JUMP TO A CERTAIN SECTION

!! DON'T CLICK OFF !!

Trust me, I know how this works - you're going to briefly browse through this document, think to yourself - hmm, this seems useful, I'll read it *later*

That's **never** going to happen.

Set a time, a date, where you can sit down and truly digest the information here.

You'll thank yourself for it later (I hope)

Project JC: Your Unofficial Guide to Junior College

Preface

My friends and I wrote this document because there were so many things we learnt during our 2 years in JC that we just wish someone would have told us before it all started. We genuinely believe that everything we write here WILL value-add to your life in one way or another. We can't dictate the choices you make in JC, or the events that will happen to you, but what this document will hopefully do is equip you with the skills you need to put you in the best possible position for "success". Our goal here is to help you guys skip as much of the "trial and error" period that we experienced in JC as much as possible, so that you can free up more time to do the things you love.

Should you listen to us?

Credibility wise, everyone who has worked on this document has maintained straight As throughout JC and eventually A Levels, whilst maintaining multiple CCAs and leadership positions, and most importantly, a social life. That said, know that everything here should be used as a tool, and are not fixed rules you have to follow. Choose the advice that works for you and ignore the rest. We most definitely do not have all the answers, and you DON'T need to follow everything here.

This is the document we wish we had when we started JC.
We wish you all the best in your Junior College journey :)

Regards,
The ProjectJC Team

Support Us

We know that Junior College and studying for the A Levels can be tough. The goal at ProjectJC has been, and always will be, to support JC students as much as we can throughout your A level Journey - from this free study guide, to our free flashcard website at www.projectjc.com

That said, coding the website, hosting the website, spending time creating and curating resources also requires a lot of time, effort and money. If you would like to support us, we will also be selling our own notes and resources at affordable prices! I want to emphasise that **you don't need to buy our notes do well in JC, BUT** funds raised from the sale of our notes will allow us to continue providing high quality resources for JC students. If you don't need any notes, you can also "buy us an ice milo" and donate any sum of your choice :)

If you are curious to find out more, here are the resources we have for sale:

ProjectJC Resource List

All you need to know:

- In the reviews collected for the year of 2022, we received 4.2 stars ⭐⭐⭐⭐
- 80% of students saw an increase in their grades after using our notes
- Our notes cover at least 5 years worth of A Level TYS Papers and Prelim Papers from all the top schools in Singapore, on top of tutorial questions from RJC

Don't take it from us, take it from them:

"During my JC period, I purchased notes from these people and can guarantee that those notes are very useful. I used it all the way up to A Levels (Physics, Econs, GP) and scored A for all those subjects in As and consistently enough for internal exams. So this resource provided is worth your time, if you are considering." ~ Ian from SAJC

"I ordered the GP content notes. It served as a convenient yet effective go-to guide to enhance my knowledge on various topics. It was in-depth, wide-ranging as well as relevant. "~Amanda from RJC

"Really fast service and reasonable prices, the resources are high quality as well, definitely worth the buy "~Dexter from DHS

"Concise notes, love the FAQs the most"~Jun from YIJC

"Highly organised and succinct notes :) "~Xun Qi from NYJC

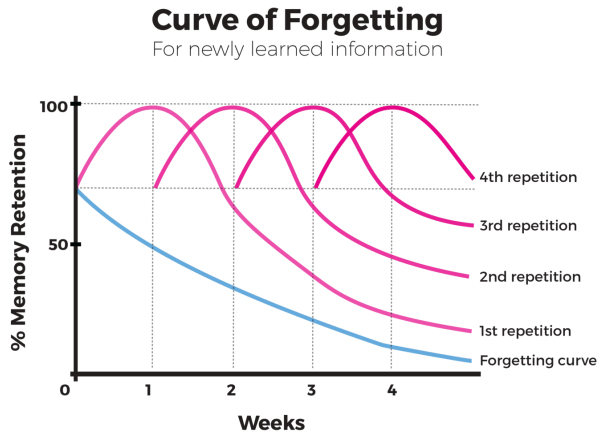
"very comprehensive chem notes! "~Mel from EJC

3 KEY STUDY TOOLS

FLASHCARDS

What are Flashcards?

- Flashcards work on the principles of **active recall and spaced repetition.** These are **scientifically proven** methods that help increase your memory retention. Put simply, when you actively recall information just as you are about to forget it (refer to diagram below), you are better able to memorise the information for a longer period of time.



Why Flashcards?

