



## 6 Powerful Learning Strategies

### 1. SPACED PRACTICE - Space out your studying over time.

Do not wait until the night before a test to study for it. You might score well the next day but find you can't remember a few days later. Space out your remembering. Studying must take place in smaller chunks over time. Every time you leave a little space between learning, you forget a bit of the information, and it might seem as if you have to relearn it. That forgetting helps you to strengthen the memory.

Teachers help you apply this strategy by helping you create a revision plan or by and by revisiting learning in plenaries at the end of lessons or periodically through the week. Teachers always plan to include current concepts AND previously learned things: We call this as "spiralling."

### 2. RETRIEVAL PRACTICE - Practice bringing information to mind without the help of materials.

Many people think of "studying" as simply re-reading notes, textbooks, or other materials. But having the information right in front of us doesn't force us to retrieve it from memory; instead, it allows us to trick ourselves into thinking we know something. Recalling information without supporting materials helps us learn it much more effectively.

That is why teachers often ask you to write, sketch or speak everything you know without using your books or devices. You are bringing information to mind almost like you're testing yourself. Explaining what you know about a topic to a friend, a pet or even a toy, helps. By bringing that information to mind, you are changing the way that information is stored in your brain so that it is easier for you to get to later. Always check your understanding by looking back at your books or devices. Discuss any errors or misconceptions with your teacher or peers.

### 3. ELABORATION - Explain and describe ideas with as many details as possible.

This method asks you to go beyond simple recall of information and to start making connections within the content. Ask yourself open-ended questions about the topic, answer in as much detail as possible, then check to make sure your understanding is correct.

### 4. INTERLEAVING - Switch between ideas while you study.

Common knowledge tells us that to learn a skill, we should practice it over and over again. While repetition is vital, research says we will actually learn that skill more effectively if we mix our practice of it with other skills. This is known as interleaving.

For example, instead of doing 10 of the same problem in maths or a page full of sums that are the same, teachers get you to try different problems in different ways. You will also be learning how to choose a particular strategy for each problem, as opposed to just repeatedly doing the same thing.

### 5. CONCRETE EXAMPLES - Use specific examples to understand abstract ideas.

Teachers always give you examples to illustrate what they are trying to teach. You can support your own learning by coming up with examples of your own.

## **6. DUAL CODING - Combine words and pictures (visuals).**

When information is presented to us, it is often accompanied by some kind of visual: An image, a chart or graph, a cartoon strip, a diagram or an infographic. Teachers use a mixture of visuals and words when they provide you with learning materials. When you are studying, pay attention to any pictures and visuals and link them to the text by explaining what they mean in your own words. Try and create your own pictures/visuals of the concepts you are learning eg mindmap. Remember you haven't got to be good at drawing.