

## *Tips for staying productive while working/studying from home*

**Timing** – Set yourself a start and finish time. This will give your day structure. It could be useful to set your start and finish times similar to school hours, so you are following your normal routine as much as possible.

**Prepare for the Day** – Follow your normal morning routine – get up, get dressed, eat your breakfast and prepare for the day. This will help put you in a good frame of mind to tackle your schedule for the day.

**Schedule** - Use a timetable or schedule template to plan out your day in a way that suits you. (Use your homework journal for this.) You might choose to follow your own class timetable where it suits as this is a familiar routine. **Be sure to include breaks in your schedule and stick to them!**

**Prioritise** – Check your Gmail account/Google Classrooms and make a list of all the work your teachers are asking you to do and any deadlines they have set for this work. Make sure you prioritise the work that is due first so that you can keep on top of meeting your deadlines. **Knowing what tasks are priority will also help you to create your daily schedule.** A to-do list template is available in this document.

**Space** – Have a specific area that you will use for schoolwork. Most of you may already have something like this. Sitting at a desk will help keep you more productive than sitting on a couch or your bed.

**Phone** – We understand that some of you are using your phone to access Google Classroom during the COVID-19 school closure but put your phone on DO NOT DISTURB in order to avoid any distractions and only use it for the purpose of school work when completing tasks or assignments. It is very easy to sit at a desk all day and do absolutely nothing but procrastinate on your phone! Check for messages and new work when you begin your study each day. When you are ready to post your assignments to Google Classroom or email work to your teachers later on, you may then use your phone. Students need to be very disciplined about this in the virtual classroom.

**Taking time** – Make sure to take time in your day to exercise. This could be before you begin schoolwork, during your day or when you have finished – whatever works best for you. This will help clear your head.

**Ask** – If you are unsure of anything you are being asked to do or have any queries, your teachers are available via email/Google Classroom. Please **ask** if you are having any problems with anything as it is important that work is completed to the best of your ability and on time.

**Identify your goals** – For example:

Long term: the grades I would like to achieve for Leaving Cert

Medium: the grades I would like to achieve in the summer exams

Short term: what I would like to achieve this week



## Find some study strategies that work for you...

### Flashcards

Flashcards are a very popular study option which have proven very effective for a lot of students. Writing down **the key information on cards** is helpful not only because you can easily **revise the vital stuff**, but the **bright colours on cards will stimulate** and engage your brain, helping the information go in easier.

LC Business – Key Definitions	
<b>Business</b> <small>study.ie.ie</small>	Is an organisation set up to provide goods or services to potential customers
<b>Commercial Business</b> <small>study.ie.ie</small>	The aim of a commercial business is to generate a profit e.g. Dunnes Stores, Easons
<b>Non-Commercial Business</b> <small>study.ie.ie</small>	Are not profit driven business but are concerned with others and doing good in the society e.g. St. Vincent de Paul
<b>Stakeholders</b> <small>study.ie.ie</small>	Different groups of people who are directly affected by how a business is run

### Past Papers – for 3<sup>rd</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Year students

**Practice, practice, practice.** The key to success in the Junior and Leaving Cert is practising past papers over and over. The same kind of questions come up again and again, so the best way to prepare is to know those papers back to front and inside out. **This method of study should suit most learners**, and it's **a great way to relieve stress** about doing the exams, because you'll be so **familiar with the layout and format** of the questions.



## Recording Yourself

This method of studying might not be for everyone. A lot of people don't like hearing the sound of their own voice, **but it can be really effective for the auditory learners amongst you**...as you will know from listening to your teachers' audio clips over the last few weeks!

Try using the voice recorder on your phone to record yourself reading some of your notes aloud. You can then listen back to these audio notes instead of reading over them again and again. For **some** people this works amazingly, because their brain intakes knowledge much better through hearing the information.



## Listen to podcasts

This is perfect for **auditory learners**. Podcasts are becoming hugely popular, and it's only a matter of time before there's a lot of helpful content for the JC and LC in podcast form. Currently, the best subjects to use podcasts for when you're studying would be the language subjects or History. There are a lot of podcasts which talk about various events in history, so for those of you studying History at JC or LC level, you can easily find podcasts which discuss a topic you might be studying at the moment and make it easier to understand.