- Create flashcards with questions/content that you want to memorise, and I can GUARANTEE you, if you do your cards diligently, **you will not forget anything** you enter into the system.
    - This means that you are constantly "on form", which makes class tutorials and class practices significantly more beneficial for you, since you are **constantly testing yourself at your "peak".** For example, feedback you receive on your essays are more useful and applicable since your flaws will be those associated with skills, rather than content, and you can see how you fare when you perform your best

- It will seem tiring, unrealistic and unappealing at first, but you are **in it for the long game** and it is worth the investment (everybody around me who uses it agrees).
- I see flashcards as a **risk management tool**. Yes, not everything you memorise will come out, but the more you memorise, the lower the chances of an unfamiliar question coming out.
- Everything you learn in JC will be tested again for A levels.
    - There is no point spending time cramming short term before every exam and relying on short term memory because you will end up wasting more time, which you could have spent doing papers. **Do not see this as time wasted, see it as time saved.**
- The period of studying and then taking Promos/Prelims /A level exams lasts a few months
    - The only way to ensure you are kept at peak condition during this period is to constantly refresh your memory/understanding of different subjects. Flashcards automate this, ensuring that you will revise questions/topics at the most optimal intervals. It is unlikely for you to remember all the content you learnt the month before, so that is where flashcards come in. Especially since exams in J2 may not test the full syllabus, using such spaced repetition tools helps you save time by making sure you only need to "memorise everything once"

How do I create flashcards?

- There are many flashcard apps out there for you to choose from, but the most important thing is to figure out a flashcard app that does two things - **active recall and spaced repetition**
- We've created www.projectjc.com as a platform for students to do **pre-made** flashcards, created by us. We've sourced for the best questions and content over the past 5 years and have made it available, for **FREE** on our website. Since launch last month, we have **over 500 students** using our platform to study for

their A Levels. **It's super simple, and takes less than 10s to sign up and start studying. There is no catch.**

- Alternatives
    - Anki is also a good platform to study flashcards, and it's the one I personally used during my A Levels. I like its customizability, but this also means that it might take a while to set up and understand its settings. You also have to create your own cards, and some users might be bothered by the $30 price tag on the app store
    - I've also seen Quizlet used by students, and it seems relatively decent. I'm not too sure about their pricing system since I've never used it, but I think it's worth checking out as well.

Tips for using flashcards in JC

- DO YOUR CARDS EVERY DAY. The only way for flashcard algorithms to work to the best of their ability is for you to do the cards every single day. If you find yourself accumulating a backlog, clear it immediately.
- Don't cheat yourself - very self explanatory, but if you get a question wrong, just click "wrong", rather than lying to yourself - **the hard way is the easy way.**
- Flashcards can be used to memorise anything, so what I like to do is
    - Have one card help you memorise the outline of a topic (i.e. the multistep process of tumour formation)
    - Have individual cards for each smaller process (i.e. one card for metastasis, angiogenesis etc.)
    - ^^ this is because it tends to be quite demoralising to memorise huge chunks and paragraphs of information
    - This also means flashcards can be used to memorise math equations, definitions, explanations etc.

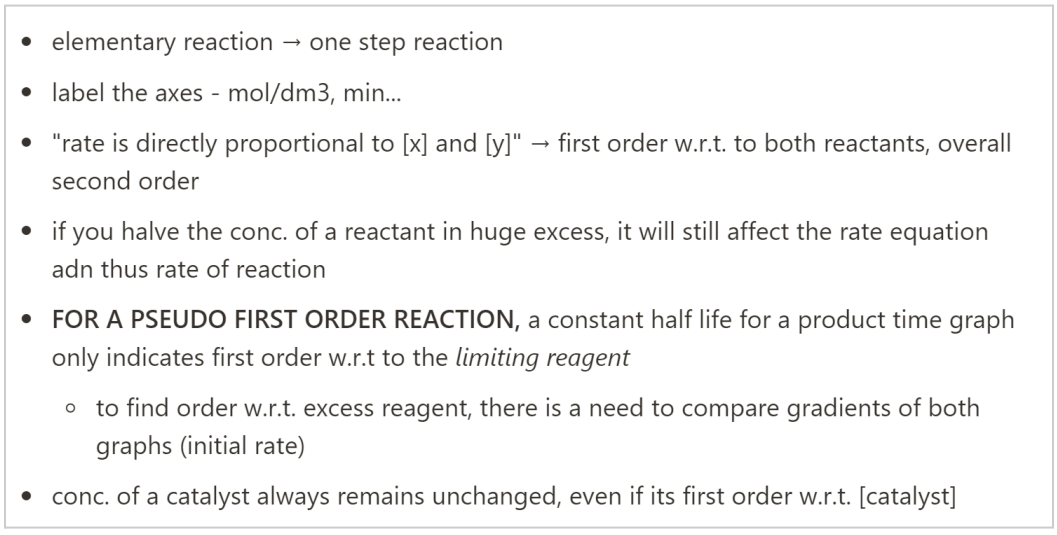
NOTION

What is Notion

- Personally, I use Notion for academics, journalling, tracking the books I've read, my to do list etc.
- You don't exactly have to use notion per se, but what you should do is find an app similar to it that has the same functionalities and key abilities:
    - A shared platform across all your devices you can access over time + An easy way for organising your thoughts
    - The ability to conveniently copy and paste screenshots. This will be especially useful as a bulk of your studies goes online during JC - online answer keys, lecture videos etc.
        - For Mac: Ctrl + Command + Shift + 4
        - For Windows: windows + S + Shift

Notion for academics

- The main draw of notion for academics is to have quick access to all the key points of each topic of each subject. This can take the form of key diagrams you might have forgotten, important things that you might not have put into your flashcards , common "maneuvers" for questions, quick concept checks etc. Me and my friends like to call this the "GOD" docs.
- For example, this is one of my pages for Chemistry - Kinetics.



