

Note: to save space this file has been saved without the picture page borders

4 Organisational Skills

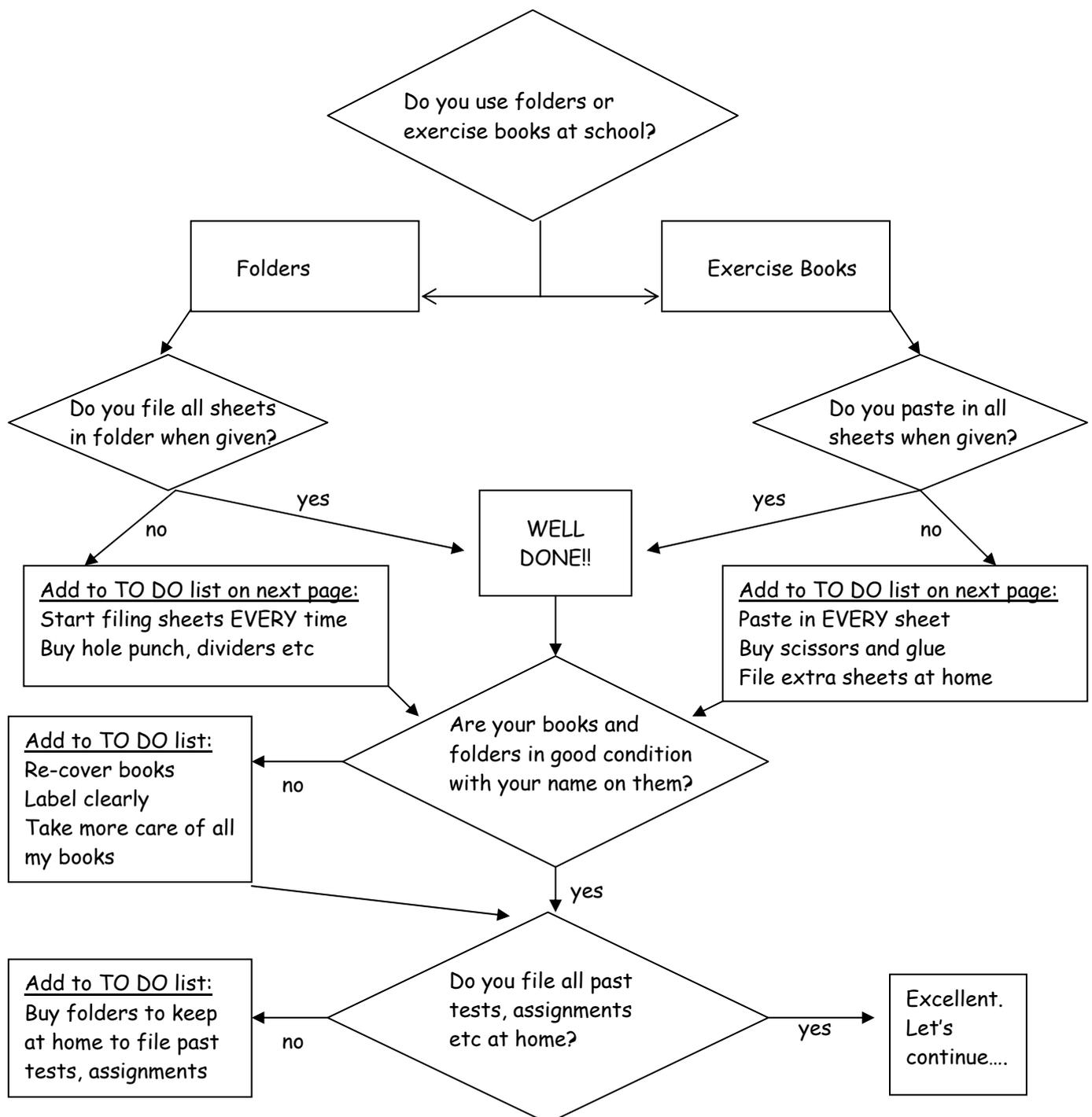
Name:

Class:

Materials needed: highlighters

Activity 1 - Individual

Highlight your path through the flowchart as you select from the choices. Fill in any 'TO DOs' as you encounter them in the space on the next page.



It is really fairly simple to keep yourself organised.

- 1. File all sheets and pieces of paper as you are given them.*
- 2. Keep your workbooks, folders and textbooks in good condition.*
- 3. File all past tests, assignments and extra handouts.*

It is a good idea to have a folder at home with dividers in it for each subject, or even a folder for each subject, where you can file extra sheets that won't fit in your book as well as any tests or assignments that are returned to you. These are useful to study from at examination time. If you use folders for school, once you have finished a topic take the notes out on that topic and file in your folder at home. You can also keep finished exercise books in your folder.

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Activity 2 - Class

Your teacher will ask the class to share any good ideas on how they manage their bits of paper. If you have your books here you can show each other the way you manage your subjects. Some people may use filing cabinets or may have special systems that work for them. If you have a good idea or a different system, share it with the class.

