

FACT SHEET • SECONDARY

Helping Your Adolescent Child Revise Effectively

Most young people revise by rereading notes and highlighting, which feels productive but barely touches long-term memory; the brain actually learns by being made to retrieve information, not by looking at it again. That mismatch between what feels like working and what actually works is why revision so often doesn't pay off on the day. These five tips point them towards methods that genuinely stick.



TIP 1

Test, don't just reread

Closing the book and trying to write out what they remember, then checking, builds memory far better than reading a page for the third time. It feels harder because it is working.

TIP 2

Spread it out, don't cram

Four short sessions on a topic across two weeks beat one long session the night before, because spacing forces the brain to retrieve the same thing more than once. Help them build a simple timetable.

TIP 3

Teach it to somebody else

Explaining a topic out loud, to you, a sibling or even an empty room, exposes the gaps in understanding that just reading over notes hides completely.

TIP 4

Break subjects into short bursts

Twenty-five minutes of focused work followed by a proper five-minute break gets more done than a vague hour of half-attention. Set a timer rather than an open-ended session.

TIP 5

Try past papers

Doing a past paper against the clock is far closer to the exam itself than reading through a revision guide.