

How to revise for English



Active revision is of paramount importance - sitting and copying out probably won't help you. You need to access what's in your brain and then add to it through other elements.

English language -

Knowing the key elements of language and structure - you have to have a toolbox of things to look for. Learn the acronym 'apes stomp', what are the key aspects of structure? - repetition, contrast, openings and endings, sentence structure, - test yourself to write down lists of key techniques from memory. Ask your teacher (or me) for a list and then learn it - test yourself or get someone else to test you.

Complete a writing task in your writing booklet - ensure that you hand them in to get marked so that you know what you need to improve on. In writing practice makes perfect.

Create a revision poster about what you have to do for each question of the exams - if you're stuck, ask me or your teacher - you can always email or put a comment on the blog.

Come up with a bank of really impressive vocabulary - learn the spellings and ask someone to test you on them.

Go through your book and identify your commonly misspelled words - learn them and ask someone to test you on them.

Literature

Plot time line - it is essential that you know that plot of a text - from memory wrote down the plot of your text. Then check it with help from the text or a revision website such a BBC bite size or lit charts. Highlight the different themes on your timeline in different colours. Make some sections larger to suggest their significance.

Knowledge vomit concept maps - brain, book, buddy, boss

Take a character, or a theme, or aspect of context and write down everything that you can remember about it. Once you have done this you should get your exercise book and add in anything you can from that, then ask a friend studying the same for anything else you have missed, then finally ask your teacher or a revision guide for anything else. You soon start to build up a comprehensive understanding. Repeat the same process a week later; how much more can you remember?

Quotations - select a killer quotation for each aspect of a text - for each character, theme, key moment etc - analyse them for language and structure etc then try to remember them. Ask your teacher to give you some killer quotations if you're stuck and test yourself on them.

Exam questions - ask for extracts, and other questions from your teacher or me. Like for the concept maps, do as much as you can from memory first. Then add in ideas from your exercise books or resources given to you from your teacher, then do some additional research - websites, revision guides, etc - finally remember to hand them in for marking - you can get feedback on what you have missed.

Going for the top grades? Read around the context - go to the British library website or national archives for some additional key context. What critical theory/ thinkers could you incorporate into your answer such as Marxism etc.

Additional for Revising Poetry:

Poetry Map

- On a large piece of paper write down all the poems that you need to know.
- In different coloured pens, draw lines to link poems by theme.
- *E.g. My Last Duchess and Ozymandias are linked because they both draw on the ideas of Control over someone. Etc.*

Killer Quotes Squeeze

- Select a killer quote for each poem.
- Write the quote in the middle of a piece of paper and create a mind map squeezing language and linking words to bigger ideas and themes within the poem/anthology.
- This will ensure you are focussing on language.

Poem Mood/Pinterest Board

- Choose a poem and create a mood board, choosing images from the Internet or drawing your own images that represent the poem.
- This will make you explore the imagery in the poem in lots of detail, and the images you find will help you to remember key points of the poem.

Comparisons

- For each poem, think of at least three other poems you could use to compare on various themes.
- If you already have this in mind when you get into the exam, selecting an appropriate poem for comparison will be much easier and quicker.

Write the Questions

- Try setting yourself an exam question. Questions should name a poem, a theme and a focus.
- *E.g. Compare how the writer's present painful consequences of conflict in Exposure and one other poem of your choice.*
- Try and write an essay plan for each question. Completing this will focus your thoughts on the major themes in the collection, and which poems are particularly useful to revise well, for covering lots of different themes

Novel/ Play Specific Revision Ideas

Character Study

- Draw an outline of each character. On the inside, write how the character thinks about themselves. Around the outside, write how other characters react to this person.
- If possible: Use quotes as well as your own description.
- **Extra Challenge:** Try linking two characters and write about their relationship.

Revision Dice

- Create a die with questions about the different characters, themes or plot on each of the faces.
- You could do a die for each character or theme.

Obituary Writing

- Consider any of the characters who die in your texts.
- Write the obituary for each character as it might have appeared in the newspaper but written as another character.
- Consider who would write it?
- This will make you think about how the characters were perceived by the other characters, and their relationships.