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QUICK TIP

One of the most effective things you can do to do well at school is to develop the following habit:
EVERY time you finish a topic at school spend a little time making some study notes on that topic. This is a great way to revise as you go and will give you a fantastic time advantage closer to exam time.



My TO DO list to get organised:

5 Optimising Study Conditions

Name:

Class:

Materials needed: dice and counters or blank paper

Activity 1 - Individual

In the space below, write down a description of what your study environment is like at home. Describe the good things about the place where you study, the distractions you face and the things that make it difficult to study in this space.

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♪ BREAKING NEWS ♪

Research has shown that today's music which has about 140 beats per minute actually makes it harder for your memory to process, unlike baroque (classical) music which has 60 beats per minute and helps short term memory. Playing the radio while you study may help you relax but it means you have to study harder to remember.

Activity 2 - Pairs/Class

Your teacher may ask some students to read out what they have written above to the class. The class can then come up with some suggestions on ways that students could optimise their study conditions. Once the class has discussed a few students' responses, ask your partner for their suggestions on how you could improve your study environment. Write their suggestions in the space below.

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Activity 3 - Pairs

You and your partner each need to find a counter you can use for the 'Snakes and Ladders' game on the next page. A small sharpener, a bit of paper, be creative! Your teacher will also give you a die or may ask you to cut 6 small squares, write the numbers 1-6 on them and put them face down. Instead of throwing a die you will choose a square of paper to see how many moves forward you go. If you land on the start of a ladder, well done, you follow the ladder up! If you land on a snake's head, that is not so good as you follow the snake down to the end of its tail. Look for the tips along the way of do's and don'ts for optimising your study environment.

Good luck!

| | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|---|
| 40 FINISH! | 39 You don't have a desk or clear private place to study at home. | 38 | 37 | 36 You listen to the radio or have the TV on while you are studying. |
| 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 |
| 30 You keep your work space clear and uncluttered and remove distractions. | 29 | 28 Your room is well ventilated and you have fresh air while studying. | 27 | 26 |
| 21 | 22 You mostly do your homework in front of the TV. | 23 | 24 You keep checking email or sending sms or messages while studying. | 25 |
| 20 Your study space at home is noisy, messy and uncomfortable. | 19 | 18 | 17 | 16 |
| 11 | 12 You have shelves and space to store your study material. | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 10 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 6 You have a supportive chair at your desk at home. |
| 1 START | 2 | 3 | 4 You have a nice big clear desk at home to use for your study. | 5 |

13 Studying to Remember

Name:

Class:

Materials needed: highlighters, scrap paper

Activity 1 - Individual

Many students find that when they are actually in a test or examination situation they can no longer remember the information they need to know. Often these students have just read over the material in their notes and textbooks hoping that it will be absorbed into their memory. For most people, reading over your notes is simply not enough to transfer the information securely to your long-term memory. In the space below, list as many different ideas as you can about other ways that you can study to remember apart from just reading through your material.



A large, empty rectangular box with a dotted border, intended for students to write their ideas for studying to remember.

Your teacher may ask you to share your ideas with the class. Write down any other good ideas.

Activity 2 - Class

There are many different strategies you can use to try and remember something. Your teacher will now ask for 6 volunteers to come out to the front of the class. Your teacher will then say a 5-digit number and each of the volunteers needs to remember that number and after a 10 second pause, write it down (or they could be asked to repeat it). Then they will say a 6-digit number, pause for 10 seconds and students write it down. Then a 7-digit number and so on until most students are having difficulty remembering the number.

After checking the numbers, your teacher will ask each student how they tried to remember the numbers. What methods or strategies did they use? See if anyone in your class used any of the following techniques:

- ❖ 'seeing' the numbers in your head
- ❖ repeating the number over to yourself in your head with the same rhythm
- ❖ moving your finger like you were dialing the number on a mobile phone
- ❖ remembering the number in groups of digits, ie groups of 3s or 4s
- ❖ drawing the digits in the air with your finger
- ❖ writing the number down as quickly as possible
- ❖ 'hearing' your teacher's voice say the number in your head
- ❖ noticing groups of numbers that mean something to you, eg your house number

The point is, there are many different strategies to activate your memory and move information out of short-term memory and into long-term memory. What you need to do is to experiment with some of these strategies and find what works best for you.

Once the information is in your short-term memory, you need to interact with this information to encode it into long-term memory. The way to do this is to make your learning as ACTIVE as possible and engage as many senses as possible.

