



Part of the Immersion Curriculum



PARK HALL ACADEMY INDEPENDENT LEARNING

Supporting development



Supporting your child during years 7, 8 & 9



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This leaflet provides information that will assist you in helping to develop the attitudes and skills necessary in order for your child to make the most of their learning opportunities at Park Hall Academy.

At the beginning and end of the school day

The beginning of the school day can be a rush for everyone. Your child will need to be far more organised at secondary school than he or she was at primary school. Establishing a routine in the morning and evening will help the day start smoothly and with minimum stress.

Tips for a positive start to the school day:

- encourage your child to pack their school bag and lay out their uniform before going to bed each evening
- try to make sure your child eats breakfast - this provides essential energy and will help him or her perform better at school
- allow plenty of time for your child to get to school -

build extra time into your morning routine so that if there are transport or other problems he or she won't be late for registration

- Check each evening for letters home or permission forms of homework diaries to sign as this will help avoid early morning panic and items being forgotten

Helping with homework

Your child will need to work more independently at secondary school than at primary school. But your interest and input will still be important and will help your child to do well.

Look for opportunities to talk to your child about schoolwork - children enjoy sharing what they are learning. Try to find topics you're both interested in so it's more of a conversation than an interrogation.

Ask your child if there's anything you can do to help with homework. Discuss the organisation of the work. If your child has several assignments due in on the same day, suggest they space the work out rather than leave it all until the night before.



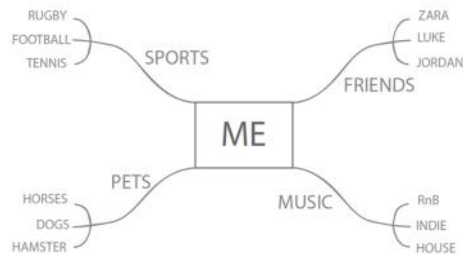
Mind Mapping

Key Points

1. A mind map is a useful way to get information and facts into and out of our brain
2. A mind map helps you to study and revise
3. A mind map helps you to come up with new ideas and plan specific projects
4. A mind map is a VISUAL, QUICK and EASY way of taking notes

Mind maps are made up of words, colours, lines and pictures. They help you to:

- Remember facts and information
- Develop ideas
- Save time
- Achieve more
- Be organised
- Enjoy learning



Acronyms

Acronyms are a useful way of remembering important information or condensing key facts about a topic. You use the first letter of the key words or names of the topic to create a word that you will then remember. In Geography, for example, the tectonic plates that float on the earth's mantle can be recorded as follows:

Africa
North America
Antarctica
South America
Pacific
Indo-Australia
Eurasia

Key Words Post-its

A useful way to memorise information is to write a list of **KEY WORDS** and then tell yourself all the details that go with those key words. These can be written onto Post-it notes which can be posted around a bedroom! E.g. in music, you could write the names of composers, dates of birth, country of origin, symphonies written etc.



Revision Strategies & Techniques



File Cards

A popular way to revise is to write notes or put facts onto file cards. These can summarise much bigger pieces of information. They can be used as visual reminders, use numbers, different writing styles, drawings, lists, highlighters and different coloured pens. These can be used with friends, or can be taped and played back.

They could be used to recall vocabulary and grammar in French.

File Card 1

Ee Verbs
 Infinitive
 Jouer (to play)
 Present
 je joue
 tu joues
 il joue, elle joue,
 on joue
 nous jouons
 vous jouez
 ils jouent
 elles jouent

Imperative
 joue
 jouons
 jouez

File Card 2

Ir Verbs
 Infinitive
 Choisir (to choose)
 Present
 je choisis
 tu choisis
 il choisit, on choisit
 nous choisissons
 vous choisissez
 ils choisissent
 elles choisissent

Imperative
 choisis
 choisissons
 choisissez

File Card 3

Re Verbs
 Infinitive
 Vendre (to sell)
 Present
 je vends
 tu vends
 il vend, elle vend,
 on vend
 nous vendons
 vous vendez
 ils vendent
 elles vendent

Imperative
 Vends
 Vendons
 Vendez

Questions

This can help you to learn faster and memorise better. In order to improve both understanding and memory you can ask questions.

1. **WHO** started it?
2. **HOW** far did it spread?
3. **WHEN** did it start and when did it end?
4. **WHAT** happened to London and the people after the fire?
5. **WHY** did the fire do so much damage to London?
6. **WHERE** exactly did the Great Fire start?

The example opposite could be used for different topics covered.

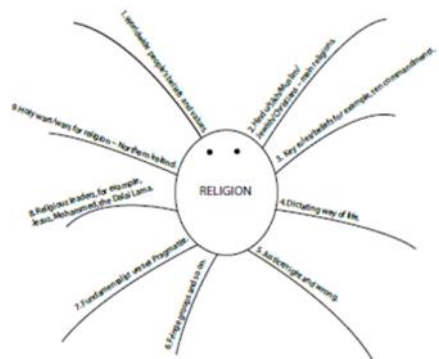
1. WHO?	2. HOW?	3. WHEN?
Answer:	Answer:	Answer:
4. WHAT?	5. WHY?	6. WHERE?
Answer:	Answer:	Answer:

Spidergrams

This is a useful tool in order to help with the structuring of essays.