- elementary reaction → one step reaction
- label the axes - mol/dm3, min...
- "rate is directly proportional to [x] and [y]" → first order w.r.t. to both reactants, overall second order
- if you halve the conc. of a reactant in huge excess, it will still affect the rate equation adn thus rate of reaction
- **FOR A PSEUDO FIRST ORDER REACTION,** a constant half life for a product time graph only indicates first order w.r.t to the *limiting reagent*
    - to find order w.r.t. excess reagent, there is a need to compare gradients of both graphs (initial rate)
- conc. of a catalyst always remains unchanged, even if its first order w.r.t. [catalyst]

- You could also add in all the tricky questions you have encountered over the past 2 years for easy revision
- Type of questions that goes onto the GOD Docs
    - Mistakes not due to carelessness (i.e. conceptual misunderstanding/errors)
    - Unusual questions
- Revising the GOD docs before your exams will serve as a productive and quick refresher to things you may have forgotten along the way.
- Disclaimers:
    - It may be time-consuming to pick up your phone, scan the question, screenshot the answer and organise the questions into the document (if its a physical worksheet)
    - It may also be hard to determine which questions "deserve" to go onto the doc. This is very important because you should/will visit this document very close to exams, and time is limited.
- Merits & rationale
    - I feel that the biggest mistake people make during revision is that they do many papers and they put in the hours, but eventually they don't effectively "absorb" and reflect on the mistakes they make
    - Unless you are confident that you can recall the mistakes you made months ago, this method will be a game changer for you
    - By actually redoing the questions that you got wrong after a long time, you are actively recalling the mistakes and there is almost no way of you making the same mistakes again
- If you would like to purchase the GOD docs that we compiled over our years in JC in order to save time, we have our own "GOD" Docs for H2 Bio, Chem, Math, Econs here: Resource List

PAPERS

How to do them properly

- Aim to do around 4 practice papers for each test before you take them. Studies have shown a direct correlation between the number of practice papers a student does and their results in a test
- Of course, make sure that you're not referring to your notes and that they are done under timed conditions in order to simulate exam conditions. Know that there are alot of intangible "exam skills" that cannot be memorised, but only trained when you simulate these conditions.
- Know that not all practice papers are built equal, and some will be more useful than others. Always opt for quality rather than quantity, and discuss with your friends which practice papers are good to do and which to avoid.

Access past year prelim papers FOR FREE here: Holy Grail Mark 4

Where to get free resources and other underrated general study tips

1. Time tracking
    a. Most definitely used as a tool (only when needed), but this is a good gauge of knowing how much work you have done in a day, especially because we tend to underestimate the amount of work we do before we take a break.
    b. It is also good to know how much work to allocate to each subject.
    c. Always aim for quality over quantity, but a good number of hours to be studying each day during “peak” exam period would be 7-11h per day.
    d. The two catches is that you must be disciplined, and you should know when to stop if this habit becomes “toxic”
2. Calling your friends
    a. I think a skype/zoom call with like minded individuals will be immensely beneficial in keeping you motivated/disciplined - it's also beneficial to have a group of individuals that can help clarify any conceptual errors you might have
    b. It might also be useful to distribute the workload among yourselves (i.e. each person covers a different prelim paper and everyone compiles the hard/unique questions from each paper so that y’all can maximize the efficiency of revision)
3. When you cannot study
    a. Clean your room (make it a good conducive environment to study)
    b. Go for a walk/ exercise
4. Figure out if you are a night or morning person
    a. In my personal experience, time passes faster in the night than in the morning

    b. If you are a morning person, do the hardest task in the morning (condition your body to do so)
    c. However, it's also worth noting a good amount of your papers will be done in the morning, and if you want to condition your body to perform cognitively in the morning, it might be good to "become" a morning person.
5. Be aware that A levels are likely going to be a little different than prelim papers. Personally, I found that A level papers had much more application questions that cannot be prepared for, while prelim papers might have more "bread and butter" questions. That said, this differs from paper to paper, subject to subject. Prelims are still likely the next best alternative compared to TYS, but it's just better to be mentally prepared for the difference.

