

Exam preparation strategies

By JK Educate - Jaderberg Krajs

It's important to fully prepare for exams, both emotionally and practically. These strategies will help at all levels from SATs and school testing, to GCSEs and beyond.



Parent's involvement is important

As the exam system has changed greatly over the past few years, and is continuing to do so, some parents may feel it best to just let the 'experts' at their child's school get on with it. However we believe parent involvement is important and that parents don't need to be an expert in any subject to make a real difference!

It is hard for children to understand the long-term importance of doing their best, so try to encourage and establish a feel good factor about learning - all learning is hard and requires sacrifice and deferred gratification, but students need to understand "what's in it for me?". For 11+ it's to do with visualising the end goal of attending a particular school, for older children it is going to their chosen university and getting a good job.

Practical preparations for revision

Create a work area where your child will be uninterrupted and comfortable. Agree up front whether music or screens will help or hinder them. Encourage your child to keep a file for each subject with section dividers and to file new notes and handouts straight away.

Get good revision aids for each subject, including past papers, and match revision notes to likely exam questions.

Parents also need to encourage the student to start revision early and make a realistic timetable that they will stick to. Agree to a regular "check-in" where you are "allowed" to discuss where the student is in relation to their deadlines.

Learning tips

It really helps to structure each revision session, setting an achievable aim and testing this at the end. "Doing something" with the information students are trying to learn and remember is essential to allow the brain to learn, make connections and remember. Different people find different activities useful, and your child needs to find out what helps them remember things. Some students like to use "spider maps" or create colourful posters that they display on the wall to see regularly; visualisation, mnemonics or acronyms are examples of useful rote learning techniques. Remember, the least effective methods of learning are just repeatedly reading the information through, or simply copying it out.

JK Educate specialises in bespoke support for children's learning, with schools advice, child assessments, specialist subject tutoring, entrance exam preparation and study skills. Contact Katie on ☎ 3488 0754 or ✉ jkeducate.co.uk

Managing stress during revision and exams

A little bit of stress can be a good thing as it motivates us to work hard. But exams can make stress get out of hand, which can stop us from performing well, so it's important to address it and get it back under control.

It's vital students eat well, with fresh fruit and vegetables and proper breakfasts. Sleep is the other essential. Try to keep household routines the same and encourage regular breaks from work, particularly if they are becoming frustrated, angry or overwhelmed.

Encourage and praise your child; show an interest by talking to them about what they are learning. Keep a note of key dates and deadlines to ensure you support them before the 'panic stage.'

As the exams draw closer, refrain from talking about them. Keep conversations light, trivial and away from anything to do with exams.

Before the exams, remember to tell them that you love and value them whatever happens. And remind them of this again, when the results are due!