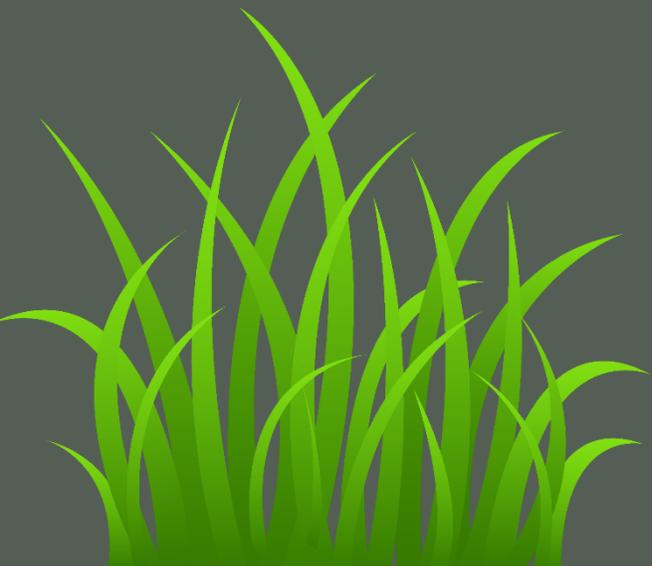


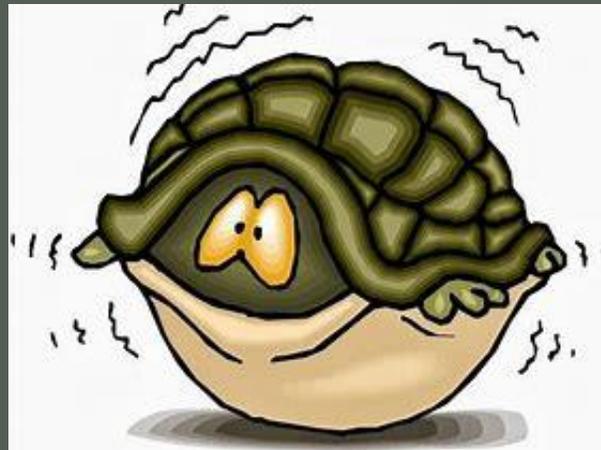
The Final Countdown.

GCSE  
EXAMS



# How can you help prepare your child in these final weeks?

- Hard Work in lessons – Obviously
- Hard work on the tasks from teachers – Essential
- Revision and Independent Study tasks. - Clearly Required for Success



# Target grades

- Talk to your child about their grades.
- Discuss if any of these grades are difficult to achieve and ask how you, the school and the child can help the, achieve this.
- Ask which subjects they enjoy/dislike.
- Have realistic expectation of what they are likely to achieve.

# Incentives and rewards

- Before offering incentives, think about whether this will increase the effort your child puts in.
- If you go this route, discuss with your child what incentives they would like and reason with them. We would all love a brand new iPhone but explain to your child they need to be realistic.
- You could offer incentives based on their results, on particular achieving subjects or based on the amount of effort they have put in.
- You know your child the best, reward them how you feel fit.

# Help With Revision

The purpose of revision is to reinforce what students already know and to find out and then learn what they don't know. Pupils have different methods/techniques that work for them and this might vary from subject to subject.

- Key Points
- There is no escaping the fact that revision for exams involves many hours of personal study.
- Their final grade will not only depend on how many hours revision they do but also how they use the time.
- Revision plans are very individual and will usually involve some form of routines and tameable – ensure your child sticks to a timetable.

# What to revise?

- Ask your child to find out from their teachers what they need to review.
- Request a list of topics from the school/subjects.
- Encourage your child to spend revision time on subjects they struggle with.
- Get them to check that all their class notes are up to date
- If they are unsure about any topics, encourage them to speak to their subject teachers for help or attend any catch-up session.
- Help by pinning up a timetable in a prominent place at home.
- Allow your child some free time – this should be planned on their revision timetable.
- Encourage your child to try different revision techniques.

# Help With Revision Session

An effective revision session follows this pattern (revise, test and rest). An example would be 40 minutes revision, 10 minutes testing, 10 minutes resting or 20 minutes revising, 5 minutes testing and 5 minutes rest.

# Resources

- Ensure your child has the basic equipment such as pens, pencils, ruler, A4 writing pad and a clear pencil case of the exams.
- Other useful stationary include highlighters, flash cards, coloured pens, folders, folder dividers and sticky notes.
- Ask them if they need any subject specific study or revision guides.
-

# Working Environment

- Ask your child if they have a suitable working environment at home and ask how you could improve things.
- Make sure siblings and anyone else in the house are aware that they need to be considerate during revision times.
- If it becomes difficult to find a suitable place at home, your child can work in the quiet spaces during break, lunch and after school.
- Ensure your child takes regular breaks and recaps topics they have already revised.
- NO TV! Insist that your child does not watch TV while revising. Research has showed that watching TV does not help with revision.
- If your child constantly checks their social media on the phone/laptop we would encourage you to discuss this with your child and work out a way they can revise without distraction.

