



***Enhanced Learning***  
***Educational Services***  
*"the study skills specialist"*

# **“Examination Preparation Workbook”**

## **Level 1**

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# **Enhanced Learning Educational Services**

*“the study skills specialist”*

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## **Enhanced Learning Educational Services Profile**

### Our Organisation:

Enhanced Learning Educational Services (ELES) is the leading provider of study skills resources in Australia. Since 2001 over 500,000 students across Australia have benefited from our study skills worksheets and workbooks. An Australian business based in Sydney, our clients extend throughout Australia and to international schools overseas. We are committed to helping all students improve their ability to learn and study by providing study skills seminars and resources on the topics students need.

### Our Mission:

To provide a worthwhile and effective service to teachers, students and parents, enhancing students' learning skills and abilities through dynamic programs, resources and strategies to unlock the power of the mind and enable greater success at school and in life.

### Our Commitment:

As part of ELES' commitment to education, 5% of all gross income is donated to charities that help and assist children.

### Our Staff:

The majority of our resources are created by Prue Salter (B.A., B.Math., Dip.Ed., M.Acc., M.Ed.), founder and director of ELES. Prue has over 20 years' experience in the Education Industry in Australia. With a strong background in teaching and pastoral care, Prue was frustrated by the absence of high quality resources available to help students develop and maintain effective study skills. A committed scholar, passionate about learning, Prue combined her natural organisational and time management abilities with her research in how students learn to develop a series of resource kits designed to address the gaps and to present them in a format that is entertaining, as well as simple and effective.

**For further information about ELES or our products or contact details:**

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# Instructions for students

Welcome. This booklet is intended to guide you through the steps necessary for effective examination preparation. You should start at least 6 weeks prior to the examination period and complete the steps as outlined in each section. Of course, you can start earlier and move faster than the suggested timings. It is up to you! Read carefully the ideas on the first page of each worksheet (maybe even use a highlighter to highlight the key points as you go) then complete the activities on the next page.

## WORKSHEET

## WHEN TO COMPLETE

A. In the Classroom	At least 6 weeks before examinations
B. Getting Organised	At least 5 weeks before examinations
C. Making Study Notes	At least 4 weeks before examinations
D. Planning Your Study	At least 3 weeks before examinations
E. Start Studying!	At least 3 weeks before examinations
F. The Weekend Before	The weekend before examinations
G. 24 Hour Countdown	Night before and morning of the exam
H. In the Examination	Review before each examination
I. After the Examinations	After all examinations are returned
Appendix: 1. Dealing with Stress 2. Improving Confidence 3. Optimal Learning Conditions 4. Obstacles to Studying	Work through these whenever you feel it is needed. You may want to flick through them now just to see what they are about so you can decide when or if you need to use them.

On the following page is a grid for you to complete as you are given information about your examinations from your teachers.



# Why do we have to have Examinations?



Examinations serve a number of purposes:

- They give you an opportunity to demonstrate your skills and knowledge.
- They help you discover what it is you know and what you don't know.
- They help you isolate areas that need improvement.
- They allow teachers to assess how well you have learnt and understood the subject.
- They allow schools to determine your overall mark or grade for the subject.
- They help indicate your progress to your parents.
- They help you determine your strengths and weaknesses for future subject selection.

Of course no-one really likes examinations very much. Students don't like them much because they have to study and many students find the pressure to perform under examination conditions quite stressful. Teachers of course are not all that thrilled by all the marking they have to do.

But what many students don't realise is that they actually make things even more difficult for themselves through their attitude or thoughts about examinations. Have you ever thought any of these things? Tick any of the thoughts that you have had in the past.

- I am no good at examinations.
- I always do badly in exams.
- I run out of time whenever I have to do a test.
- I always forget everything at exam time.
- I never do well in exams.
- I get really nervous at exam time.
- I know I am going to do badly.
- I am definitely going to fail.
- I am hopeless when I have to do things under exam conditions.
- No matter what I do I always fail examinations.

