

Parents Guide to Examination Performance



Maths Checklist					
Topics for Revision	Confident	OK	Unsure	Notes / time needed for revision	Complete

Different revision methods

Keep a fact book or write facts on index cards

- 1 Take a page / card per topic
- 2 Bullet point key facts / mind map key facts
- 3 Read this information as frequently as possible

Practice Questions from past Exam papers

- 1 Pupils can get past questions from school. Keep practising!
- 2 Past exam papers can be downloaded (see below)
- 3 Read the question, underline key parts, understand what the question is asking you to do before starting to write down an answer

Do Practice Answers

- 1 At first, take as much time as needed to do the question as well as possible
- 2 Then practice doing them in the amount of time there is in the exam

Use only the recommended websites (available on Frognet) e.g. <http://smoodle.myvle.org/brumtalks>, www.mymaths.co.uk, <http://frog.saltley.bham.sch.uk/englishpastpapers>

- 1 Use web sites recommended by the Maths, English and Science Departments
- 2 Use the websites to make a note of new facts for their fact book
- 3 Keep practising examples—practice makes perfect

Using a text book to revise

The only way to revise using a text book is to

Read the *index*
write down words that they do not understand. Write down a simple meaning

Use a glossary – which gives a definition
 go through the *glossary* and write down the terms that are not understood

Read the Contents Page
 List the topics and next to each one and write confident) ok (?), unsure (X). Now your child should take this list to the teacher and ask about the topics they are unsure of

Read the summary at the end of each chapter and write out new facts in the fact book.

Always go back to the problem areas - during the next revision session check your child has remembered what they learned. Pupils like to revise what they are most confident about first.

Two weeks before the examination

- Make sure that your child **knows what they have to revise**
- If your child feels that they are still **struggling** to understand certain topics get them to **speak to their subject teacher because understanding these areas of weakness will make a difference to your child's grades. Pupils have a tendency to revise what they already know.**
- **Ask your child** how revision is going
- Following your child's revision session they should test themselves:
This could be done in two stages :
 - Stage 1 Write down keywords and bullet point information. Brain trees are a good idea
 - Stage 2 Next get your child to close their eyes and tell them any information they can remember

The day before the examination

- Check your child knows which exam they have the next day and what time they are at
- Get your child to look at the information sheets around the house and talk about them with your child

The night before the examination

- Encourage your child to go through the information charts – no more than fifteen minutes on a chart, with a five minute break between each
- Make sure they have packed everything they need for the examination the next morning
- Your child should go to bed early so that they get a good night's rest this will make sure that they are *alert, awake, aware*

The morning of the examination

- **Be positive and supportive** about the work they have put in for the examination before they leave home
- Your child should be in school at 8.30 am for the morning examinations or 12.35 for the afternoon examinations
- Give your child a **healthy breakfast** to set them up for their exam day
- **Make sure they pick up their school bag** – it will have equipment for the examination
- Remind them that everyone will be nervous on the day of the examinations

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English Checklist

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Talking to you child about the examination

Tell them not to:

- **Panic** if their mind appears to go blank. Once they start answering questions their memory will start to work again – look at the key words in the question, this will help
- **Forget to include all their workings** - they could get plenty of marks for them Waste time thinking and worrying about losing an odd mark in part of a question they don't know the answer to. Leave it, come back to it later, if they have time
- **Let their handwriting let them down** – the words and numbers must be able to be read.

Get your child to relax before going into the exam room by

- Taking regular deep breaths
- Tense and relax muscles (especially their writing hand)
- Sip water

Well planned revision means better knowledge and better grades

Designing an environment for studying

Make sure that every member of the household is fully aware of the importance of your child’s forthcoming exams. Ask them to offer support, understanding and co-operation. Get rid of external noise from the television set, computer games, other people, children playing, shouting, Try to give your child a quiet space to work in. If your child has to study in the same room as a television, turn it off while they are studying. Allow no interruptions during study periods if your child has a shared room, request that they are left alone for their revision session. If it is important for your child to have access to a computer, then make sure they have priority over everyone else, for their revision times

The playing of music

Remember quiet relaxing music can stimulate the brain.

Preparing the Workplace:

- Make sure that your child has:
- a tidy, quiet place to work
 - a comfortable chair
 - a table which allows enough room for books and stationery
 - a bright table lamp
 - all the books s/he needs – school notes, revision guides and so on, pens, pencils, scrap paper etc
 - revision booklets – usually provided by the school

Why do some pupils lose marks in the examination

Problem

They misunderstand the question and so do not answer it correctly

Solution

Read the questions carefully and highlight key words like explain and describe to avoid this. It is easy to answer a different question because it is the one they have revised for.

Problem

They write what they know, miss the main points and do not link their ideas to the question

Solution

Avoid this by highlighting the key words, making a few constructive notes, referring to the question every now and again to make sure they are still on track.

Problem

They write pages of text but only answer some of the questions and so lose marks

Solution

They may have answered one question brilliantly, but now they have no time for the rest of the paper, or rush the other questions. **Look at how the marks are given for each part of the question and structure their answers accordingly e.g.; 2 marks do not require a very long answer and 10 marks need more than a brief paragraph – not many exam questions expect three sides of writing.**

Problem

They do not include enough information or explain their answers E.g. “It is nice”, or “it shows that it was quite hard” “I think it was fairly important” but do not give any reasons for their comments

Solution

Again **look at how the marks are given for each part of the question and structure their answers accordingly e.g. 2 marks do not require a very long answer and 10 marks need more than a brief paragraph. Give reasons (explain) your answer. I agree because....**

Problem

They misread simple words in the question, e.g.:

“Why are mosques built in such a way.....?” (Reason)

Answer *“Mosques are built like” (Description)*

Solution Pupil describes what the mosque looks like not why it was built in a particular style

Problem

Pupils do not attempt all the questions or answer the right questions so they lose marks

Solution

They need to attempt all of the questions they are required to . If there is no answer it clearly gains zero mark. In other words, have a go at the ones they have little knowledge of it may gain them a few extra marks, which may make every difference overall. Make sure all questions are answered.

English Checklist					
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