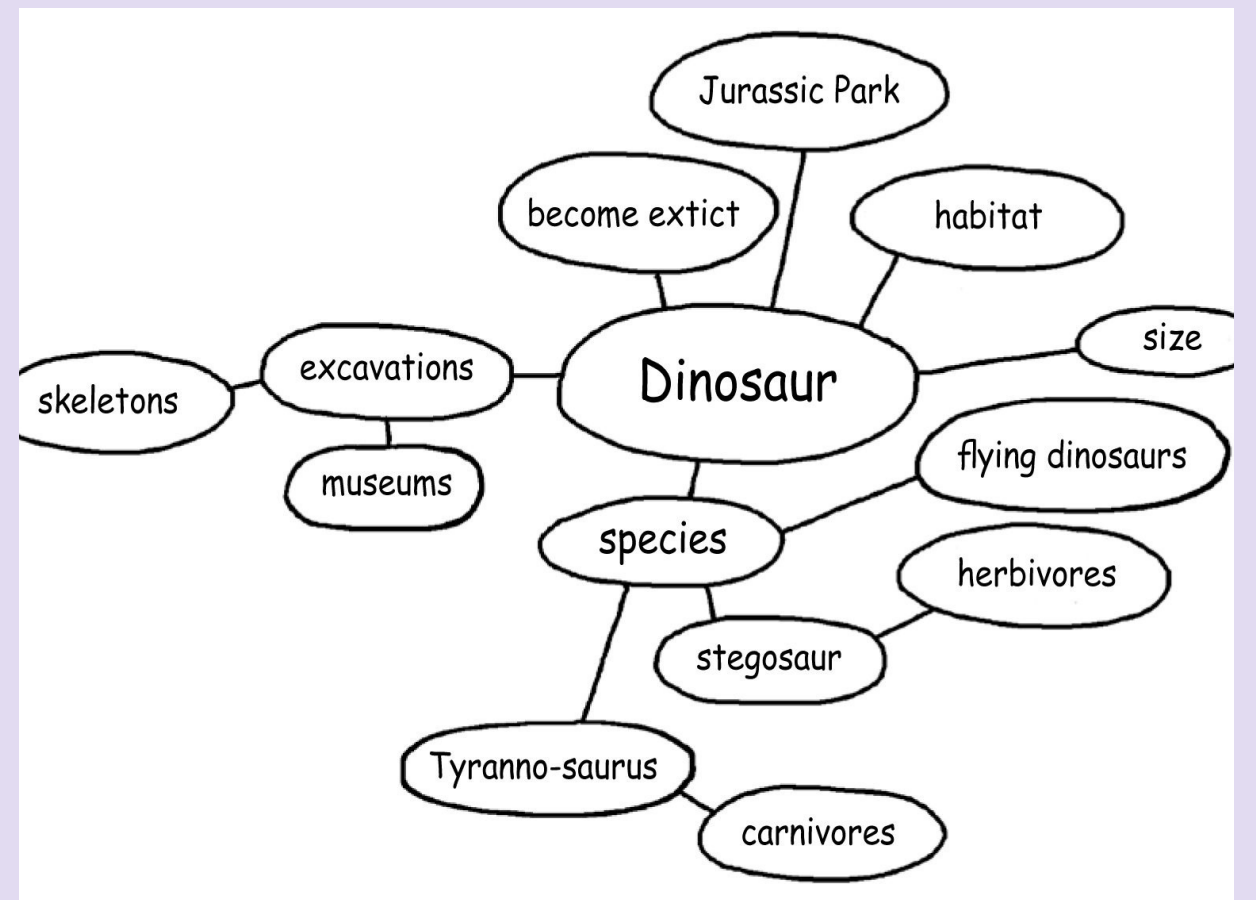
STEPS TO CREATE MINDMAPS

1. Choose a topic for the mindmap and place it in the middle
2. Come up with key main ideas and evenly space them in a circular formation around the topic
3. Draw lines from topic to each main idea
4. Brainstorm supporting details like ideas, tasks and questions for each main idea
5. Draw lines connecting each main idea to its supporting details

TIPS FOR MAKING USEFUL MINDMAPS

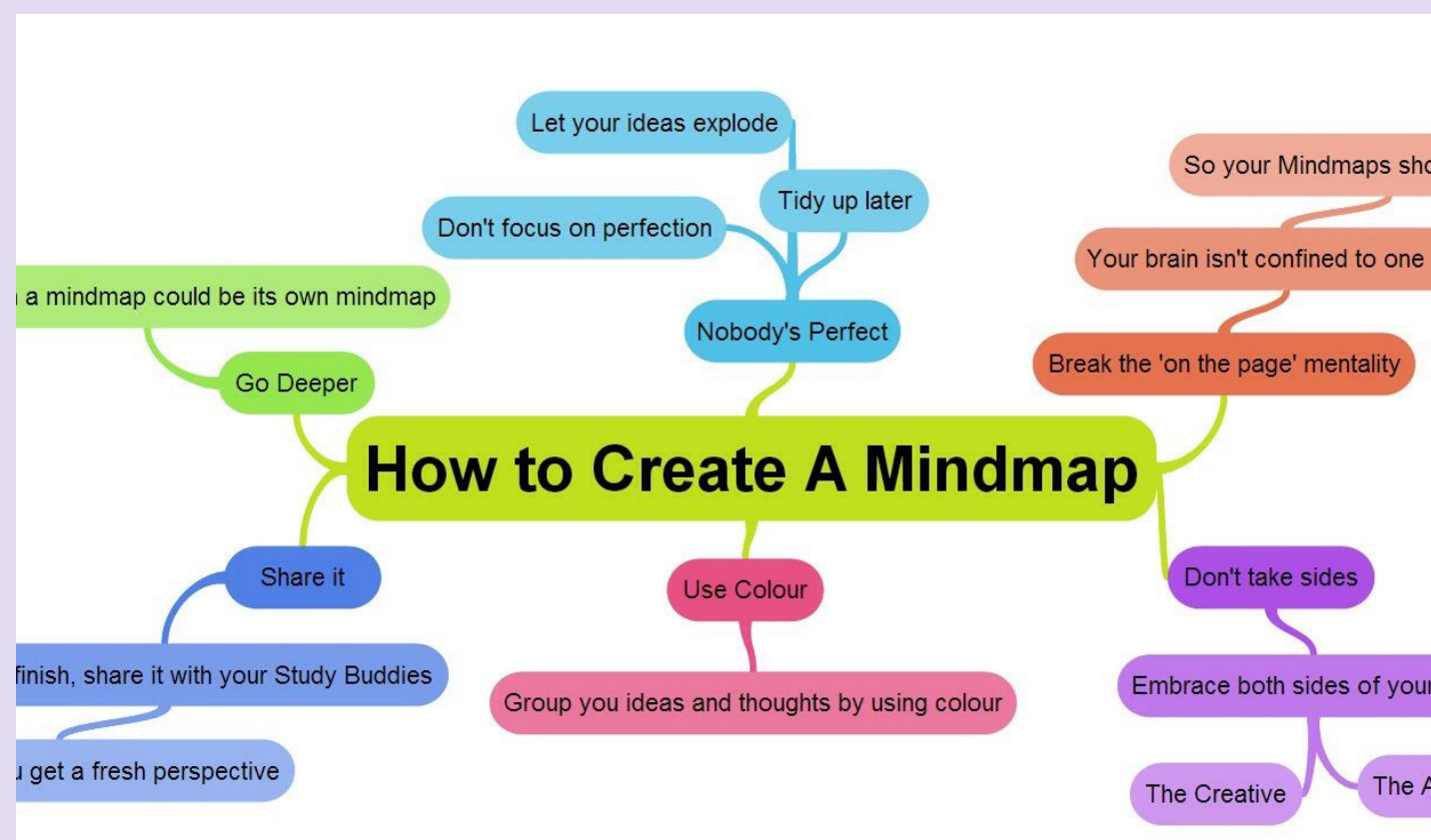
Use Single Words or Uncomplicated Phrases

Short and strong meaningful phrases can convey the same meaning more efficiently



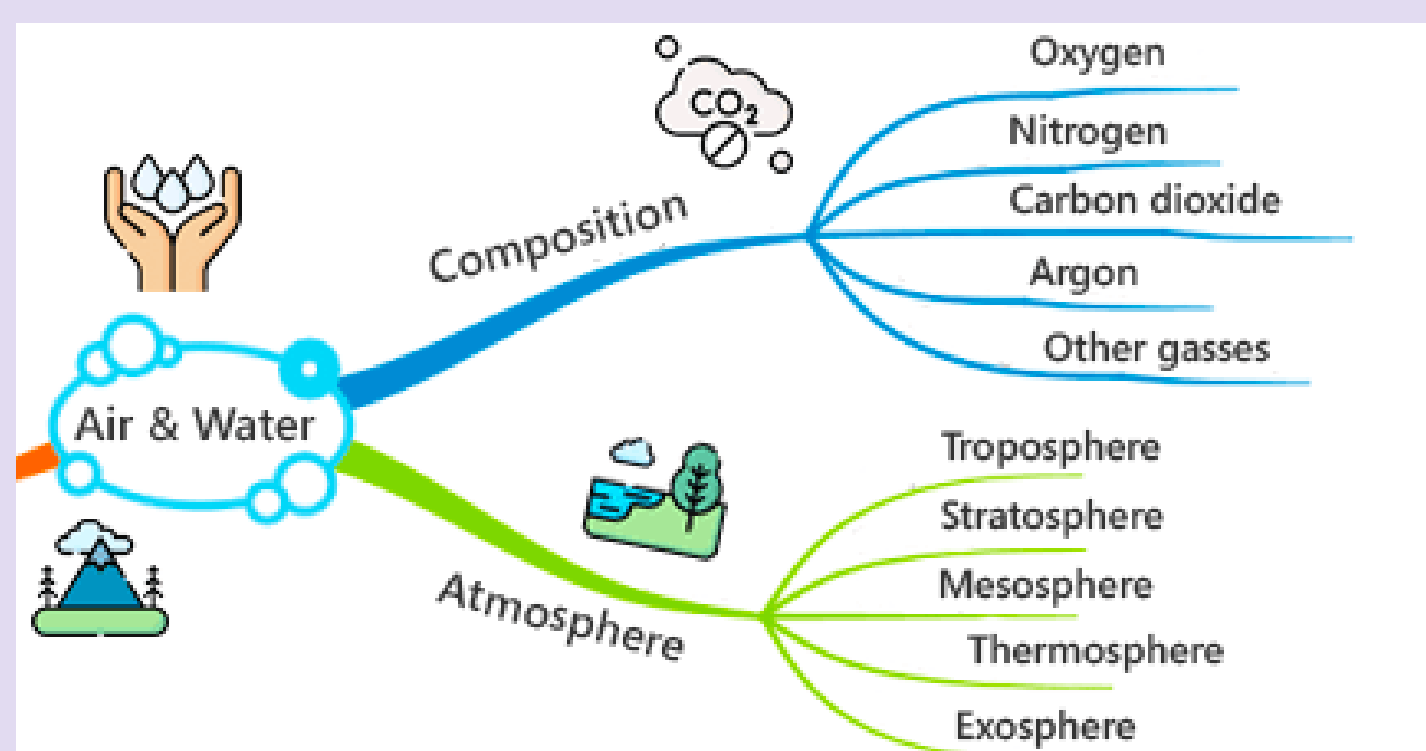
Use Colours to Separate Different Ideas

Colours can help to show the organisation of the subject and make it more appealing