## Make out your own Notes

This might seem basic, but this method works a treat for those reading/writing learners out there. Studies have proven that you will remember information better if you write it out/take notes with a pen and paper as opposed to typing them up on a computer.

Try recreating notes you saw online or received from a teacher by writing up new pages and highlighting the most important pieces. Creating and seeing your own work will help you retain the information a lot better. (**This should not be transcribing**). These notes can be words or phrases preferably not long and full sentences.

Each new point should be written on a new line. This should result in one page of text being condensed down to about 10 to 15 lines. It is also sometimes useful to skip every second line to create space in which to add comments/notes at a later date. In addition, once these condensed sentences have been written, the student can then say these sentences out loud and then automatically hear them.

Other **variations on note taking**:

**Mnemonics** are various word games which act as memory aids which allows for personalisation and creativity. For example, to remember the colours of the rainbow (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet) the following sentence can be constructed "Richard OF York Gave Battle in Vain."

Using **synonyms** can also be useful. For example, to help the understanding and meaning of the word 'compassion', the word 'pity' can be tagged along side it. The use of a Thesaurus can help with this.

Thinking up an **analogy** to a particular point (a comparison) to be remembered can result in a high degree of processing the material.

Using **antonym** can also help stimulate the retention of words. An antonym is a word that means the opposite to another word. Using the word 'eager' may help the understanding of the meaning of the word 'reluctant'.



### Teaching/Explaining to someone else

A really good way of checking if you've retained information is **to try and teach or explain the concept to someone else**. This could be your classmate, friend, or you could even just try it on a parent or sibling! If you find that you can convey the correct meaning of what you're explaining to the other person, and they also feel that they now understand, then you'll know that you've correctly studied and repeating it to someone else is a brilliant way to revise and confirm that you got this. **(During the current Covid 19 virus – this should be on-line or over the phone)**. **Kinaesthetic learners** might do this by creating a scenario with physical objects and acting out the concept.

### Get someone else to quiz you

A great way to check if you really know your stuff or not is to get someone else to ask you questions on it. Say you're done studying a topic and now you want to check how much you know. You might think you can answer anything on it when you're alone and answering your own questions, but it can be a lot different if you have to say it out loud to someone else!

Ask a friend or a family member to **quiz** you on various aspects of what you studied and try to answer them as best you can out loud. **You'll be able to identify immediately what you do and don't know**. **(During the current Covid 19 virus – this should be on-line or over the phone if it's not a member of your household)**.



### Quizzes

Design your own quiz questions by designing your questions based on past exam paper questions on a topic to see how much you know. This is a really fun and easy way to study that **matches all learner types**. By the end you score at the end and know where you need to improve.

Quizlet is brilliant for this: [quizlet.com](https://www.quizlet.com)

## Mind map- What is a mind map?

A mind map is a drawing of a basic concept, that stretches out into detail through branches and stems, like a plant. It allows you to visualise clearly the connections between topics/subjects/theories. You can make your mind map whatever way you like, just try to **keep it clean and clear** so that you don't get lost within it. You can use colours, highlighters, drawings, you name it, whatever you think will help you retain the information.