<u>Building your "arsenal"</u>

- There will forever be more than enough work for you to do. I think the main thing to recognise here is that **there are many different paths to the same goal.** You don't always need to do the exact same worksheets/practice papers as your friends.
- Spend some time building your "arsenal", which in other words means collating all your available resources, and then setting out the worksheets that you plan to do
- These worksheets should be those that push you to some extent, but are still doable within your means. Hopefully, this gives you more confidence that what you're currently doing is "enough" and you will feel less need to always try and copy what others are doing

Useful Resources (pls dont spend money on stupid shit on carousell)

1. www.projectjc.com and our resources!!!!
2. The Holy Grail (compilation of most prelim papers for most years)
    a. Holy Grail Mark 4
3. Your Seniors
    a. Ask for your seniors school accounts and download everything you can find
4. SG Free Papers (usually notes + topical revision + papers)
5. Tick Ninja (usually notes)
6. SG Exams (usually notes)

Closer to As, your school will likely also release topical revision packages, mock papers and other school prelims.

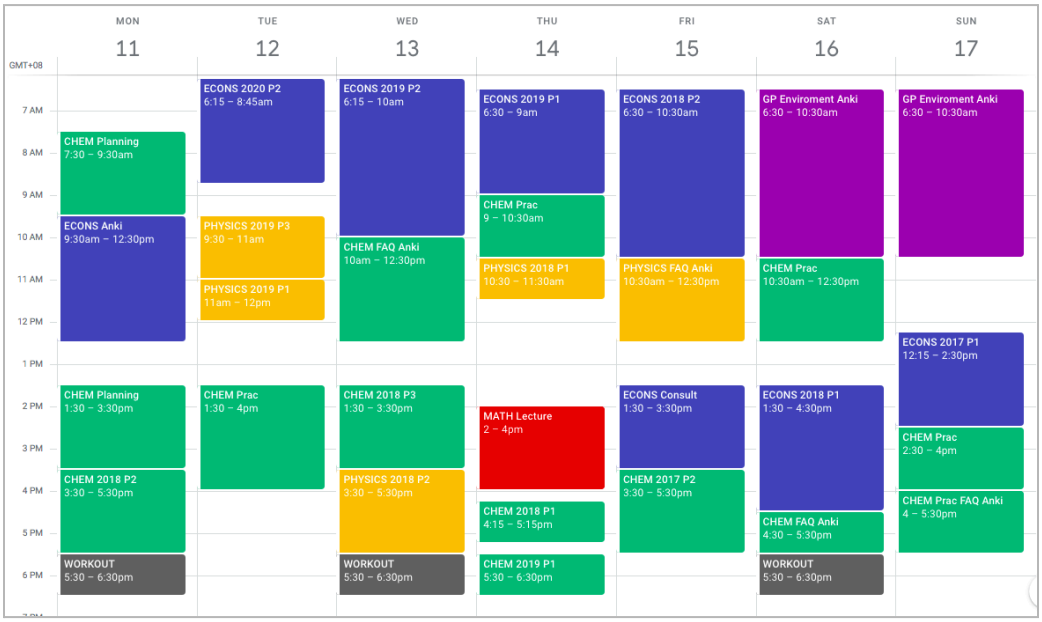
SCHEDULING/TIMETABLES

I personally believe revision schedules and how you do it is a highly personal thing, but I had some trouble figuring out how I wanted to plan my day so I'll just leave a few ideas here below

1. Micromanaging
    - Some people like to "micromanage" their days by setting out study blocks each day and presetting what work they are going to do for that day
    - This should be accompanied with a "birds-eye view" planner that lists out all the things you have to complete by the end of the week.
    - This technique is good if you have a good understanding of your level of discipline and capabilities, and you are certain you will finish the work you put out for yourself
    - A huge flaw most of us aren't that disciplined and there will always be unforeseen circumstances we cannot prepare for e.g. going out with friends spontaneously, burnout
        - But this can be mitigated by implementing "buffer days/slots" in your schedule
    - Recommended platform: Google Calendars (Colour-coded, easy to shift around blocks)

Example Timetable

(Take note this was near A levels hence it is extreme, recommended to leave more buffer slots + more time dedicated for rest)



2. The retrospective timetable

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b7o09a7t4RA&t=1s
- I tried this out for a while because the idea makes sense in theory, and it is definitely a good way to make yourself a more “rounded” student
- However, I didn’t like the uncertainty that comes with the schedule because you will never know if you are doing “enough”, so I think this method only works if you are someone that can embrace uncertainty, and you have confidence that you will finish everything on time

3. The bread and butter method

- While arguably less effective since it doesn't target your weak spots, it is the easiest to follow as it is super simple
- Essentially, create a table, where the left most column is all your upcoming exams, and the number of additional columns you add is the number of papers you want to do for the exam - aim to check all boxes, so you know you have done at least a few papers for each test.