Use Symbols and Images

Pictures can help you to remember information more effectively than words

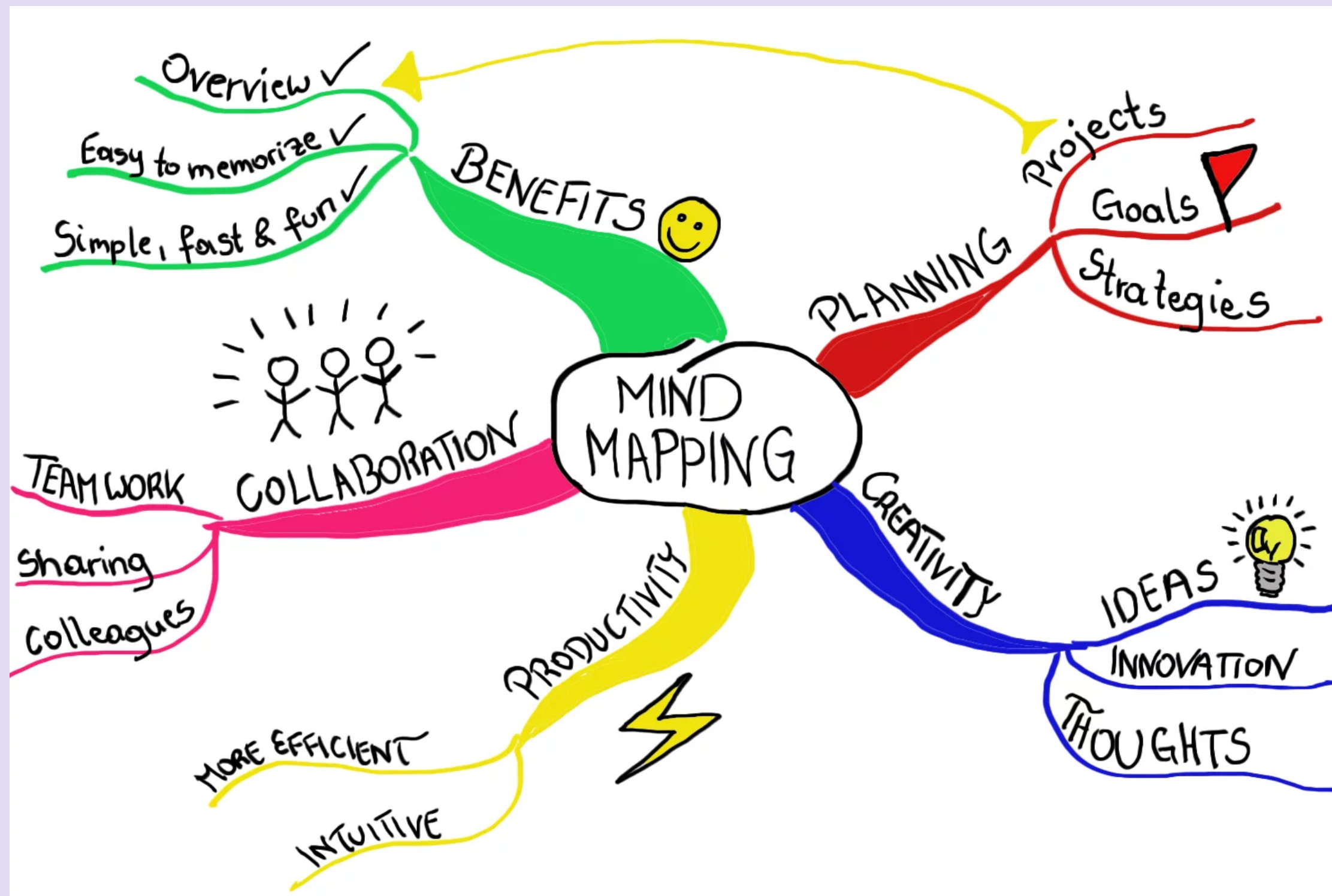


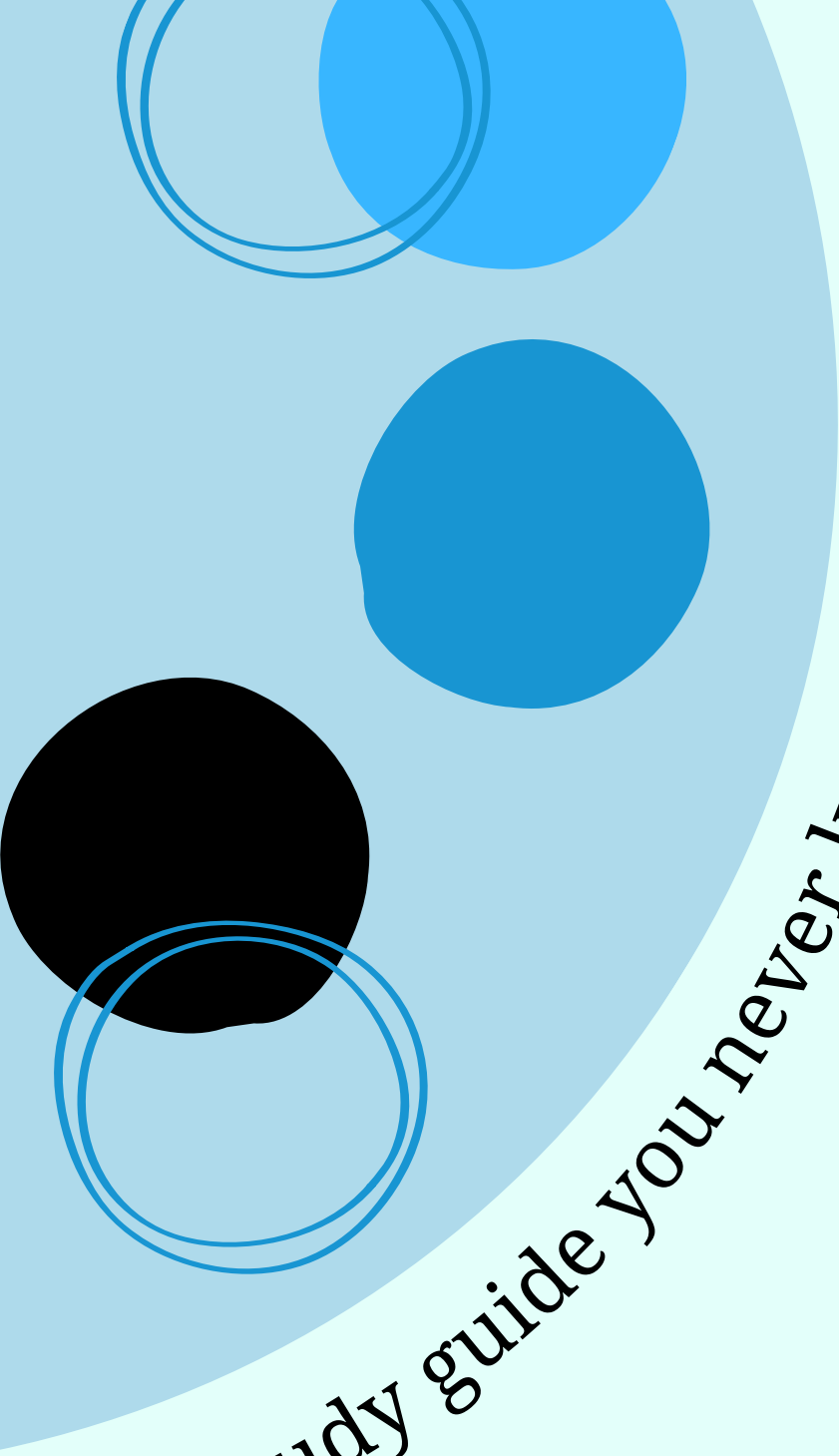
Use Cross-Linkages

Draw lines between the concepts to show how each information is linked to each

other

SAMPLES OF MINDMAPS

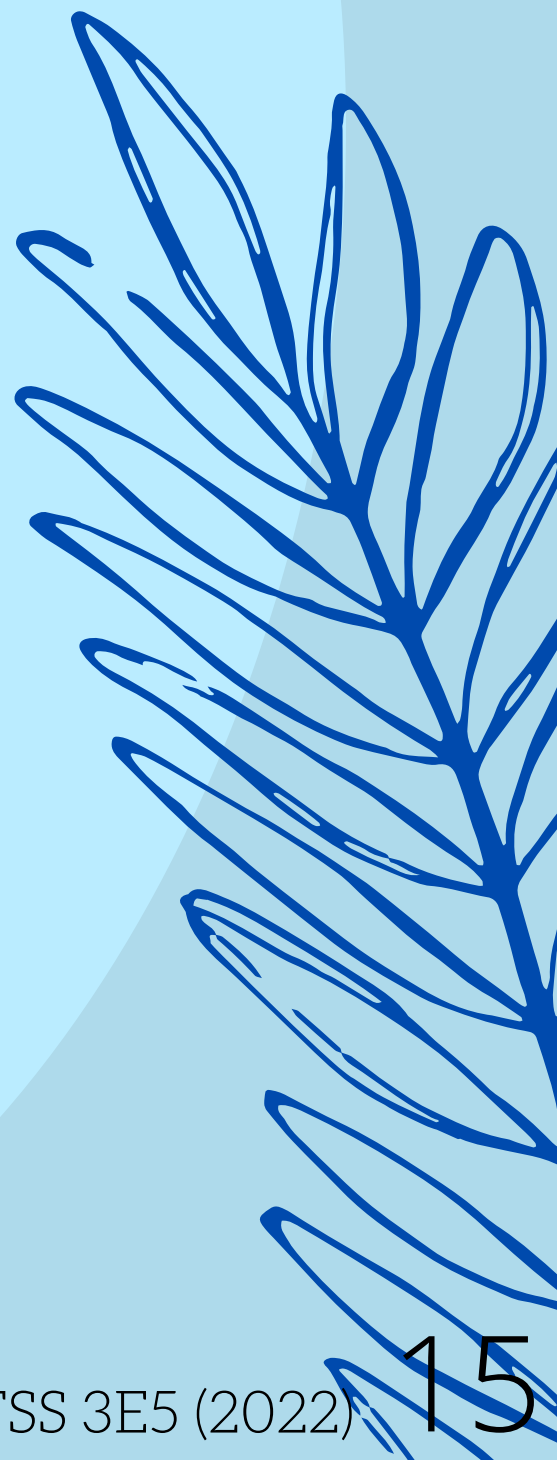
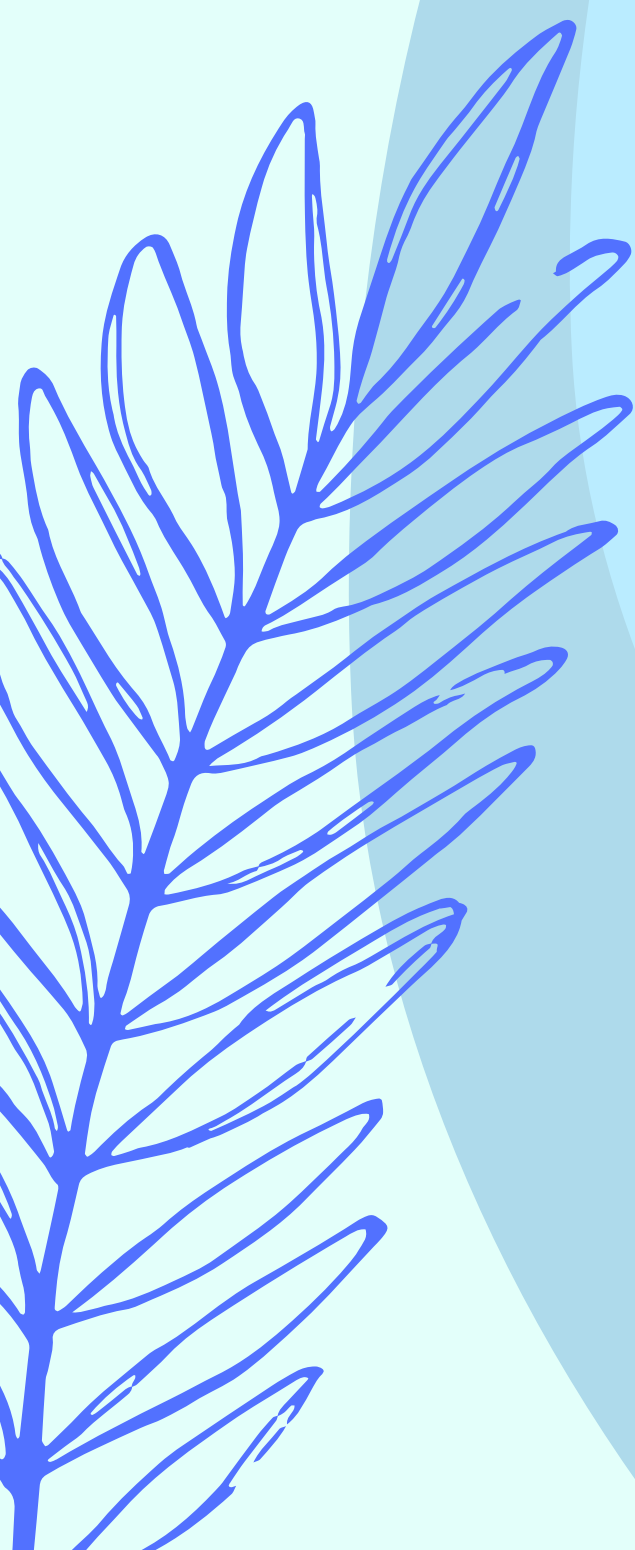




The study guide you never knew you needed



CREATING A STUDY TIMETABLE



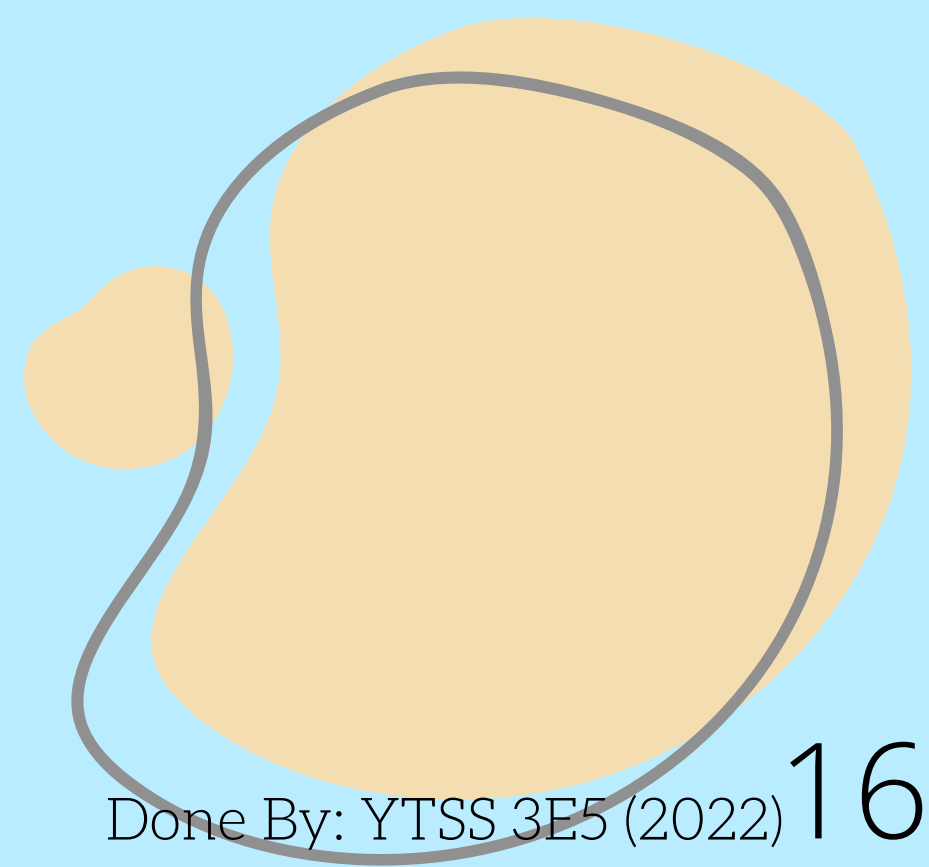
SETTING A MINIMUM REQUIRED TIME



Know how much time an activity would minimally require and set aside some extra time as a buffer

For example, if an English essay takes 1 hour to complete, add another 10–15 minutes to your planned time

As time passes by, you will be able to grasp exactly how long a particular activity might take and will be able to plan your time properly



Setting Priorities

List down ALL the activities you want to complete

example

work/tasks to complete	due date
English compo	Friday
Science practice paper	Wednesday
English paper 2	Monday
Mathematics worksheet	Monday

Assuming that it is a Saturday, after listing out all your tasks, check which task has the closest due date.

In this case, the English Paper 2 and Mathematics worksheet are due on Monday, so they have to be given more priority and planned to be done first.

PLANNING BREAKS



Planning breaks in your timetable is essential. However, if you are taking some time for breaks in between the tasks you are doing:

Take note:

- 1) Only schedule short breaks so as to prevent losing your momentum
- 2) Avoid using your mobile phone or electronic devices as you may get distracted and not get back to studying

Reward yourself with longer breaks and some fun screen time after you are done with all your tasks in your timetable!

THINGS TO DO ON A STUDY BREAK

Taking regular study breaks can positively affect your attention abilities. It's important to choose the right type of activity for your 5 minute break so that you can return back refreshed and focused, ready to get back to your books.

How Often To Take a Study Break:

The Pomodoro Technique

1 2 3 4 5

Decide on the task to be done.

Set the timer to **25 minutes**

Work on the task until the timer rings.