Activity 3 - Individual

Read through the strategies in the table below. Using a highlighter, highlight the techniques you use or have used before.

| | | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|---|---|--|
| | Repetition Repetition Repetition Repetition | | Write things out in your own words | | Teaching someone else is a great way to learn | | Write it out over and over and over again |
| Get a discussion group started | | Make tapes that you can listen to while travelling | | Act it out to experience what you are learning | | Make up a rhyme to help you remember | |
| | Test yourself to make sure you know it | | Have someone test you | | Make up a song to help you remember | | Association - link it to something you know |
| Make summaries and study notes | | Say it out loud as you walk around your room | | Cover Repeat Check | | Write out lists of key words and definitions | |
| | Read over notes then write what u remember | | Make flashcards of formulas, vocab etc | | Sit your parent down and explain a concept | | Practise lots of different styles of questions |
| Repeat it out loud with rhythm | | Draw it or make a visual diagram | | Make it bizarre and weird | | Turn it into a story to help you remember | |
| | Use different colours for different topics | | Personalise it - make it relevant to your life | | Move around as you learn - walk or pace | | Break the information into new categories |
| Make 'acronyms' using the first letters | | Image associations - make pictures in your mind | | Ensure you understand it totally first | | Ask yourself questions and check your answers | |

Now write down 5 techniques you have not used before that you will try:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Activity 4 - Pairs

Take some scrap paper and cut 12 small circles each. Each person colours their circles or marks them in some way so you can tell them apart. Have you played draughts or checkers before? It is easy. Each person places their 12 counters on the black squares of the first three rows facing them. You can only move on the black squares. You can only move forwards. You take it in turn to move one space each at a time. If you are touching the square your opponent is on, you can take their piece by jumping over them onto the next black square. If you set it up right you can do a number of jumps in one go. If you lose all your pieces the other person wins. And if you make it to the opposite end of the board you become a king (draw a crown on it) and you can then move (and jump) both forwards and backwards. Take note of the study tips again as you go and good luck!

17 Study Timetables

Name:

Class:

Materials needed: worksheet 16 completed, blank paper (preferably A3)

Fail to Plan and you Plan to Fail

Activity 1 - Individual

Think about the words above. What do you think they mean? Do you agree with them? Write your response below. Your teacher may ask you if you would like to share your thoughts with the class.

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Activity 2 - Pairs

There is no secret formula to doing well in examinations. Answer the following True / False questions with your partner:

1. Hard work and effective preparation are necessary to do well in exams. T F
2. Everyone just loves taking examinations. T F
3. Examinations enable teachers to see what you have understood. T F
4. It always takes longer than you think it will to prepare for exams. T T (not a misprint!)
5. It is easy to just keep putting off starting your study. T F
6. If you leave study till the last minute, you will find exam time stressful. T F

Some students feel that study timetables just don't work for them. They see them as a waste of time and have not found them useful in the past. If you are one of the students who thinks this way, I'd like you to give it one more try. It does not need to be incredibly detailed but having at least a general plan of what you are going to study ensures that you will, at least, cover the work needed in the time you have available to you.

Activity 3 - Individuals

Let's start preparing an outline of a study timetable. Your teacher will give you some blank paper. Follow the steps outlined on the next page.

STEPS FOR MAKING A STUDY TIMETABLE FOR THE EXAMS

1. Using a ruler, draw up a grid with the number of weeks you have left to exams. For example, if you have three weeks left, you would draw up a grid like the one below. Make the space for the weekends greater than the weekdays and give yourself lots of space to write in each box.

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S | S | M | T | W | T | F |
| S | S | M | T | W | T | F |
| S | S | M | T | W | T | F |

2. Fill in all the days and also fill in all the commitments you know about in the next few weeks. Sporting events, social events, any time that you know you will not be doing any study. In each space, write down the time that would be available for you to study in (even though you may not use the whole time). For example, if you have soccer training Thursday afternoon, you might write 6-8pm as the only available time. On Sunday you might have a family lunch so you would write 9-11am and 3-6pm as the times that could be available for you to use. Ensure you have allocated time for leisure and relaxation as well!

***NOTE:** Don't panic about how much, or how little, time you have left until the examinations. Of course it would be great if you could start studying months before your exams so you were totally prepared but realistically this rarely happens. You have other homework as well as assignments and you'd probably be sick to death of it all if you started so early anyway. The important thing is to make the best use possible of the time you have left before the exams. What actually is the ideal? Different people have different views on this. If you have been making your study notes as you go all year, about 4-5 weeks prior to the exams is a good time to start really learning and practising for the exams.*

3. Now it is time to start planning which subject you are going to study when and write these in the spaces you have drawn in step 1 for each day. Some things to think about before you start doing this are:
 - Depending on your skill in each subject and the amount of work being tested in the exam, you may not need to spend equal time on each subject, but try and make them as balanced as possible. Do a little on each subject every week.
 - Do the hardest subjects when you are most alert, i.e. first study session on a weekend.
 - Decide whether you would prefer to do a big session on each subject or smaller sessions on a number of subjects. Some students like to allocate time as Monday - History, Tuesday - Maths etc while other students will decide to do Monday - Maths and History, Tuesday - Science and French etc. If you do more than one subject together, try and choose very different subjects. For example, you are better to study English and Maths together rather than Maths and Science as they require different learning styles.
 - Leave time spare each week in case one of your study sessions is cancelled because of too much homework or an unexpected social event so you can reschedule that session to another time.
4. You should have a subject written in now for each study slot. For each subject you should be constantly learning (making study notes, checking understanding etc) and practising (questions, past papers etc). In each box for the first week of your plan, write down what you would like to do or achieve in that time that you have allocated to that subject. You might write things like; start study notes on WW11, do past paper for Science, learn Maths formulas. At the start of each week, do a more detailed plan for that week.