We all hear voices in our head. Not in a crazy kind of way, but in a self-talk kind of way. Without even realising it, we are continually talking to ourselves all through the day. Start to listen to your self-talk, listen to your thoughts and what is going through your head. If you discover that your self-talk consists of many of the negative thoughts listed above, you need to start doing something about this. Our brains take these thoughts that we have and look for ways to make these come true. Your brain doesn't care if you are planting weeds (negative thoughts) or flowers (positive thoughts). It simply helps the thought to grow and become reality. So if you keep thinking 'I'm hopeless at examinations', your subconscious will find ways to make that come true. You'll find you don't do much study, you don't ask questions about things you can't do. Your brain finds all sorts of sneaky little ways to make sure you do turn out to be hopeless at examinations. This is the power of your mind and the power of your thoughts. So what can you do about it?

Jackie Chan used to write his negative thoughts on a piece of paper and then tear it up into little pieces. A very effective technique is to put a rubber band around your wrist. Start to become aware of what you are thinking during the day and whenever you have a negative thought flick the band on your wrist (just gently!). It may shock you how many of your thoughts are negative. Each time you have a negative thought, think (or even better, say out loud) a positive thought straight after. Some examples are listed below:

<p><i>I am no good at examinations.</i> <i>I always do badly in exams.</i></p>	<p><i>I might not have been great at exams in the past but this time I'll make some changes to how I prepare for them and that will make all the difference.</i></p>
<p><i>I run out of time whenever I have to do a test.</i></p>	<p><i>In the past I have run out of time but this exam will be different. This time I'll have a plan before I go in of how much time to spend on each section and I will make sure I know the work really well so I can work through the exam quickly.</i></p>
<p><i>I get really nervous at exam time.</i></p>	<p><i>I used to get nervous at exam time but I won't this time because I will be really well prepared for the exam.</i></p>
<p><i>I know I am going to do badly.</i></p>	<p><i>I may not know everything but there are lots of things I know and can do in this subject and every bit of study I do helps me know more and more. I will do OK because I will make sure I am prepared for this exam.</i></p>

At first it might feel strange thinking these positive thoughts and it takes a while to 'reprogram' your brain. But it is amazing the difference it can make if you approach the examinations with a positive and optimistic attitude. The best way to create this attitude is through effective preparation. If you follow the steps in this workbook you will find you feel confident about your ability to do well in the examinations. There is a direct relationship between the amount of work you put in and the results you achieve in the examinations. And of course the more work you do, the more confident you feel about your ability and the better your achievements!



So what do you need to change? Perhaps you may need to change seats and not sit next to the person you usually sit with. Perhaps you need to make a strong effort to listen and even take notes in class. Perhaps you just need to stop talking in class and start working. If you really think hard about it, you could probably find little ways to improve in every class.

To help you assess your application in class, complete the grid below.

You can choose to answer the questions in the table in any of the following ways:

- *by answering Yes or No for each question*
- *by putting a Tick or a Cross for each question*
- *by estimating a Percentage for each question*

<i>Fill in each of your subjects here:</i>									
<i>Now answer each question for each subject:</i>									
Do you listen in class?									
Do you participate?									
Do you work well during the lesson?									
Are you quiet when the teacher speaks?									
Do you work with the person you sit with?									
Do you usually complete the set classwork?									
Do you ask questions if you don't understand?									
Do you do all the homework?									
Are you putting in 100% effort?									

In the table on the next page, write down the top 3 things you could do to improve the way you use your class time in each subject. Some examples are listed below:

- *I will start really listening in Science.*
- *I will make sure I am not told to be quiet more than twice in Maths.*
- *I will ensure I finish all my class work for History.*
- *I will sit next to someone else in Geography.*
- *I will write my Science homework in my diary.*
- *I will put more effort into participating in English.*
- *I will ask more questions about things I can't do in Maths.*



English

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Maths

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Look back at what you wrote about what your teacher would write about your current application in class. What would you ideally like your teachers to say about you?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

The last stage in improving your application in the classroom is monitoring your progress. For the next three weeks, fill out the grid below at the end of each day to see if you are improving in your application in class. In each space, fill in the subjects you had that day and rank how well you applied yourself in the lesson using this scale:

**1 Excellent, 2 Good, 3 OK, 4 Below Average, 5 Poor.**

You could even ask your teacher at the end of the lesson how they would rank your application on that lesson.