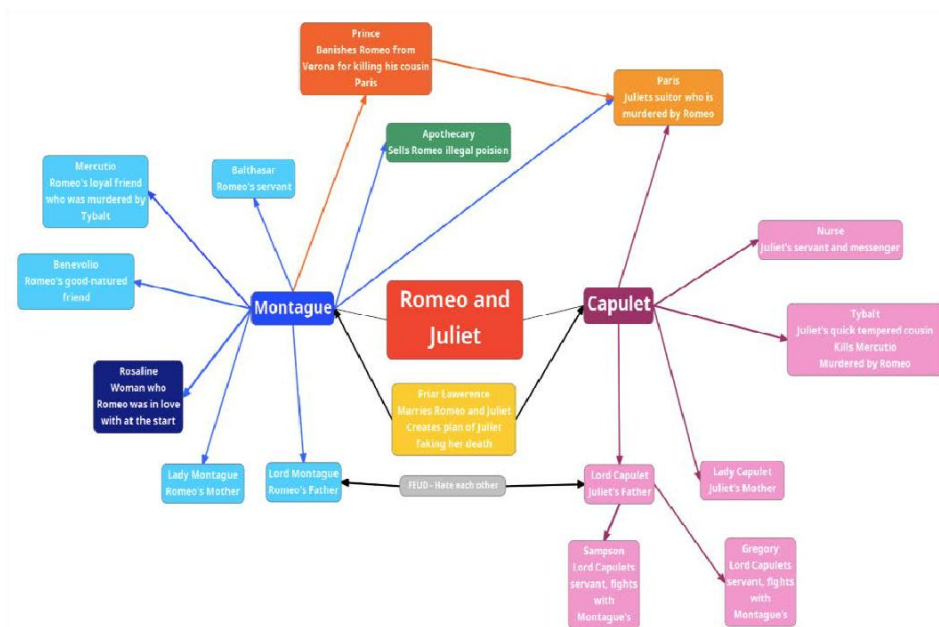
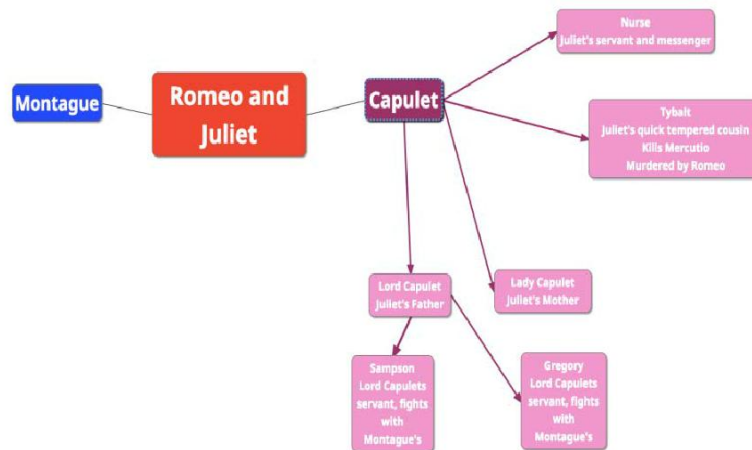
## Why use mind maps?

Mind maps are visual, so they're ideal for those of you who are **visual learners**. It's a more creative way of collecting all the information you need to learn, and it gives you a chance to put your own personal touch to what you're learning. You can take control in how you learn the information! **For example**, if you're studying Sylvia Plath, you can include your own drawings of images seen in her poems, to help you remember better than just looking at words on a page.

## How do I make one?

- ❑ Start off by drawing a fairly large circle (or picture of the theme/topic) in the middle of the page (turned horizontally).
- ❑ Start thinking of the secondary ideas connected to this primary idea, start branching out from the primary concept with these secondary ideas.
- ❑ Then, jot down or draw any other important notes/words/ideas associated with the secondary themes.
- ❑ Try to make your branches/connectors different colours or squiggly, zig-zagged or curved. This will keep your brain interested and alert.
- ❑ Don't write big long sentences for each idea. Keep it short and only include key points. Mind-mapping is all about not boring your brain!

## Example- Romeo and Juliet



Obviously, this is just an example (taken from Studiedly). Be as creative and make whatever design of a mind-map you want, just follow the guidelines above.

**Kinaesthetic learners** might like to get more creative and make maps on a big whiteboard or use physical items and string to make connections and associations.

### How do I use it once it's done?

Easy, just look at it when you're revising that topic again. The colours, drawings and branches you've used will pop and jump out at you when you look at it again and all that vital information will hopefully have been retained in your brain, causing you to be able to recall the information easily.

# HOW TO BUILD YOUR EXAM CONFIDENCE



Review recent successes and what you can learn from them



Visualise yourself performing well



Remind yourself of your achievements



Make sure you are physically well prepared



Invest time and energy into building your confidence



Develop a good support network who can help to build your confidence



Identify positive thoughts you want to be thinking



Focus on the things that you can control



Focus on identifying process goals you want to achieve



@BELIEVEPHQ



Get regular feedback from teachers



Think about how you can use your strengths leading up to an exam



Identify a list of all of your strengths



Practise some mock exams under exam conditions