Step one: Brainstorm ideas around the spider's body

Step two: The main sections that would form an essay or the main points of a topic can be written on the legs around this body.



Take a daily interest

Getting involved with your child's education at secondary school doesn't have to be difficult. There are some simple things you can do to show your interest:

- ask about your child's homework - find out when work is due and whether they need any help with anything
- find out the topics your child will be studying each term by looking at the school's curriculum plan or talking to teachers
- check the school newsletter for upcoming events and mark your calendar straight away for activities that will include your child



Supporting your child's reading

- Encourage them to read magazines, comics and newspapers as well as books
- Buy books for presents - those that tie in to a favourite television show, pop band or computer game are often a hit
- Read together - try picking reading material on subjects you both enjoy like a sports team, music group or holiday destination
- Read the books or plays your child is studying in school and discussing what you've read with them

Get most out of school reports

Your child receives a school report at least once a year. To get the most out of a report you should:

- Read it carefully and note your child's strengths and weaknesses - work out what they need to do to improve in weak areas
- Give praise when your child has done well, but for areas of concern agree on specific things that can be done to improve
- Compare reports from year to year to highlight areas of improvement and concern

Get most out of parent teacher meetings

In secondary school you might only meet your child's teachers once a year, so it pays to be prepared. You can make the most of parent evenings by:

- spending some time with your child before the evening discussing their strengths, weaknesses and any problems at school
- making a list of questions to ask teachers about your child's work, how they get along with classmates and their general attitude toward school
- being prepared to listen when meeting teachers, even to criticism of your child's work or behaviour
- asking questions, especially if you don't understand or agree with something
- trying to take away from the meeting some positive steps that you, your child and the teachers can take to help your child succeed

Supporting your child in developing their spelling



When you are supporting children in their writing, help them develop their spelling strategies. Remind them that if they are uncertain how to spell a word they can draw on a range of clues to help them choose between possible spellings. Some will work better for some children than others, and some will work better with some words than others.

Sound clues

In English, the way we represent sounds in writing is complex, so relying on sound alone can be misleading. Many people find it helpful to remember some words using 'spellspeak'. This is the trick of remembering a word such as *business* by pronouncing it *bus-i-ness* in your head.

Visual clues

People who find it relatively easy to spell well have a good memory for the way words look. If they are uncertain, they write the word in several ways and choose the version that looks right. If you can do this, the best way to learn words is by this process:

Look carefully at the correct spelling.

Cover the word.

Try writing the word.

Check if you have spelt it correctly. If not, repeat the process.

Spelling rules and conventions

English spelling is actually more regular than most people think. If you follow the rules, you will be right around 90% of the time.

Word meaning

Words related in meaning are usually related in spelling. For example, *hear* and *heard*.

Word derivation

Think about how some longer words are built up in parts that we do know how to spell. For example *mis-under-stand-ing*. Also, we can think of words that are like the one we want to spell – if you can spell *television* and *headphone*, you can probably spell *telephone*.

Grammar

A word's function in the sentence can often tell us about its spelling. For example, *practice* is a noun and *practise* is a verb.

Personal memory joggers (mnemonics)

There are some well-known mnemonics, such as 'There is a rat in *separate*.' Pupils should be encouraged to develop their own personal memory joggers for tricky words they struggle to remember.

Supporting your child in developing reading strategies to support understanding



- **Predicting**

Making an informed guess about the text

- **Skimming**

Read quickly through the sentences getting a gist of the understanding of the text

- **Scanning**

Your eyes dart around a text searching for a specific word/phrase/number

- **Close Reading**

You pay close attention to the sentences, taking time to understand the meaning.

- **Questioning**

You ask questions about a text to clarify your ideas.

- **Reading backwards and forwards**

When you have to read back in a text or read forward in order to make connections or clarify your ideas

- **Empathising**

When you put yourself in someone else's shoes and feel what they feel e.g. Jealous, happy, angry, sad

- **Visualising**

You see a picture in your mind to help gain a better impression or understanding of the text.

- **Inferring**

When someone makes a point that isn't obvious and you have to read 'between the lines' to find the meaning

How to support your child through the stress of revision

Tips for revision planning:

- work out a revision timetable for each subject
- break revision time into small chunks - hour-long sessions with short breaks at the end of each session often work well
- make sure your child has all the essential books and materials
- condense notes onto postcards to act as revision prompts
- buy new stationery, highlighters and pens to make revision more interesting
- go through school notes with your child or listen while they revise a topic
- time your child's attempts at practice papers
- check your child's revision focus is on the subjects they are weak in. Many will start with their best subjects and leave the weak ones till the end.
- use Post-Its. Try different coloured ones as reminders about vocabulary, formulae, quotes etc. Display them on mirrors, doors or around computer screens.
- break revision into small chunks. It is better to do 30 minutes successful revision than plan 5 hours, feel overwhelmed and fail to start.
- ensure your child reads their exam timetable carefully and gets to school in good time.
- encourage your child to relax before bedtime so they sleep long and well.



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