*For example:*

*Monday*  
*English 2*  
*Maths 3*  
*Science 1*  
*Geography 5*

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Week 1					
Week 2					
Week 3					

At the end of the three weeks take the time to look through your scores. Which subjects have you improved in? Which subjects do you still need to focus on? If you feel like you are not improving, you could ask your teacher what they would recommend you need to do.

Parent Signature (check section A completed):	
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# B Getting Organised

Suggested Timing:

At least 5 weeks before  
the examination period

## Moving right along. Now read this (and highlight):

The problem with school (one of the problems!) is that you are given so many bits of paper. In fact, these sheets you are reading now are a perfect example of this. More paper! Apart from the issue of trees and the environment, you have a more immediate problem of how to manage all these papers.

Some students seem naturally good at this. They stick in every handout they are given, cutting it out carefully and pasting it in their book. Other students are not so good. These students end up with bits of paper scrunched in the bottom of their bag. They open their Science book and History sheets fall out. They lose sheets, they can't find their homework. The bits of paper seem to make their life very difficult for them.

If you are in the first group of students, congratulations! You are very lucky. You can probably almost skip this section altogether. Maybe you should just read it quickly through to check that you are doing everything you should and that you are totally organised.

If you are in the second group, don't despair. There are a few simple things you can do in order to improve your organisational skills. The steps are actually quite simple. It is a good idea to choose a night or a weekend to sort out all your papers in one go.

### Organisation Steps

1. *Get together all pieces of paper, all your exercise books and folders.*
2. *Sort them out into piles for each subject.*
3. *Stick the sheets into your exercise books.*
4. *You also need a folder that you keep at home (preferably a folder for each subject) where you can file papers that will not fit in your exercise book. This is also where you should file all past tests and assignments. When you finish an exercise book and need to start a new one, file the old exercise books here as well.*
5. *Now you need to check that you have a full set of notes with no sheets or anything else missing. The best way to do this is to ask a student who you know is organised if you can compare your exercise book to theirs. They are unlikely to want to let you take their book home, so bring your book to school and look through theirs at lunchtime. Photocopy any notes or sheets that you have missing.*

Excellent. Now your current papers should be under control.

Ensure that all of your electronic resources for the subject are also together in a folder on your computer. You may also need to access these for the exams.

*Below are some other ways to keep yourself organised. Tick which ones you currently use.*

\_\_\_ You keep stationery like scissors, glue etc in your pencil case so you can deal with pieces of paper as soon as you are given them.

\_\_\_ You keep a plastic sleeve or manila envelope pouch with your books or folders at school, and when you are given things that won't fit in your exercise book, you place them in this folder and then deal with them at home that night.

\_\_\_ You haven't been able to get out of the habit of just placing sheets you are given into your school diary, but you improve your organisational skills by making sure that every night you go through the sheets and paste them into your book or file them away.

\_\_\_ You have an index page at the front of your exercise book or folder where you keep a list of the topics you have covered in that subject so it is easy to see everything you have done.

\_\_\_ You date or number the pages and sheets you are given so you can make sure that you haven't lost any of them.

\_\_\_ If you are absent from a class, the next day you ask the teacher for the sheets you missed and copy out from your friend's book any notes you missed.

\_\_\_ You use different colour pens for headings or underline them so it is clear when new sections start in your notes.

\_\_\_ You check every now and then with your friend that you have everything in your book that should be in there.

\_\_\_ You keep all past tests and assignments and file them into your folders at home so you can refer back to them if there are any tests or exams on that topic.