Take a short **5 minute break**

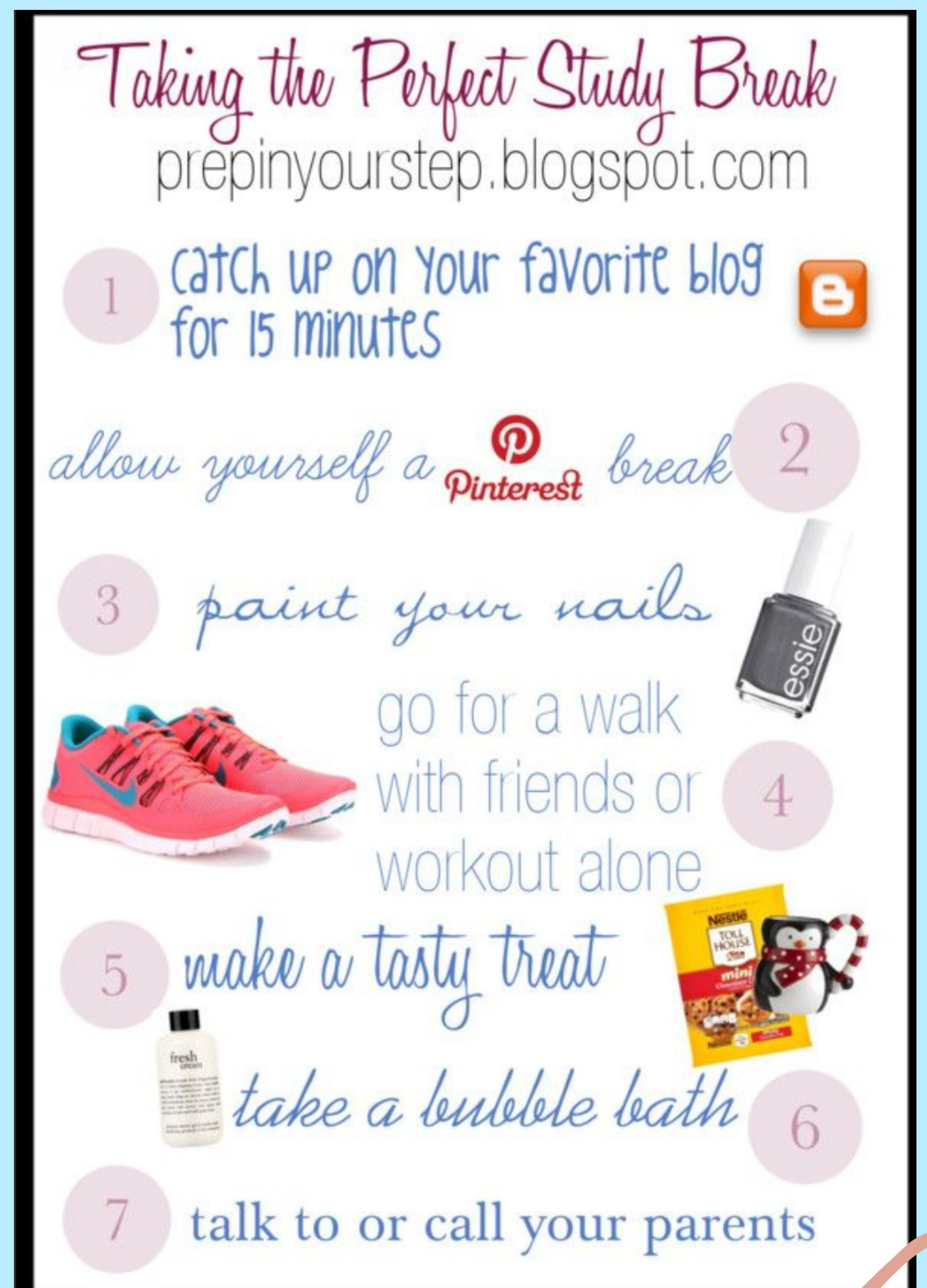
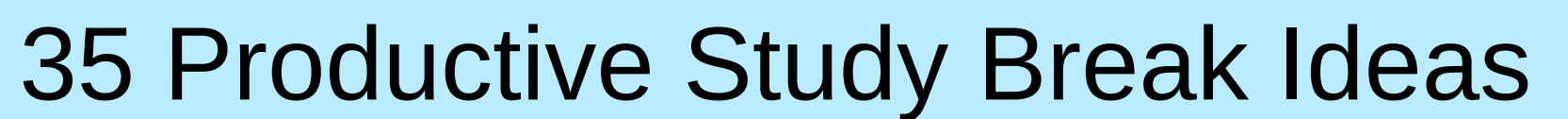
Take a **15-30 minute break**

repeat 4 times

WHAT TO AVOID

- ✓ Snacking on Junk Food
- ✓ Taking a Nap Not Longer Than 20 Minutes
- ✓ Watching TV, Surfing the Web, Video Games & Other Media-Related Activities
- ✓ Excessive Caffeine
- ✓ Huge Meals

homeworkforyou.com



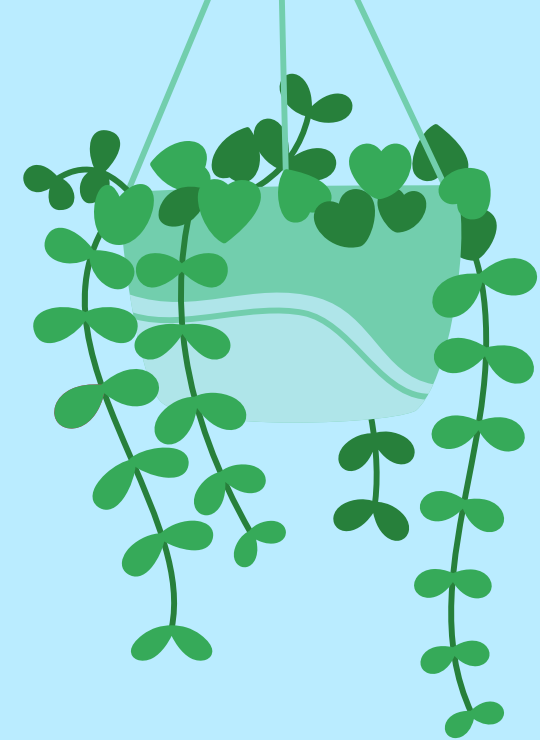
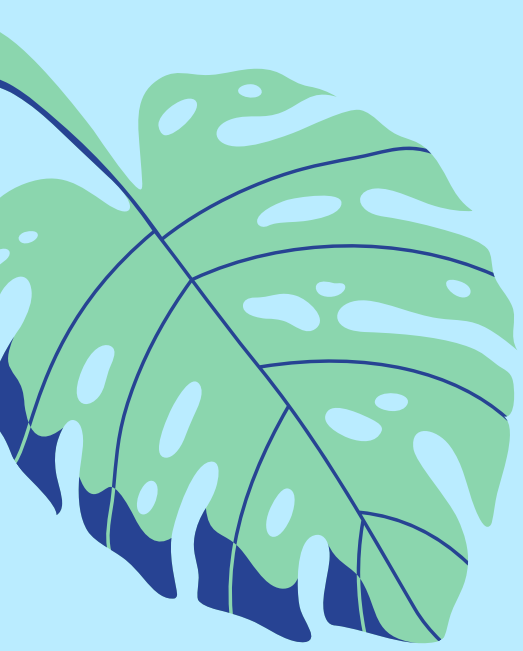
POMODORO METHOD

THE POMODORO METHOD IS A STUDY TECHNIQUE IN WHICH YOU PLAN TO DO 25 MINUTES OF INTENSIVE REVISION BEFORE TAKING 5 MINUTES OF REST