GP							
Chem Prac							
Bio Prac							
Math P1							
Math P2							
Chem P1							
Chem P2							

HOW TO STUDY FOR EACH SUBJECT

Once again, all resources can be purchased here: Resource List, and you can find free, pre-made flashcards at www.projectjc.com

- This covers almost everything we talk about below, already pre-made for you, so you can spend less time making notes and more time studying them.
- All resources are made by individuals who have scored straight As for the subject, and contain all the necessary keywords required to get full marks for the question
- They cover at least 5 years worth of A level papers and prelims of the top 5 schools, as well as all tutorial questions you need to know.

Biology

- You need to memorize in order to understand the topics, you can't have one without the other.
    - Understanding is simply not enough for biology, because marks tend to be given according to whether all the keywords are present or not. Thus, take extra effort to make sure you memorise your keywords word for word according to your answer keys
    - Flashcards are especially useful here, especially when it comes to questions that commonly come out
- Workflow: When approaching a new topic, here's usually what I like to do
    - 1. Watch lectures to gain a rough understanding of what is going on
        - Creating big picture mind maps can be helpful at this stage, especially for complex processes that may overlap with each other (e.g. Immunology).
        - I would recommend either mindmeister or buying a sheet of whiteboard paper on Shopee for this
    - 2. Look at tutorial questions, identify the concepts that keep reappearing, and memorize the answers for those questions. My school

released summaries of all the important concepts to memorize, so I used those to know what concepts to memorise, but I used tutorial notes for the actual answers and phrasing themselves.
    - 3. (optional) If time permits, do MCQ questions on the topic in other to further solidify your understanding
    - 4. Don't expect yourself to know everything, some concepts are more important than others, in the sense that you can avoid memorising them for prelims and still do fine, and once As come you'll see them enough times to understand it sufficiently. Similarly, you may start to be exposed to new types of questions for old topics as they come out, and that is completely okay - just memorise them before you sit for your paper.
- Basic essay tips
    - look at the question first, and do the rest of the paper while letting the question, allowing the question to "stew" in your head
    - List out all the topics you've learnt in order to see if you missed anything out
    - Know whether the question is prioritizing depth of breadth
    - Examples, Examples, Examples !!!
    - Know that simply writing the name of a process will usually warrant a mark, so just write as many buzzwords as you can.
- The Notion technique still applies here, and will be especially useful during MCQ, which requires more understanding and knowledge of "fun facts" rather than memorisation.
- Bio MCQ
    - Know that A level MCQs are likely to be different that prelims, and in my opinions less well set HAHA
    - Most schools are unlikely to give explanations for TYS, so two possible options are

        - Do the same papers with your friends so that you guys can compare answers and explain the questions to each other
        - Buy topical TYS/TYS from popular instead of obtaining them from your school
    - On the bright side, they tend to repeat questions, so this should be the only paper where doing all 10 TYS is a must
- The tip on creating a GOD doc still applies, but is more beneficial for MCQ rather than structured questions

<u>Chem</u>

- When watching lectures, make an effort to understand the broad overarching concepts (steric hindrance, hybridisation, resonance etc). Many concepts are interlinked with other topics and are not "one time off". That said, be okay with not knowing certain things, you will do most of your learning through questions
- Try and obtain tutorial answers from your seniors, and only do the tutorials when you have the answers. This makes it easier for you to identify how to do certain types of questions, as well as the presentation and keywords.
- You should create flashcards for:
    - Template bread and butter questions (e.g. how a heterogeneous catalyst works, Boltzmann distribution)
    - Equations (Organic Chem, periodic table)
    - Reactions (Organic chem, periodic table)
    - Memorise your graphs (kinetics)
- Underrated tip: You can use the STO function on your casio calculator to store the coefficients of equations (iodoform, fehlings etc.). You will not be required to clear the casio calculator during exams
- When trying to "get in the zone", just do one MCQ paper to see whether your conceptual weaknesses lie. The HCI topical revision pack (found on SGFreepapers) should be quite good for beginner level questions.

- Try to do as many prelim papers as you can once your tutorials are completed because concepts may be interlinked with each other. Know that some papers are more application based (VJC allegedly) while some are more bread and butter based (NYJC allegedly). Know which papers are more suited for you.
- Tips on creating a GOD doc still apply!

Chemistry practical

*fun story: I actually got last in class (8%) for my chemistry practical test in J2 but this framework helped me jump to 88% in prelims!