\_\_\_ You take note of what students who are really organised do in class and how they manage all their bits of paper.

Complete the table below listing the topics you have covered so far in each of your subjects. If you are preparing for your yearly examination, you may want to find out first if you are tested on all the topics from the whole year or just the topics since your last examination.

Subject: ENGLISH <u>Topics Completed</u>          Any work/sheets missing?	Subject: MATHEMATICS <u>Topics Completed</u>          Any work/sheets missing?	Subject: <u>Topics Completed</u>          Any work/sheets missing?
Subject: <u>Topics Completed</u>          Any work/sheets missing?	Subject: <u>Topics Completed</u>          Any work/sheets missing?	Subject: <u>Topics Completed</u>          Any work/sheets missing?
Subject: <u>Topics Completed</u>          Any work/sheets missing?	Subject: <u>Topics Completed</u>          Any work/sheets missing?	Subject: <u>Topics Completed</u>          Any work/sheets missing?

If you have not yet done so, start to fill out the grid at the start of this booklet titled 'Examination Information'.

Examples of the information you need to find are as follows:

Subject	Topics	Date/Time	Length	Format	Timing
Eg Spanish	Common objects Greetings People places and things	Tuesday May 16 <sup>th</sup> 2pm- 3.30pm	1.5 Hrs (90 mins)	20 multiple choice 2 sections each worth 30 marks 80 marks total	20 mins mult.choice 30 mins section 1 30 mins section 2 10 mins checking

To do this, you will need to **POLITELY** ask your teachers some questions about the examination. Keep in mind that your teachers may not yet know all the details about the examinations as sometimes examinations are not finalised until quite close to the examination date.

But you can at least find out the following as soon as possible:

- Are all topics being tested?
- If it is the yearly examination, will the work from the whole year be tested or just half of the year?
- Are there any topics that you don't need to study for the examination?

Once you have found out this information, you can start focusing on organising your notes for the topics to be tested.

As the examination gets closer, you can start to find out some more information such as the length and format of the examination and what styles of questions will be included. Once you have gathered this information you can organise a plan of how you will spend your time in the examination.

*EXAMPLE. Your exam is 1.5 hours or 90 minutes long.*

*Part A is 30 marks, Part B is 50 marks and Part C is 40 marks. Total 120 marks.*

*To calculate the time you should spend on each section, use this pattern below*

*(Marks for that section)  
divided by  
(Total marks for the exam)  
multiplied by  
(Number of minutes you have to complete the exam)*

*For example:*

$$30/120 \times 90 = 22.5 \text{ minutes}$$

$$50/120 \times 90 = 37.5 \text{ minutes}$$

$$40/120 \times 90 = 30 \text{ minutes}$$

You may decide to alter this slightly and spend 20 minutes on Part A, 35 minutes on Part B and 25 minutes on Part C so you have 10 minutes left for checking.

Collecting as much information as you can about the coming examination is all part of getting organised for the examination period. Don't be one of those students who puts their head in the sand and doesn't want to know anything about the examination. It won't make the examinations go away but will just make things more difficult for yourself! Getting organised is the key to a stress-free examination period.

Parent Signature (check work is organised):

# c Making Study Notes

Suggested Timing:

At least 4 weeks before the examination period

## Yes, more reading (and highlighting):

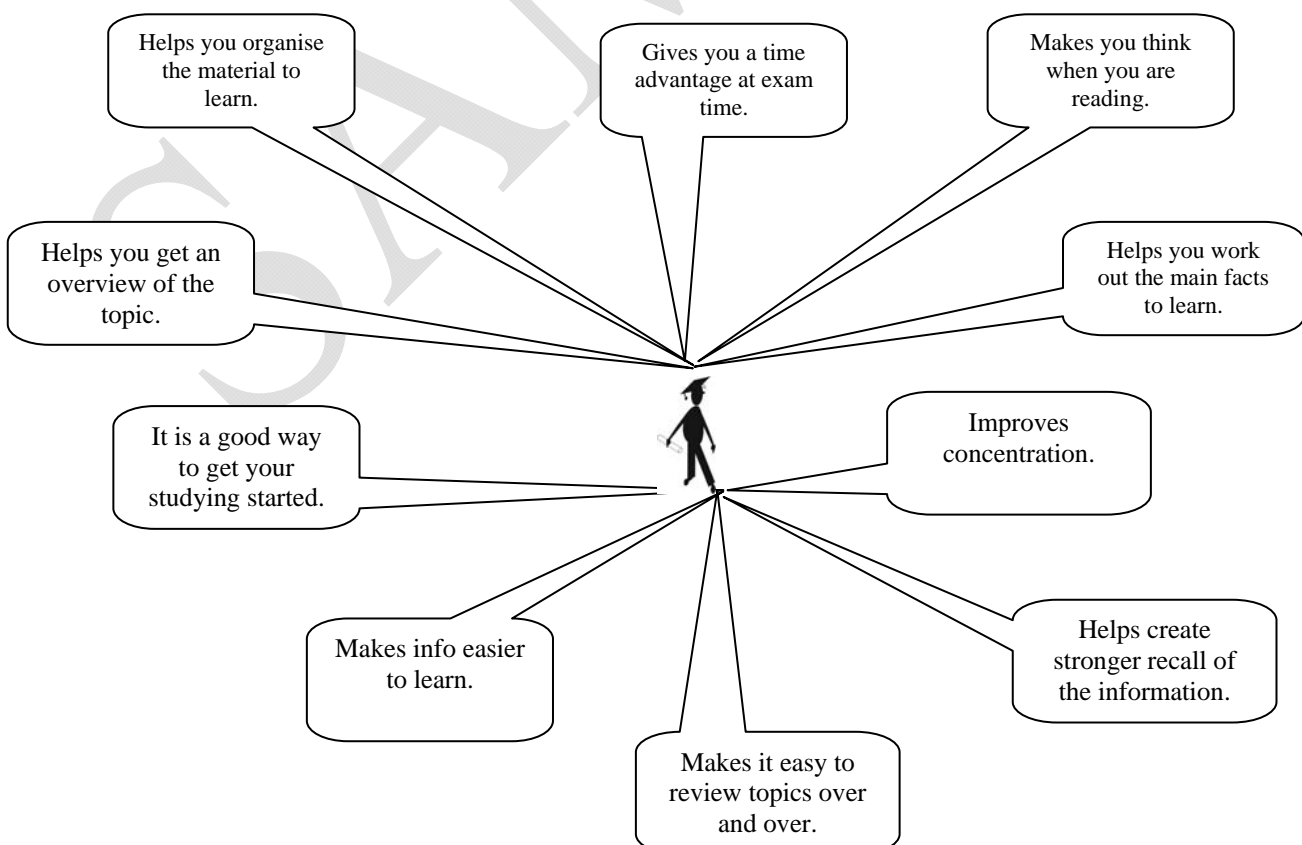
A month until the examinations! Time to start getting serious. At this point in time you should have a full set of notes with nothing missing and a list of the topics you have covered so far.

Now it is time to start making some study notes for your subjects. If you are really organised, you may have already done this. The best approach for study notes is as follows. Every time you finish a topic, in any subject, you should do study notes for that topic right then. Don't just wait till examination time. If you do summaries or study notes as you go, you will find that it is much less stressful as you approach the examinations as lots of the work has already been completed. Unfortunately, most students do not do this and so need to start their study notes now.

## Why are study notes important?

You probably already have some idea, but in case you don't, let's spell it out now. The process of making the notes is just as important as the actual notes themselves. Every time you start a summary you are actually studying as you have to think about how the topic is arranged, what things mean, and the best way to organise all the material. It is a selective process helping you gain the main ideas and facts. Making study notes improves your concentration and memory and it helps you translate information into terms that are meaningful for you. The more clearly you organise your notes the better you will be able to learn them.