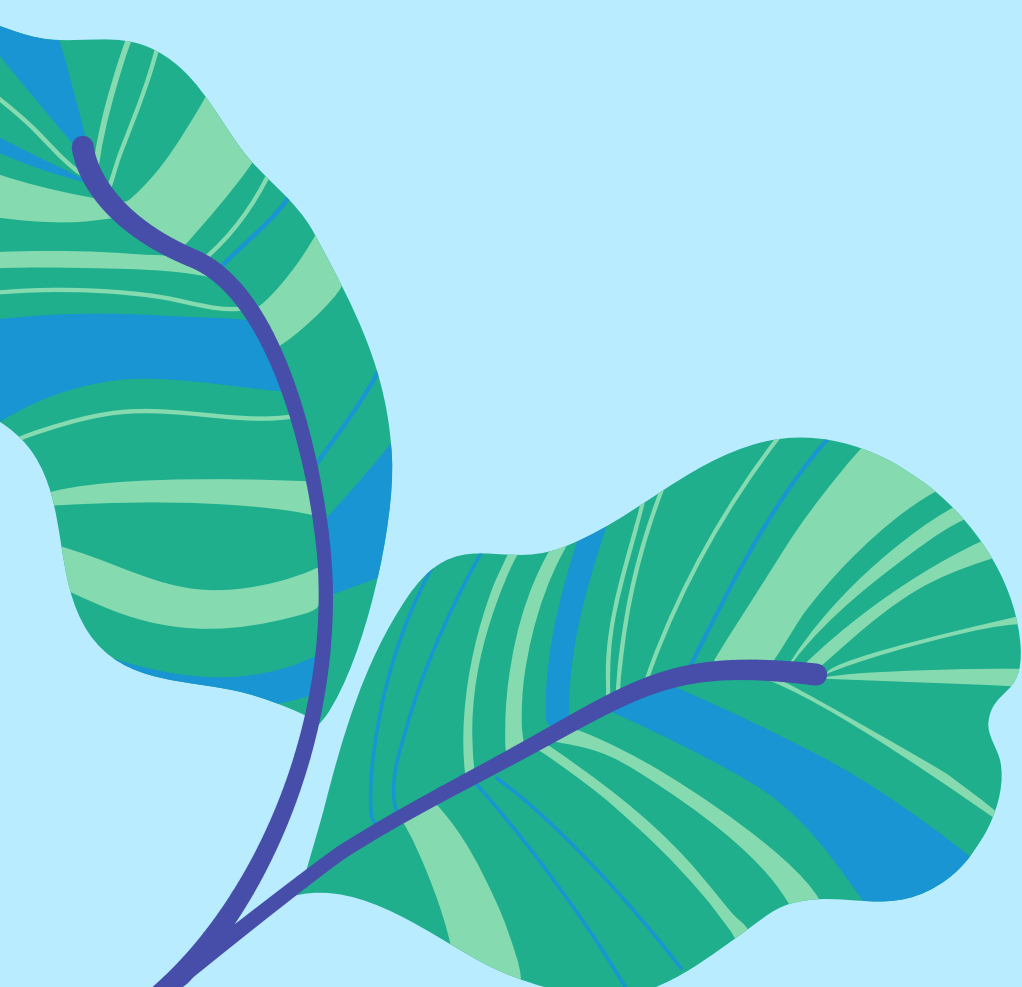
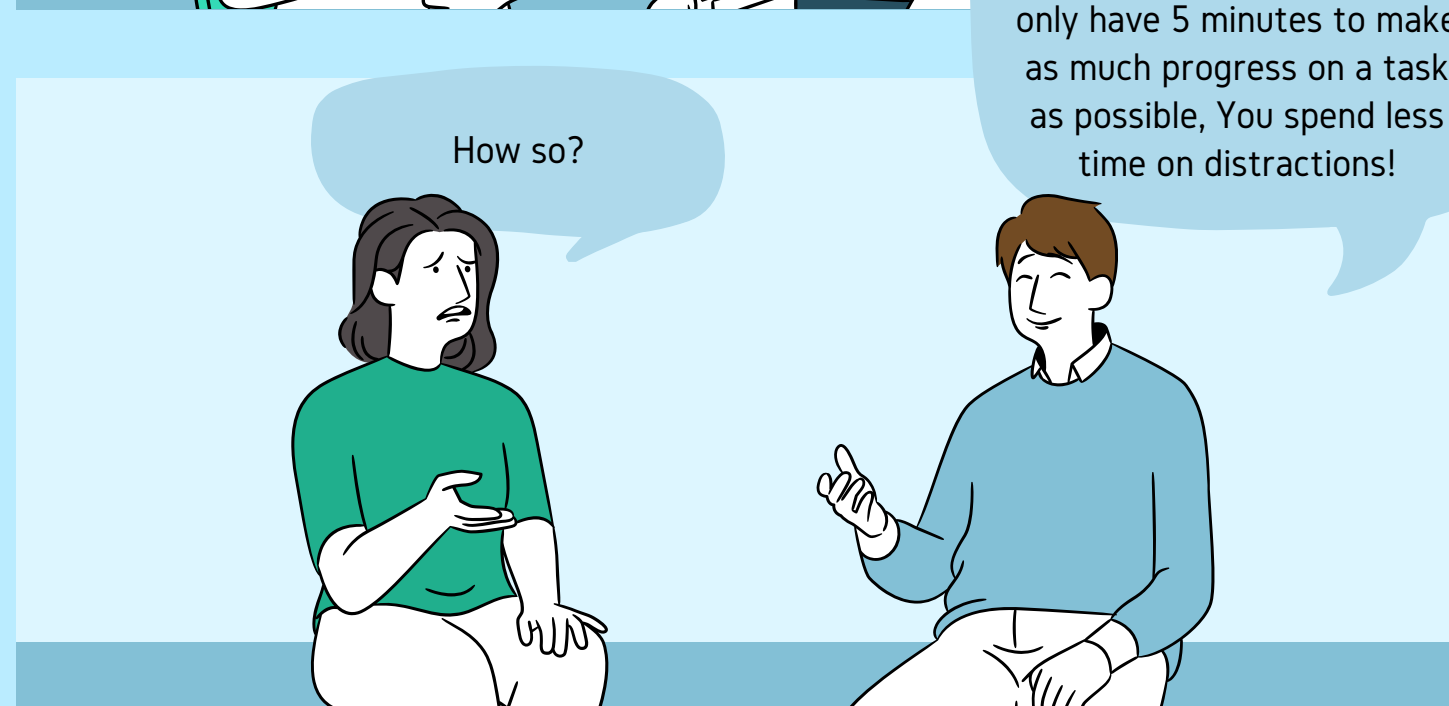
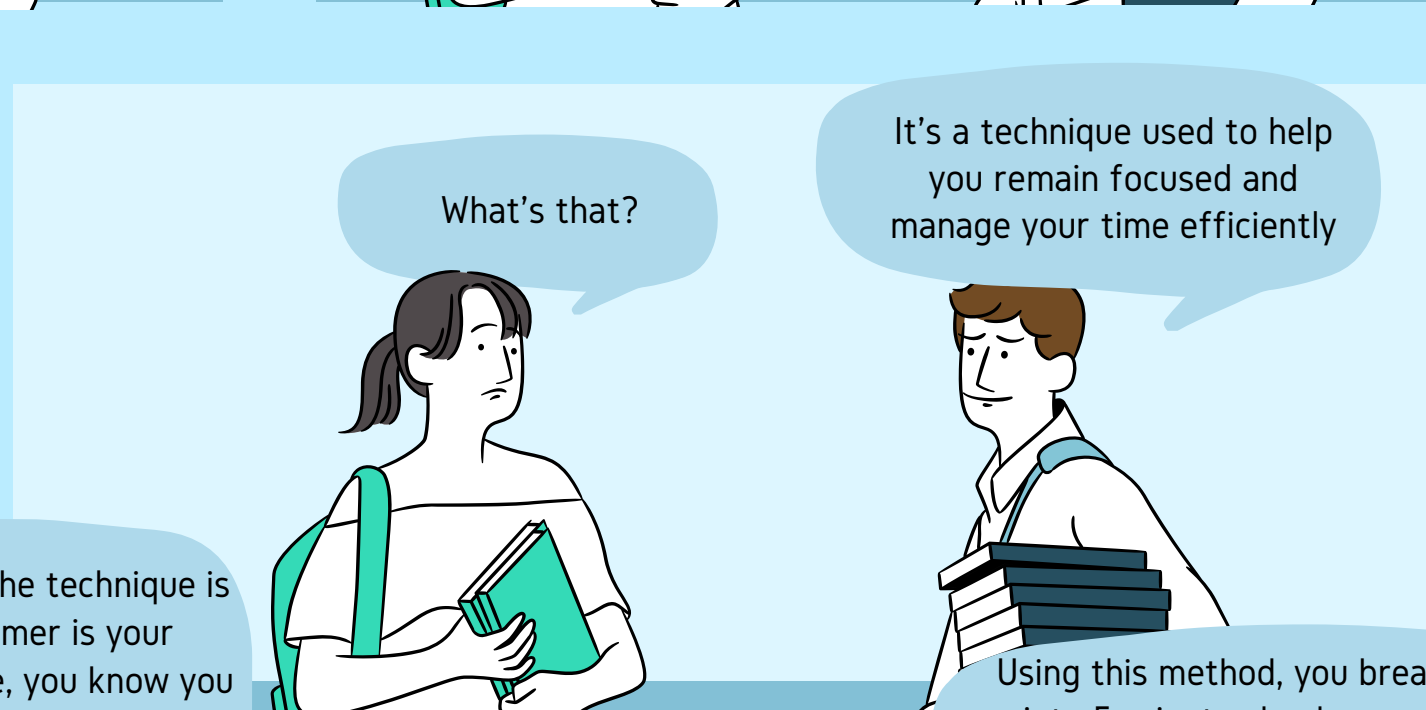
This study technique can be used when you need lots of focus to do a certain task or when you lack the motivation to start. This technique can help reduce the friction of having to start the task you have been dreading. After the 25 minutes are up, you can even continue if you wish to since you have already overcome the tough part of starting the task in the first place

* NOTE: Try to avoid electronic devices during that short break





POMODORO TECHNIQUE COMIC



POMODORO TIMER →



SCAN ME

● Tasks

EFFECTIVE STUDY TECHNIQUES



Study Technique 1 :

- Do a mindmap for a topic. Draw it out for better visualisation
- Time taken: 30min per mindmap
- Mindmaps help you to get concepts easily

tutorial on how to
draw a mindmap



Study Technique 2 :

- Summarise different question types for all subjects
- Use 10 min to organise each topic
- This makes revision much easier
- Here is an example. You can also make notes at the side

1. Question Types

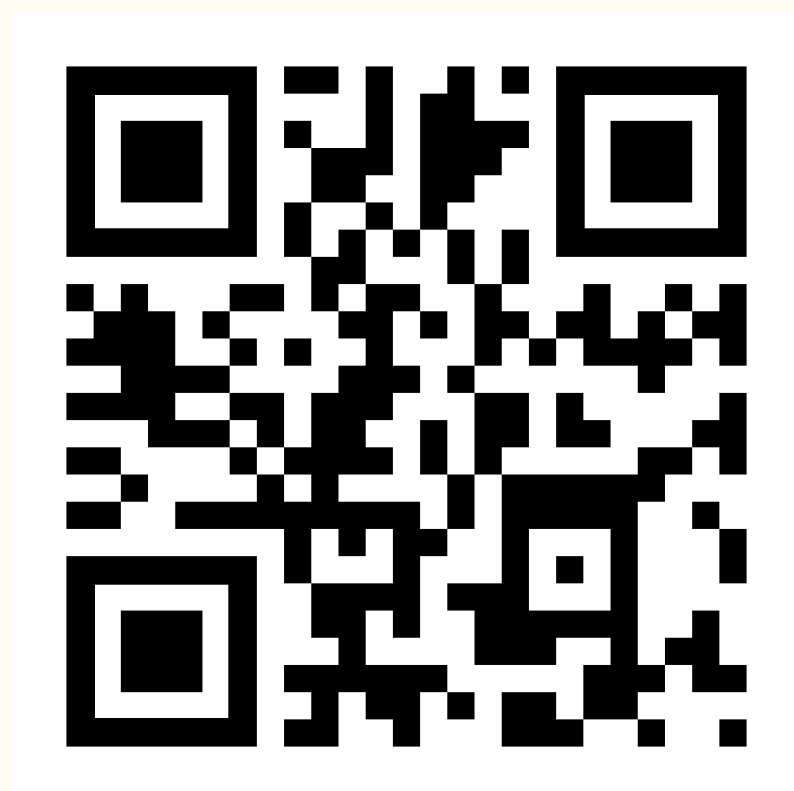
Firstly you must be able to identify the different types of questions that are presented in a comprehension paper.

1. These question types can be classified into 4 categories. These categories are:

- a) Literal questions
- b) Inferential questions
- c) Use of language questions
- d) Use your own questions

Study Technique 3 :

- When doing maths, especially algebra, you can use PhotoMath for help
- PhotoMath is an application that solves math questions by just typing it in
- It is quick, fast and convenient
- However, do not overuse it as you might be over reliant on it
- You may scan the QR code to go into PhotoMath's website or download the app



Study Technique 4:

- Use flashcards for revision
- Take your time to practise until you fully understand the topic
- Helps in memorising information and quizzing yourself

Link to quizzlet, a popular flashcard website



Study Technique 5:

- Test yourself with other school test papers to check your understanding
- Set a timer to keep track of time used
- Search for test papers of other past year school papers online.