- Compile a list of every single practical experiment you've done since J1, and write out what concepts each tutorial is going through. This allows you to know which worksheets to focus on once you identify your weak spots in the future
- For each tutorial, memorize the common questions that come out by creating flashcards for it.
- Know and understand every experiment
- For planning, memorising the basic steps given by the school's answer keys should be sufficient - know the basic apparatus and their quantities and you should be fine.
- Practice by using prelim papers
    a. Open both the answer key and the question paper at the same time, and just refer to the answer key whenever experimental calculations are needed
    b. You can also "reverse engineer" QA experiments by predicting the required observations you need to write, since you already know the identify of the cations/anions
- It is better to start earlier rather than later - many people tend to underestimate the stuff you have to study for chem prac/

Math

- Commit your formulas to memory using flashcards!
- Do your homework the day before / just before tutorials, because teachers tend to not release answers, and more often than not we will forget the questions when the teachers go through them a week later. Doing your homework the day before helps ensure you maximise the time spent in class
- If you ever need to "re-learn" a topic, just go through your lecture notes again, because mathematical concepts build on each other and you need to get to level 1 before you can get to level 2.
- Notion is the most important thing here, there is a need to screenshot and compile all the "common maneuvers" for every topic which teachers may not always include in lecture notes. Start building this compilation now, and you will thank yourself later. (i.e. math god doc)
- There is no 'trick' to studying math - it is just practice, learning, and practicing again.
- Tip: check for the answer key before doing a paper. I don't feel like its very useful for you to get a question wrong and not be able to see the correct steps to get your answer
- Underrated tip: your GC can do much more than you think. Always think whether you can use your GC to obtain your answer/check your answer because it will save loads of time.
- For J1s: don't freak out when you don't know how to use the GC, you will learn it eventually.

Economics

Because I am quite passionate about this subject, I have created a new document for studying economics: PROJECT JC: Economics

Physics

To do well for Physics, you should create flashcards for the following: (yes, it's all on www.projectjc.com !)

1. Definitions
    - Can be up to ~8%/7m of free marks (e.g. ~8 marks in 2020 P3)
    - The truth is, memorising 152 definitions just to answer the 4 or 5 in exams may not seem worth it. But the way I see it, definitions are the only constant in the papers, and everything else varies in difficulty
    - These 4 marks will make a difference, especially since they are "free". It will also make a difference in your performance later on in the paper as you will feel more confident of yourself
2. Standard explanations
    - More free marks
    - E.g. Why is GPE negative?/Explain the formation of the emission line spectra
    - Super common and marks are free as long as you memorise them word-for-word
3. Calculations
    - Bulk of the paper
    - How to study: Practice, practice, practice
    - This section is no different from math, and based on experience in the H2 syllabus, there aren't any extremely difficult calculation questions in physics. As long as you truly understand the *physics concept* behind each calculation, the calculations/math itself are basic
4. Qualitative/Application questions
    - The hardest part of H2 physics, but only a minute portion of the marks

    - How to study: Experience + flashcards
    - Its kinda contradictory to use flashcards for this section because the questions are completely based of the context of the question, but what this flashcards will help to do is to train you for the skills needed to answer such questions
    - Yes, these qualitative questions are extremely skills based. You can perfectly memorise all your content but somehow still miss points that they require.
    - In conclusion, experience of such questions (thru papers and compilations which can be provided) is the best way to go about it

<u>GP</u>

GP is such a complex topic that I don't think I should advise much on it, since it is a highly personalized and subjective subject. But here are some things I wished I did:

- Write more essays and send them to teachers for review
- Start a habit of reading news
    - Newsletters and podcasts are quite beneficial for this
        → Morning Brew
        → Hard Fork
        → The Algorithm, The Download by MIT Technology Review
        → CNA
        → Trevor Noah
- **HUGE TIP:** archive.is and paywall bypass on Github are two ways you can bypass the paywalls required for newspapers
- For those that want to save time, we have also made "topical" GP notes that can be purchased here Resource List
    - Do read the caveats before purchasing these notes

History

Studying history can seem pretty daunting especially since there is SO. MUCH. CONTENT!! But I think what really helped me was to understand that I don't have to memorize every single year, incident or political figure down to its every detail. To make the information taught more digestible, I broke my learning process down into these few components:

1. Internalising Content
    a. If you can, read the notes briefly before the lecturer so that the information can get reinforced during the lecture, and so that you won't be so lost.
    b. This would probably an unpopular practice but I found handwriting lecture notes quite useful as it:
        i. helped me understand the content during the lecture itself, as I have to grasp the main point of what the lecturer is explaining
        ii. helps with long term retention of information (as studies have shown)
        iii. can train you to write faster, which is a useful skill for exams! I would recommend doing this if you're a relatively fast writer in the first place! Ironically I would not recommend handwriting your actual notes because there's really too much content :(

2. Memorisation
    a. In the beginning, I made the mistake of trying to memorize the whole "narrative" of each country as a story because that was how it was taught. There is no right way to study ofc, but I found that this method was super inefficient because:
        i. it's kinda hard unless you have god like memory and

    ii. it'll take longer for you to apply evidence during the exam because you have to comb through the entire "story book" in your head to find the relevant moment

b. Instead, I identified common trends in the topics and gathered evidence from across the different countries and governments that demonstrated that trend. I only started memorizing from these trend sheets that I made so that I could easily recall the relevant evidence for my point in the essays.

c. Another memorisation technique I found super useful was to use colors! Because we learn about 100 years' worth of history from 7 countries in just SEA history alone, it can be quite easy to confuse the names and events. Thus I highly recommend investing in a solid pack of highlighters, assigning one color to each country and then using the corresponding highlighters to highlight your notes/ make notes. This is especially effective if you're a visual learner!

