



Examination tips

Preparing for examinations

The most important thing to remember is not to get stressed about the exams. The exams are important but they are not the be-all and end-all. Remember that 50 per cent of your final mark comes from the work you have achieved throughout the year. It is important that you study in a calm, positive environment and sit the exams in a calm, positive frame of mind.

Planning and preparation make a difference to your exam results, so use your study time effectively.

When studying you should:

- do active reading – such as highlighting, underlining or circling words to develop a comprehensive set of study notes; don't just re-read notes
- seek help from your teacher if you don't understand something
- work with a partner or small group of friends to test your understanding
- focus on what you don't know rather than going over what you have already mastered.

Don't just rely on the knowledge and skills you have learnt through completing class work and assignments throughout the year. Practise writing answers in limited time periods. You also need to practise tackling a wide range of questions in case you do not get asked the questions you expect. The following materials are available on the Curriculum Council website at <http://www.curriculum.wa.edu.au/> and they can assist with your revision program:

- Current syllabus outline for each course – syllabus outlines describe the examination details and the knowledge that will be examined
- Guide to Grades – provides work samples at different grades and levels of achievement
- Past examination papers.

If your teacher is registered to logon to the Curriculum Council extranet, he or she will have access to additional examination information such as the marking keys for past examination papers and chief examiners' reports.

You should lead a balanced lifestyle. This means:

- taking short breaks from study at least every two hours
- having reasonably early nights
- eating a balanced diet
- engaging in some physical exercise and social activities.

During the examination:

- Use your reading time effectively to plan which questions you could answer, brainstorm information for your responses and order them logically so that your arguments are well-developed.
- Divide your time intelligently. Do not spend a lot of time answering a question that is worth five marks and then hardly any time answering a question worth 20 marks.
- Exam markers cannot guess your potential; they have to judge your work according to marking guidelines. This means you have to demonstrate what you know and are able to do while you are sitting the exam paper.

- Make sure your writing is legible. Markers will not be able to decipher writing that is illegible, so you need to take care when you are under the added pressure of writing inside a time limit.
- You must answer the questions asked, not write down all you know about a particular topic.
- Leave yourself ample time at the end of the exam to pick up any careless errors with calculations, spelling and grammar. Avoid racing to finish as the time draws to a close.

Tips for parents

- Have realistic expectations for your child.
- Be encouraging and supportive. Tell them to do the best they can.
- Encourage them to follow a comprehensive, committed study program.
- Provide a calm, positive atmosphere at home and a quiet study space.