Study Technique 6:

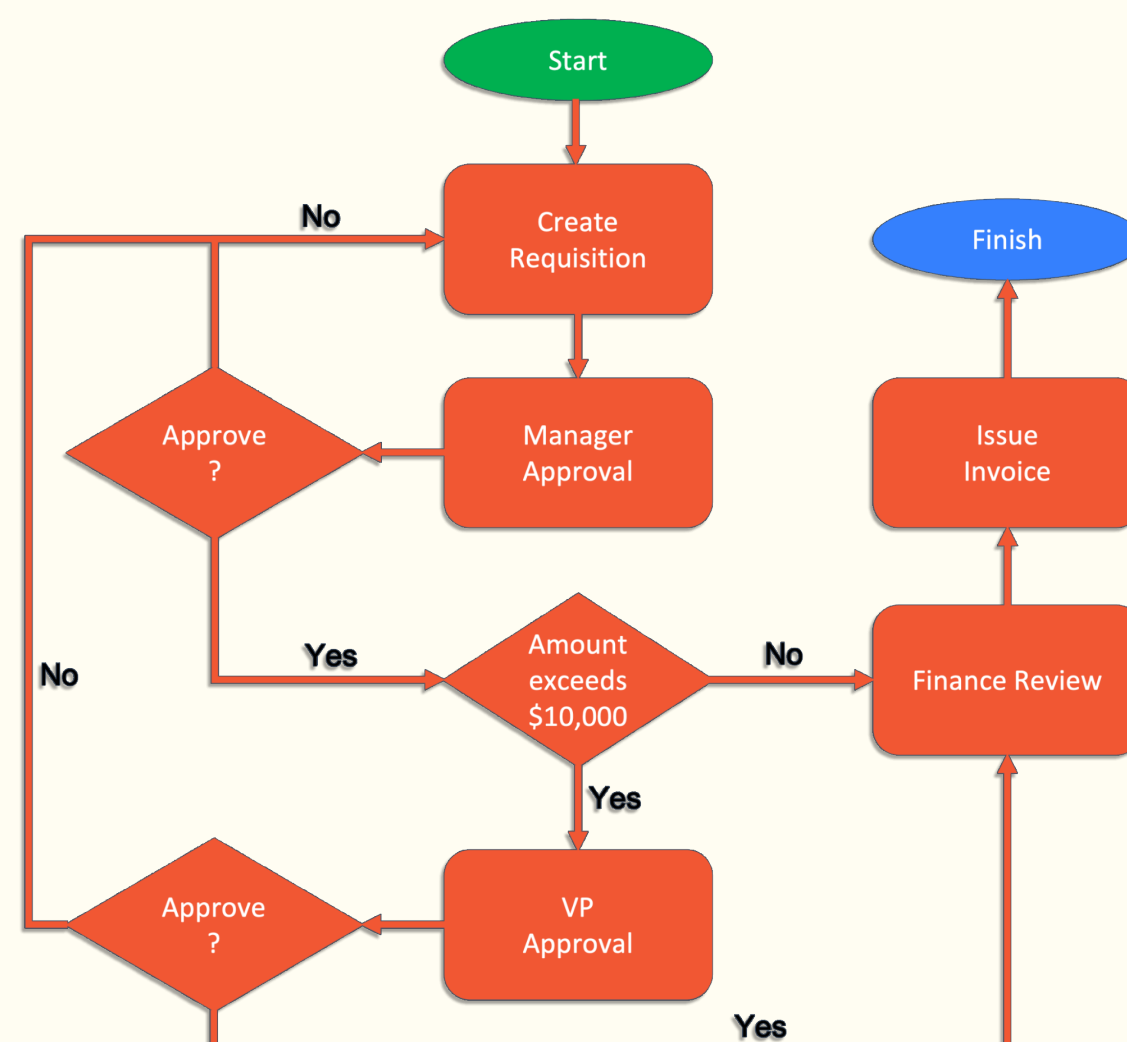
- When in doubt, ask teachers or friends
- Do not be shy, teachers don't bite (their role is to guide you!)

Study Technique 7 :

- Space out your studying time
- Always take time to go back to topics learned (not just during exams)
- This constantly refreshes your memory of older topics and you will not completely forget how to do them.

Study Technique 8 :

- Learn by drawing
- Visual learners can understand and learn better when there are visual elements, e.g. Diagrams



How to make flash cards

Step 1: Make a cover card which states the topic of the flashcards

Step 2: Write the flashcards, making sure the information is easy to understand for yourself

Step 3: You can draw small pictures if it helps you to understand better

Optional Step: Make it aesthetic as it may help you focus better(depends on the individual)

Scan this QR code for a sample flashcard!



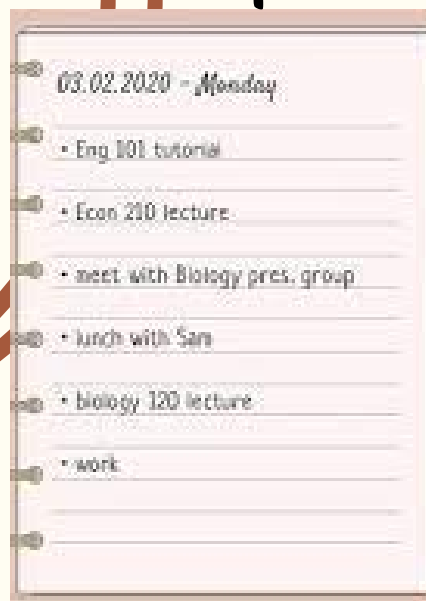
Tips on what to avoid while studying

+

Procrastination/
pushing the work
to the next day

Plan a To-do
list at the
beginning of
your day

example



03.02.2020 - Monday	
•	Eng 101 tutorial
•	Econ 210 lecture
•	meet with Biology pres. group
•	lunch with Sam
•	biology 120 lecture
•	work

alternative!

Put away
distractions like
electronic devices
eg. phones

Not having a
study schedule
/ planner

+

Tips on what to avoid while studying

alternative

Start to study regularly and check up often on what you have learnt for eg. every day or every two days

Cramming up all revision/studying in one day

Not having a conducive study space and being disorganised - instead plan where and what you want to revise :)

Avoid multitasking to have focus on one main thing .

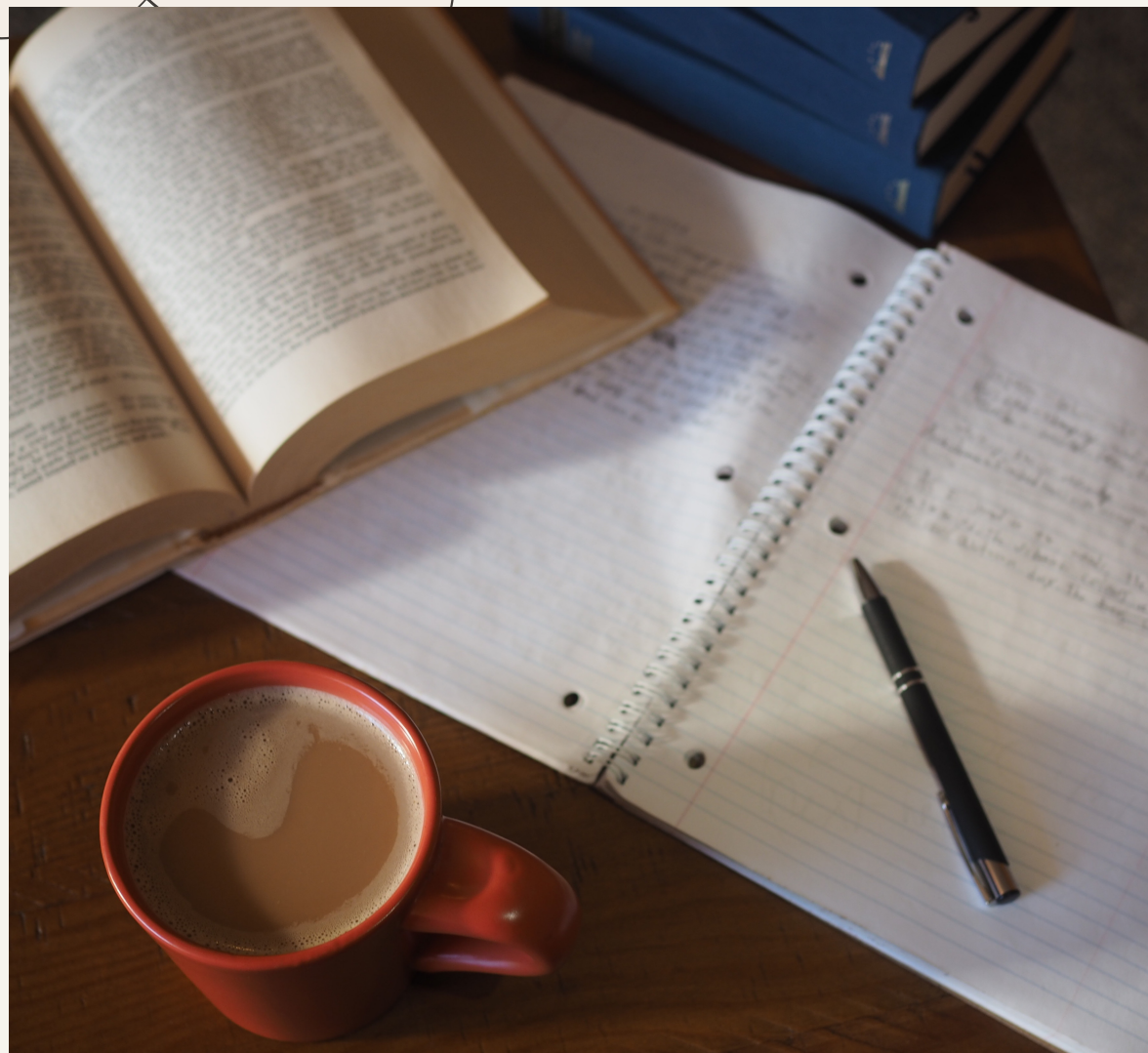
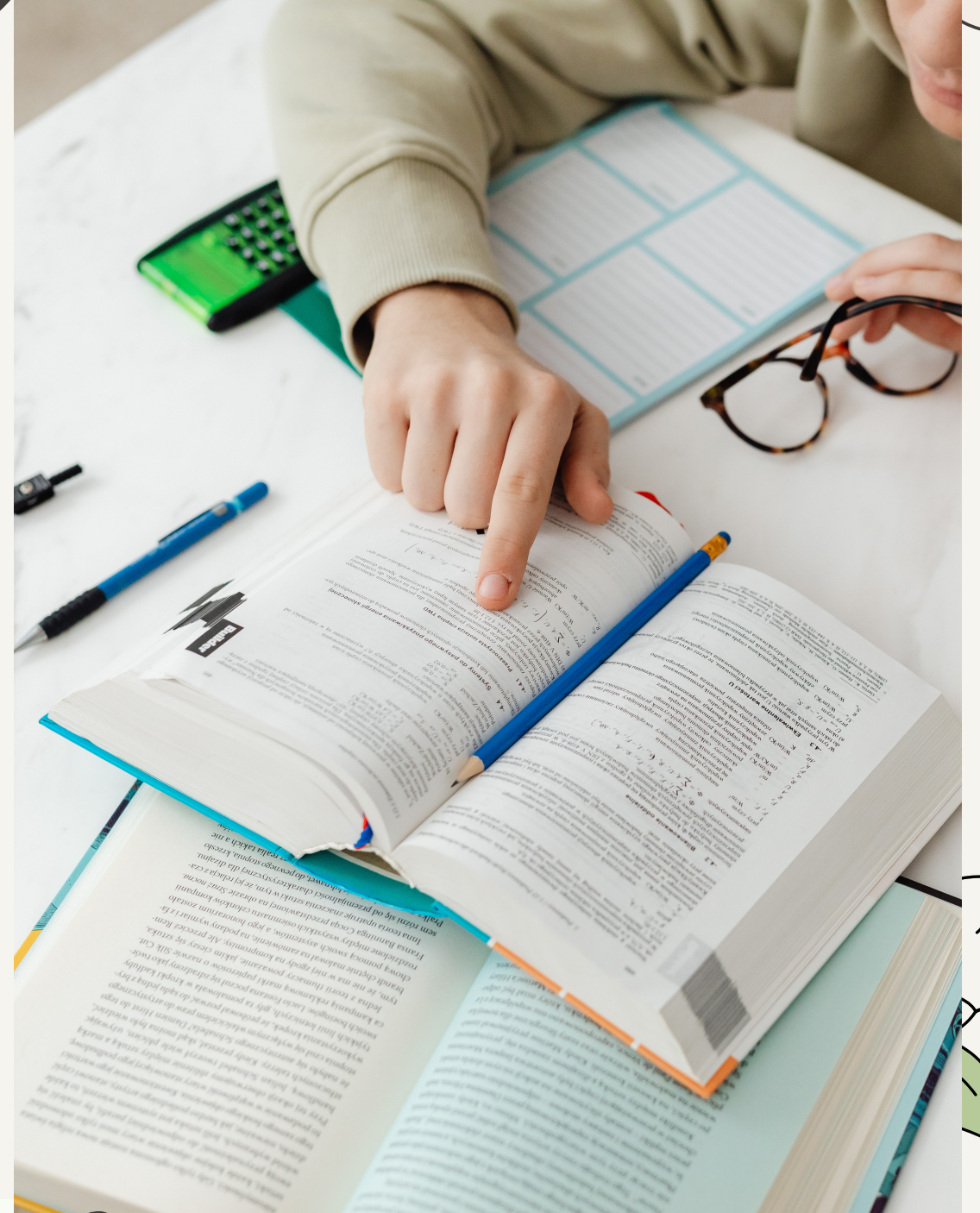
OVERCOMING STUDY PROBLEMS