3. Application
    a. When applying evidence, try to use at least 2 countries for each point. To demonstrate a more conscious and thoughtful use of evidence, I would recommend at least one positive example and one negative example per point (if possible). For example, if your point is "XX is important for political stability", you should have one example to show how country A which has XX is able to achieve political stability, and one example of country B which lacks XX and is thus unable to achieve political stability.

4. Essay Writing
    a. Take note of the key words in the question, especially if there is a comparison word, or if the question wants you to focus specifically on stakeholders/ factors.

b. Remember not to contradict yourself in your antithesis!

5. SBQ
    a. There are 3 main skills that you have to apply after analyzing the source itself -- Contextual Knowledge, Cross Referencing and Provenance. In the beginning I made the mistake of heavily relying on Contextual Knowledge (so that I could show that I was familiar with all the content learnt), but I later on found that I did better when I gave the other two, Cross Referencing and Provenance, more attention. Thus, I tried my best to use each of the 3 skills at least twice in the paper, which showed that I wasn't just a one trick pony. *Do note that this method wasn't exactly endorsed by my tutors though it was just something that I thought to do
    b. When analyzing the graphic sources, I think there is definitely space to be a little bit creative (it's safer to try this out during practices though haha) eg. comparing the relative sizes of different subjects to show relative importance/ talking about negative space to symbolize something. Talk about what certain elements/ expressions convey, and explicitly mention any visual metaphors mentioned.

GENERAL TIPS

For J1s and J2s - Framing your mindset

1. It is completely fine to not know what you want to do once JC ends - I know there will be people around you who are driven and already have their life journey planned out, and it's really scary, but you need to know that everyone eventually finds their own path. Thus, the most important thing to do in JC is to make decisions that allow you to open as many opportunities as possible, to ensure the highest chance of success in the future. This means to spend your time wisely - sign up for VIA projects, read up more about articles you are interested in, and don't be afraid of trying new things or meeting new people. You don't want to be in a position in the future where you regret wasting your time in J1/J2. Another good example is building a good rapport with your teachers from the start - they will be the ones writing your testimonials and they will be the ones there to save your grades when you need it. Be likeable.
2. Limiting beliefs - some people are going to tell you that out of the three (sleep, play, studies) you can only choose two, or that it is impossible to juggle x amount of commitments - basically statements that limit your potential before you even try. You need to be aware of these and know that they are not always true. Instead of asking if something is possible, ask yourself - why not? The point of me saying this is not to make you stressed/feel bad about where you're currently at, but instead for you to believe in yourself, and know you can legitimately do whatever you put your mind to.
3. ^^^ This ties in closely to the idea of having a growth mindset rather than a fixed mindset. (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L11WCsRqrIg). In JC, you will find yourself faced with a lot of stress and challenging experiences, and you need to know that everything is figure-outable, and take active steps to address these issues, rather than plainly accepting it.
4. Growth and learning is MEANT to be a struggle. Don't expect everything to come easily to you because you will feel demoralised. Understand that when

the work is the hardest, is when you learn the most. In personal experience, most of the topics that I found the hardest at the start became my strongest topics (and vice versa)

5. Message your seniors and ask for their IVY accounts / notes - download everything so that you can use them later.
6. All examinations are (kinda) important
    a. Scholarship applications tend to ask for promo and prelim results
    b. The results of your major exams tend to determine whether the school shortlists/recommends you for early application for scholarships and universities
7. Always have your future self in mind when making decisions
8. Follow some rules and ignore others - you need to know what works best for YOU and make decisions that follow that. For example, you don't have to watch your lectures according to whatever schedule the school sets out for you. If you feel like reading lecture notes is better for you- then do that. Personally, I didn't do any tutorials until I had an answer key because I didn't see the value in it. I felt like I learnt better when I did my tutorials and could compare answers immediately.
9. *The most important lesson - BALANCE. Nothing in life is black or white, it is always about how you navigate the grey.* The most important thing to realise in JC is that balance in your life will be very helpful in helping you achieve your goals - be it in academics or in extracurriculars. Balance your work with your play, balance hanging out with friends with time for self reflection, balance working out with giving your body rest.
10. The second most important lesson - start early. You will always hear miracle stories about how people did a last minute cram for A levels and came out with straight As, but what you don't hear about are the people that decided to put off watching lectures and daydreamed during tutorials and ended up screwing themselves over in the end. Not everyone gets to enjoy a miracle.