Let's summarise, in a visual way, the reasons why we want to make study notes:



Steps to making a summary for a topic:

### 1. GATHER ALL INFORMATION

Gather all the information you have on the topic: your exercise book, the textbook, and any handouts you have been given. Choose one subject and do this now.

### 2. WORK OUT MAIN SECTIONS OR HEADINGS

Pick one topic to focus on and to start with. Glance through all the information without reading it in any great detail yet. Work out what the main sections or headings are in that topic. The size of the heading will usually indicate in textbooks if it is a main heading for a section. Smaller headings then indicate subheadings.

*For example: A topic in Science might be Energy and the main sections or headings might be:*

- *Energy Uses in Our World*
- *Electrical Energy*
- *Sound Energy*
- *Light Energy*
- *Heat Energy*

*The subheadings for the Energy Uses in Our World could be Home, Office, Industry, Other.*

### 3. TAKE ONE SECTION AT A TIME

- Take each of the main headings or groups of information one at a time and first read over the material just on that heading.
- Are there sub-headings like in the example above? If there are, take each sub-heading one at a time and focus on it.
- Once you have read through the information in your textbook and class notes on this heading, think about what the key facts are and write these down in point form. Try and avoid great big long wordy sentences. Instead, focus on the key pieces of information that you will need to know for the examinations.
- Try and use the minimum number of words that you can, and if possible try and express the point in your own words rather than rewriting slabs from your textbook. You are only writing down the things that you will need to memorise and know for the examination.
- If you are not sure what information to include, think to yourself - could I be asked a question on this? What type of question would it most likely be?

*For example:*

*Electricity*

- *Has been around for 200 years.*
- *Advantage: can move with ease through electrical circuits.*
- *Series and parallel circuits serve different purposes in households.*
- *Amount of energy used depends on power rating of appliance.*
- *Electric currents also produce magnetic fields.*