TIPS TO SPEND TIME PRODUCTIVELY

Can't memorise effectively?

-start looking through notes and memorising them 1-2 weeks before actual exams.



LACK OF MOTIVATION?

-think of good comments from your teachers
-give yourself short term rewards.

Cannot concentrate?

-put away distracting items like your phone as it can distract you from studying
-let someone keep your devices away from you before you finish studying.



TIPS TO OVERCOME STUDY PROBLEMS

Stressed?

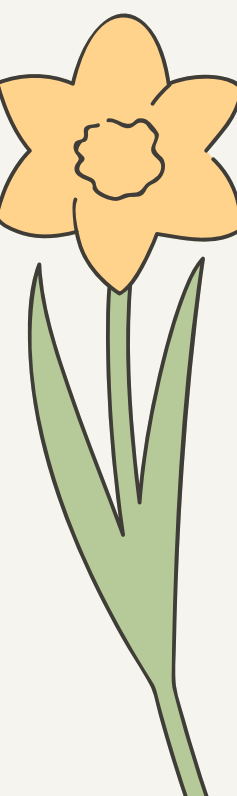
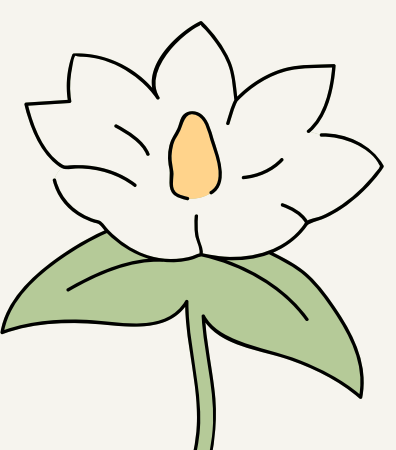
-GIVE YOURSELF
BREAKS EVERY
30-60MINS TO
CALM YOURSELF
DOWN DURING
THESE BREAKS



WHAT CAN WE DO DURING BREAKS?

Breaks should be spent doing things that feel fulfilling and help you go further in reaching your goals.

You should not take longer rest time than studying time.



What do we recommend?

- watch an inspirational talk
- watch a short comedy video
- go out for a run/do your favourite sport
- resting/meditation

Note:

avoid playing addictive/competitive games
avoid watching intriguing drama series

They can get you carried away from your original task.

Comedy videos

Watching comedy videos will allow you to have a good laugh. When you are happy, you will be more willing to continue studying.



Inspirational talks

After studying for some time, you may feel worn out and may not want to continue. Watching inspirational talks can help you find motivation and reasons to continue studying,.

e.g. Organisations such as TED Talk have a lot of quality speakers



Doing A Sport

After long hours of sitting and studying, you should be out exercising as it enhances fitness as well as your emotional wellbeing.

You will be recharged and be able to concentrate on studying.

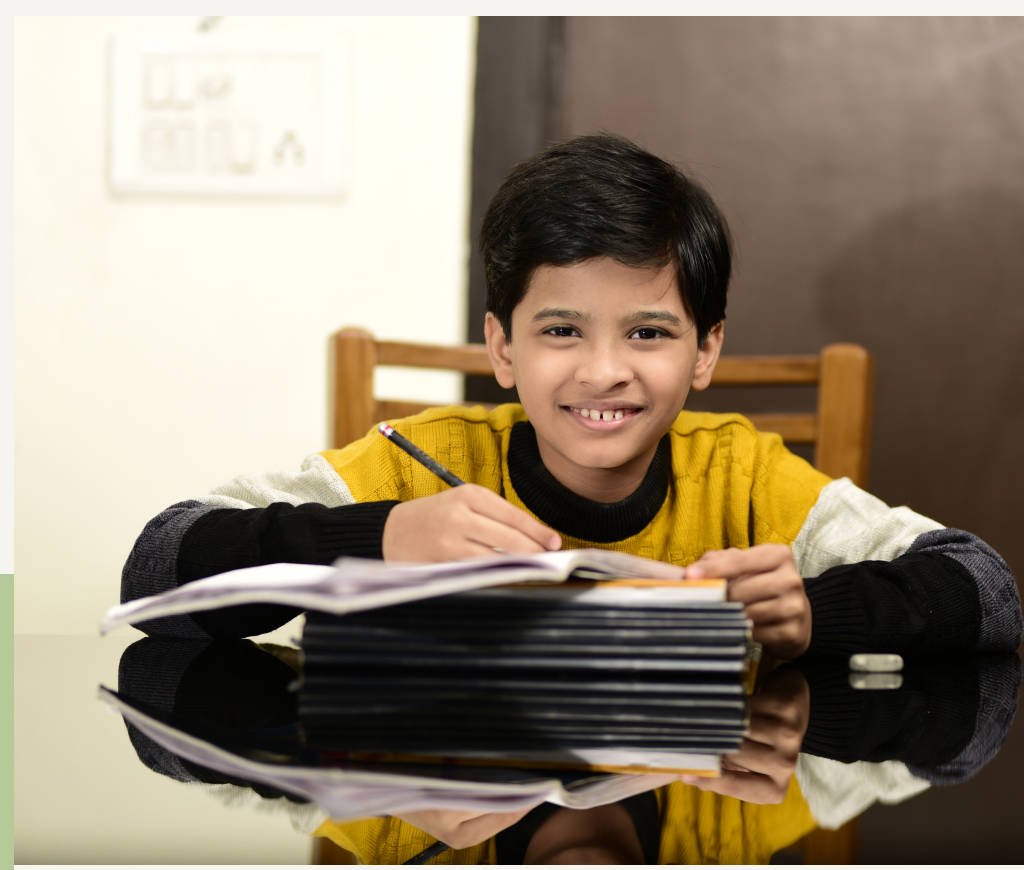
Resting/ Meditation

Sometimes, after studying for a while, you may lose focus and keep thinking about playing. Meditation can help you increase focus and learn concentration.

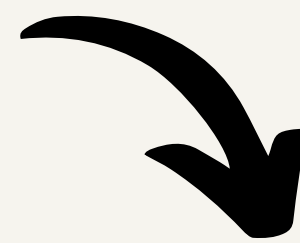


Wellness

Mental wellness is crucial in order to study effectively, but how do we do so?



Some ways to maintain mental wellness



- Not overloading your timetable
- Using 'study with me' videos or study playlists
- Exercising regularly
- Socialising with others
- Setting a specific workspace
- Rewarding yourself when you complete your tasks
- Praising yourself for making improvements
- Forming a routine





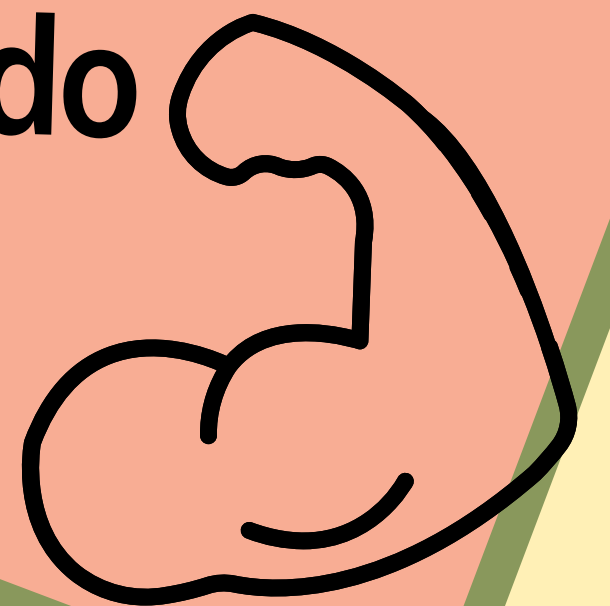
*A little
inspiration for
you...*



“If there is no struggle, there is no progress.” - Frederick Douglass



“Courage is like a muscle. We strengthen it by use.” - Ruth Gordo



Nothing is impossible. The word itself says ‘I’m possible!’ - Audrey Hepburn



Keep a little fire burning; however small, however hidden” - Cormac McCarthy



Many successful people
always had their own
share of struggles



Move on to find out
more about it

Did you know that...