# The Reluctant Student

- Maintain an active interest.
- Encourage them to go along to revision sessions. Contact the school if you're unsure when they are.
- Have the exam timetable hand and discuss what exams your child has that day.
- Offer to do some testing with your child.
- Suggest your child works in short intervals.

# Exam Stress

## What to expect?

- It is normal for pupils to be stressed
- Make sure you are available to listen to your child and talk through any concerns
- Expect to encounter wild swings in their moods.
- If things aren't going well in a particular subject then contact the teacher to discuss this or email into the school.
- Look out for signs of unhealthy levels of stress and if they are not coping contact the school or visit the GP.

# Revision Planning

- Help with a revision timetable which includes breaks and extracurricular activities.
- Encourage your child to get out the house for some rest.
- Don't nag too much about domestic tasks such as tidying their room.

# Healthy Body, Healthy Mind

- Provide your child with a variety of healthy meals.
- Encourage exercise.
- Encourage your child to drink plenty of water.
- Healthy lifestyle
- Time management
- Sensible periods of time to Relax
- Get a good night's sleep the night before
- Avoid people who you know will stress you out

# Sitting Exams

- May 13<sup>th</sup> -

# Night Before

- Ask your child if they need to leave school earlier and think about whether you need to adjust your routine to help.
- Ensure your child has all of the equipment including a clear pencil case. Your child should know what equipment they need for that particular day.
- Make extra allowance for the fact that may behave differently and could possibly be more moody or short tempered.

# Day Of The Exam

- Avoid last minute advice.
- Encourage them to have a good breakfast.
- At this point there's very little you can do – they're on their own.

# After Each Exam

- Try not to ask them how it went – allow them to approach you when they are ready. If they haven't mentioned anything after a period of time you could show some interest and ask how their day has been.
- Try to keep everything as normal.

# And Finally.....

- Continue showing interest throughout.
- Grit your teeth for one final push!
- Then it's time to reward yourself with a treat!

# Not all stress/anxiety is bad!

## Good stress/anxiety:

- Motivates us to stay focussed on study. Can actually make us a bit quicker and smarter. It's all to do with two hormones; Adrenaline and Cortisol

## Bad stress/anxiety:

- Interferes with us preparing for exams. Makes us unhappy, can make us unwell and can make us less able to perform in the exams.

# Remember...

- Anxiety is unpleasant but it can't hurt you
- You get stressed about exams because they are important. Your body responds in order to help you cope with the extra demand placed on you. Annoyingly, it can't tell the difference between getting stressed about exams and getting stressed about being chased by a sabretooth Lion ...



# We can accidentally manage stress in negative ways— which makes it worse

## Self critical thoughts:

- I know I've messed up
- I am not ready
- I must be stupid
- I can't do this
- It's not going well

## Helpless thoughts:

- What's the use?
- Why am I doing this?
- I have no future in this
- I don't have enough time
- There's too much to cover
- I'll never pass

# How can I help my child manage stress more productively?

- Ensure realistic expectations
- Resist comparisons
- Manage outside pressures
- Practice negative thought stopping
- Rehearse the exam
- Visualise success
- Affirmations
- Relaxation techniques

# Helpful ways of thinking...

- Concentrate on the task and not the outcome
- Remember past successes
- Recognise that you are likely to pass
- Be methodical in your approach
- Positive thoughts: e.g. 'I have revised and am going to do the best I can'

# Visualise Success

Spend some time visualising how you would like things to go.

- Imagine yourself turning up to the exam feeling calm and confident,
- Picture yourself sitting at a desk in the exam room and feeling comfortable and relaxed.
- Picture yourself reading the questions and smiling because you know what you will write about.
- Picture yourself finishing the exam within the allotted time and feeling happy with your performance.
- Try to put as much detail into this visualisation as possible as it will make it seem more realistic.

# Affirmations

When developing your own positive self-statements, there are some basic rules, which can give you some guidance:

- Avoid negatives (don't say "I'm not going to panic", say "I am confident and calm about my exams" instead.)
- Keep it in the present tense (don't say "I will feel better about exams" as this will keep the good feelings in the future and not the present, say "I am feeling better about exams")
- Keep it in the first person (saying "I feel confident about my exams" is better than "it is possible to feel more confident about exams")
- Have some belief in what you say (don't tell yourself something you really don't believe. Try to think about the reasons why something positive is true and challenge your negative beliefs if you have trouble believing a positive self-statement)

# Examples of Affirmations

- “I can find out what I have to do to help me get as prepared as I can”
- “Although my time is limited, I can use the time I have more effectively”
- “I have been studying all year for this”
- “Others are Scared too. I can control it and make it work for me”
- “My feelings are in my control”
- “If I get anxious, I can use a relaxation technique and calm myself down”
- “My Teachers are great! They have taught me what I need”

# Relax...

7-11 breathing – breath in to the count of 7 and out to the count of 11. Repeat 10 times

Progressive Muscle Relaxation – I'll explain

Guided imagery - It's a happy little daydream.