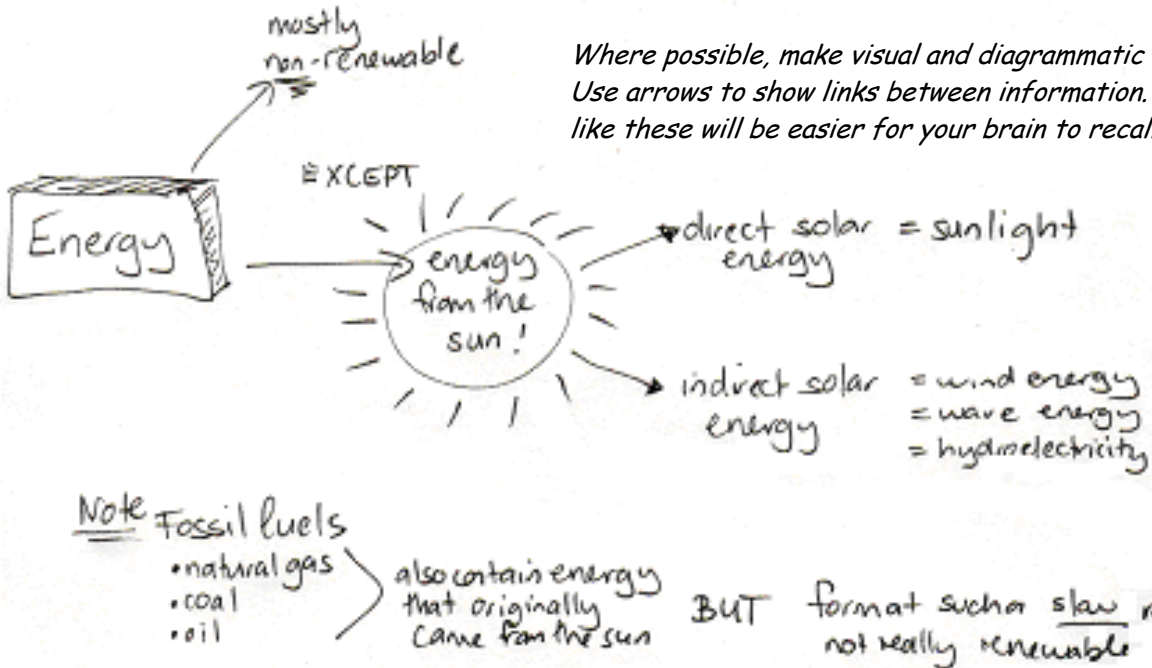


#### 4. MAKE YOUR NOTES VISUAL

Try and use tables, diagrams and visual aids to organise the information as much as possible. Make your notes neat and tidy. Use highlighters, colour, headings and boxes for key information. The more organised it is, the easier it is to learn. By organising information into tables and charts, you make it easier for your brain to process and later recall the information.

Example:

PUMP TYPE	Advantages	Disadvantages
Solar powered systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low maintenance</li> <li>• Clean and Green</li> <li>• No fuel needed</li> <li>• Easy to install</li> <li>• Reliable long life</li> <li>• Unattended operation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relatively high initial cost</li> <li>• Lower output in cloudy weather</li> </ul>
Diesel or petrol systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate capital costs</li> <li>• Can be portable</li> <li>• Extensive experience available</li> <li>• Easy to install</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Needs maintenance and replacement</li> <li>• Maintenance often expensive and technical</li> <li>• Fuel often expensive and supply intermittent</li> <li>• Noise, dirt and fumes</li> <li>• Site visits necessary</li> </ul>
Windmills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potentially very long life</li> <li>• Works well in windy areas</li> <li>• No fuel costs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High maintenance</li> <li>• Costly repair</li> <li>• Difficult to find parts</li> <li>• Labour intensive</li> <li>• Safety issues</li> <li>• No wind, no power</li> </ul>



#### 5. UPDATE AND ADD

Summaries should be continually added to and updated. After tests or exams add in anything else you need. You can also skim through textbooks and notes to make sure you haven't forgotten anything. Don't spend hours laboriously re-writing sections to make them look pretty - only rewrite sections if you need to reorganise or clarify the information. Wide margins are useful to add notes in at a later date.

This week, set aside time for each subject to at least START your study notes.

NOTE: If you are not totally sure how to make study notes for a particular subject, it is a good idea to check with your subject teacher who will be happy to help and advise you.

Tick the method below that you will use for your summaries and study notes:

- loose leaf paper that you keep in a display folder (this is my favourite)
- an exercise book for each subject (an advantage is you won't lose pages)

In the table below, allocate WHEN (this week) you are going to start your study notes for each subject. For example, you might write on Saturday 'English 9am-11am' and 'History 2-4pm'. Remember you can get much more done on the weekends than during the week. Also make sure you allocate time to start study notes for **EVERY** subject this week although some subjects may require more time than others.

Saturday		
Sunday		
	SUBJECT	TIME
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Parent signature (at the end of the week, check study notes are started for EVERY subject) :		

# D Planning Your Study

Suggested Timing:

At least 3 weeks before the examination period

It is important to have some sort of a plan for the next three weeks. Some students like to have a very detailed study timetable, scheduling exactly when and what time they are going to prepare for each subject. Other students find this restrictive and impossible to stick to. However much detail you decide to have, it is good to at least have some idea of how you are going to cover all of your work in the time that is available. This section will help you to come up with a plan to get yourself started.

1. What time of day do you work best? As soon as you get home from school, before dinner or later?

.....  
.....

2. How much time do you actually have available during the week taking into account all of your activities?

.....  
.....

3. How much time do you actually have available during the weekend taking into account all of your activities?

.....  
.....

4. Do you prefer to sit down and do one subject in a big block or do you like to do shorter sessions of several subjects?

.....  
.....

5. How long can you sit and study for? How often do you need a break?

.....  
.....

6. How many hours will you try and study for on most nights?

.....  
.....

7. Do you need to spend more time on some subjects than others?

.....  
.....

This resource continues for another 25 pages

SAMPLE