Bill Gates



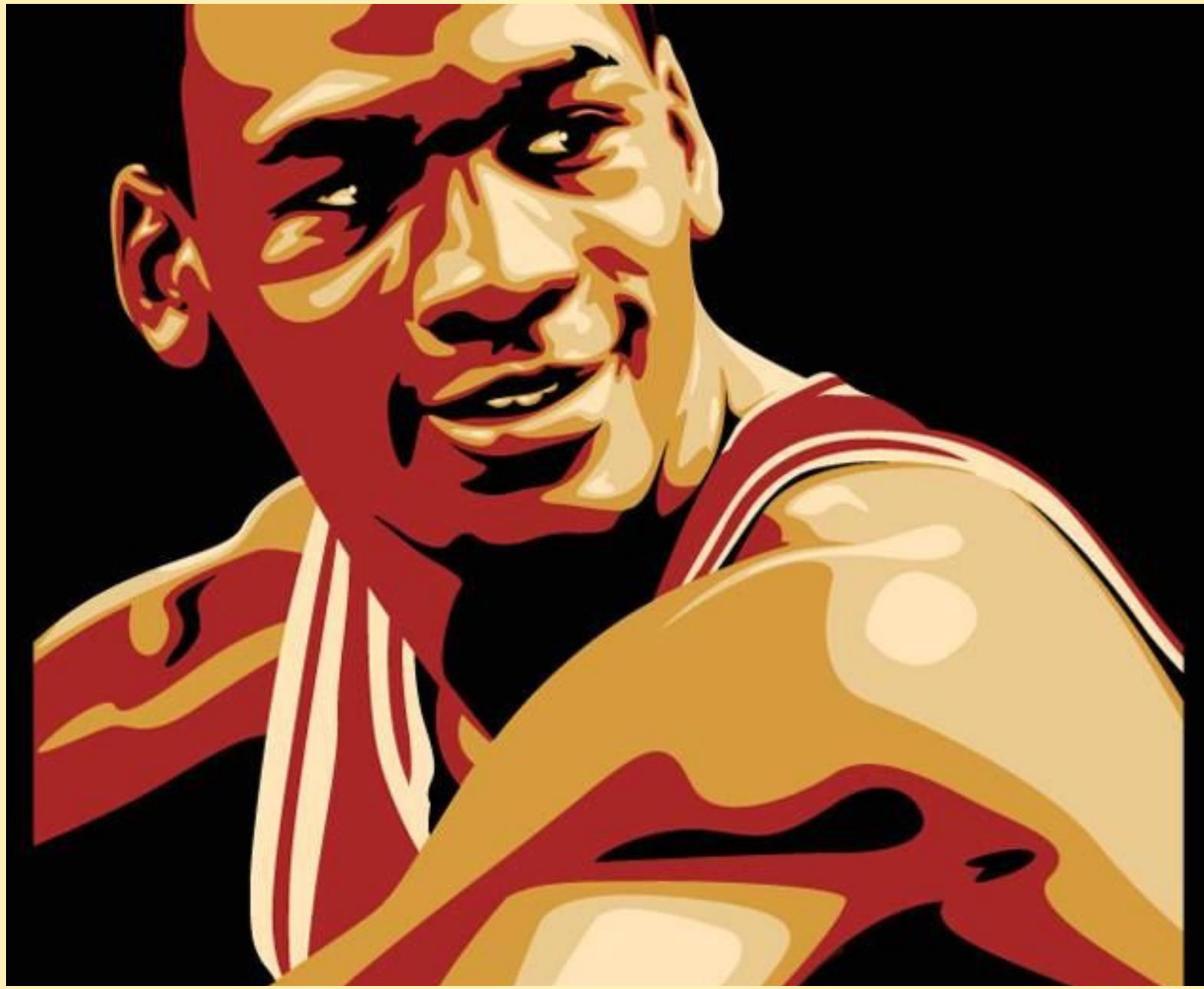
He dropped out of Harvard and closed his failing business, Traf-O-Data, soon after that. At the arrival of the public internet, Gates is said to have underestimated its influence and failed to keep Windows and Microsoft's systems strategy at the forefront.

Steve Jobs



In 1985, less than 10 years after he founded Apple, Steve Jobs was (essentially) fired.

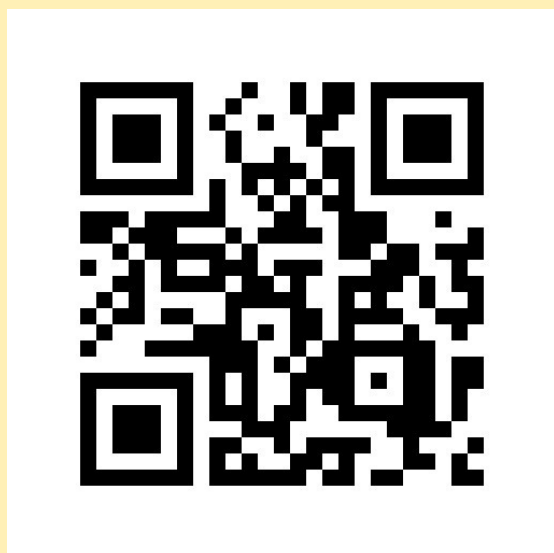
At the age of 30, his life was flipped upside down and he needed to move on from the only business he'd ever known. Jobs was forced to resign when CEO, Jon Sculley, felt Apple needed to reorganise and shift gears. He didn't see Jobs in the tech company's future plans.



Michael Jordan



"I've missed more than 9,000 shots in my career. I've lost almost 300 games. Twenty-six times I've been trusted to take the game-winning shot and missed. I've failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed."



Stephen King

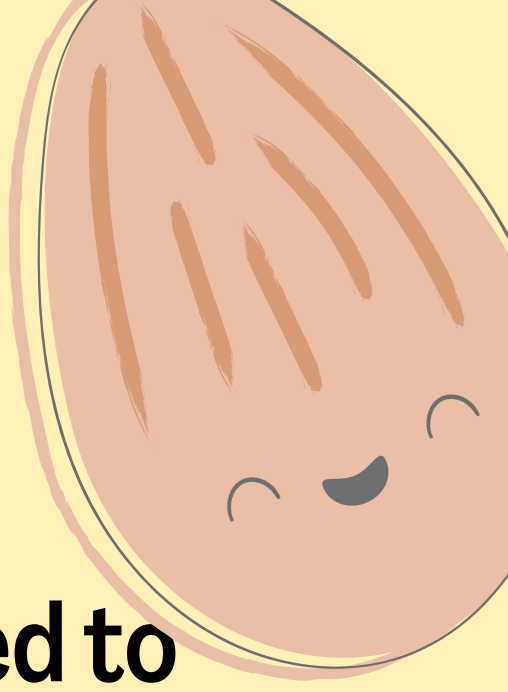


Stephen King tackled several rejections and setbacks right from his youth. He worked several odd jobs and poverty was a major issue that drained him for several years. He worked several low-paid jobs before landing a teaching job at a local high school.

Did you know that...?

Almonds

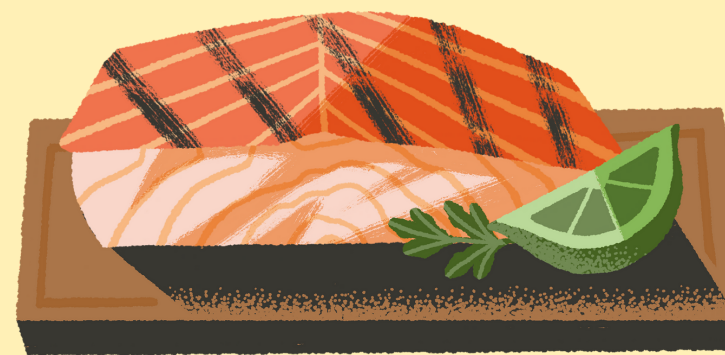
- eat a few before bed to enhance your quality of sleep
- full of vitamin E, which is known to preserve memory longer by boosting alertness



Coffee and cinnamon

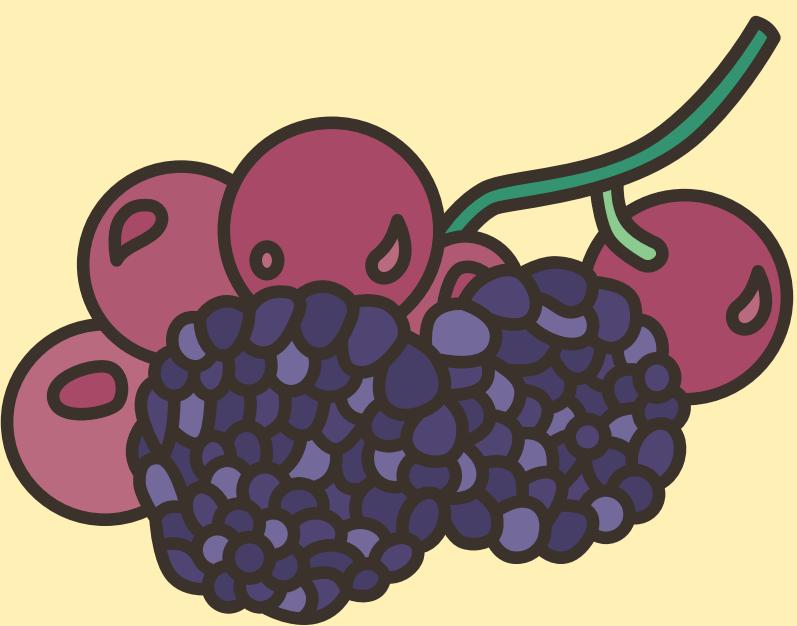


- add a few dashes of cinnamon to a cup of coffee and drink 2-3 times daily
- increased feelings of alertness and decreased frustration
- linked to both long-term & short-term improvements in memory



Fatty fish

- e.g. salmon, tuna, cod, and pollock
- contain omega-3 fatty acids and DHA, which are great for improving concentration and memory
- at least two servings of fatty fish each week



Berries

- rich in a variety of antioxidant compounds that may help promote academic performance
- protect the health of your brain



Milk and honey

- mix honey & milk together and drink twice daily
- improves overall sleep quality