a. If you're like me, and never took exams seriously until you came to JC, then you only have around 5 major exams for you to "guess and check" your optimal study routine, study habits, and the perfect balance between work and play for you to stay sane and avoid burnout. And trust me, knowing yourself and being able to foresee how you will react to different situations in the future will make a huge difference in how you perform - because being aware of these means you are able to take active steps to prevent it from happening.

b. When we look at topics like Economics Essays, it's quite demoralising to know that out of all the topics you study only a few will come out, and the rest of your efforts will be wasted. And it doesn't make sense to "start early" because you can never predict what's going to come out etc. but the idea here is not that starting early will give you a better grade, it is that there is a higher probability of you getting a better grade.

c. It is just easier to finish a race strong when you're leading the pack rather than when you are constantly chasing from the back.

11. Side Task: Invest in yourself.
    a. Put in the effort to upgrade YOU. Spend time eating healthy, working out, ensuring your body is performing at peak performance. Spend time reading books and articles, expand your worldview, and spend time learning how to learn.

Top things you should know if you're starting J1

1. Meet new people - literally a fresh start
    a. Don't be held back by "who you were" in secondary school. This is an opportunity for you to get a fresh start so hold an open mind and know that you get to choose how your journey turns out.
2. Have a rough idea of how you want to approach JC life
    a. If you want to hustle and paper chase (i.e. build a damn solid testimonial etc.), you need to be aware of all the opportunities for you (e.g. council, exco, CE01, leadership activities, potential internships/competitions etc.)
    b. If you know that you probably want to do a uni course that does not have a very high barrier to entry, then just enjoy JC life and don't put so much stress on yourself.
    c. That said, I believe that it is impossible for us to make decisions for our future selves because we change so much as time passes, so I think the idea of ensuring all your options are open is the best way to go. Also, know that what you want will always be changing as that is okay, don't beat yourself up about it.
3. Know what opportunities are available so you don't miss out
    a. Figure out what the available MEPs, VIA projects, leadership positions are so that you will not "miss" opportunities
4. PW is more stressful than you think
    a. Pay attention during class and take notes lol
    b. I'm not sure if y'all bought a project work book in secondary school for design thinking, but I did - I never used mine during PW, but I think it MAY be useful
5. Start reading the news
    a. It is so hard to make this a habit because you don't see the fruits of your labor at the start, but know that this is an investment that will likely pay

off in the future especially if you take Econs/GP. Take it from somebody that didn't make news a habit - this was one of my biggest regrets in JC.

6. DON'T study before you start J1 - trust me, you will thank me later.
7. Know what to expect
    a. Most people around me (myself included) had a hard time learning the new subjects and adapting to the new teaching style - but know that this will all be temporary, and you will be used to it in no time.

<u>Top things you should know if you're starting J2</u>

1. Study over the december holidays
    a. Your next "big exam" will come very soon, and you will unlikely be able to finish the whole syllabus before the exam, wasting a crucial opportunity for practice. What I did was I started studying during december, and took the last week (christmas/new years) off to rest - worked pretty well for me.
2. It is never too late to start
    a. If your grades aren't doing too well - STOP procrastinating and start now. It will never be too late, and you will regret not starting earlier. The work isn't going to do itself, and you will need to study all of this eventually. The best time to plant a tree was 100 years ago, the next best time is now.
3. Grades DO matter
    a. There will be people around you who for some reason do not seem to care about how they do in exams - DON'T follow that shit. Surround yourself with like minded people and know that exams in JC need to be taken seriously.
4. Know when to say no
    a. Less is truly more sometimes. You don't have to say yes to every opportunity that pops up/ say yes to every outing with a friend group / say yes to taking on additional workloads if they don't help you achieve

what you want to achieve. In terms of studies, I felt like the change in the amount of work given towards prelims was quite drastic. Know that you don't have to do everything to do well - you just have to do enough.

5. Start to compile a list of all your achievements/awards over the past few years (usually from Sec 4 till now) so that it is easier for you to access when writing uni/scholarship apps
6. Have fun
    a. There's no other way to put it other than work hard, and play hard.
    b. It IS possible to balance academics, sleep and play. Don't have unrealistic expectations of yourself - productivity, discipline etc. are all MEANS to an end and not an end in of itself - be nice to yourself, have fun.

Final words

Ultimately, JC is going to be one hell of a ride. I know I experienced as many ups as downs, and I also know that I truly grew so much during this period of my life, and I'm glad I made the most of it. Know that you are likely already in a very privileged position right now, and try your best to be grateful for those around you rather than wishing things were different that what they already are. You are always where you need to be, and life will always work itself out. Not to spoil the ending for you, but everything is going to be okay :)

We wish you all the best.

If you found this guide useful, feel free to buy us a cup of ice milo :)