

## How to revise for GCSE Geography – Some guidance for parents & carers

1) Be clear on **what they need to revise** – this evening will help you, talk to your son/daughter and make sure they are clear that they know **WHAT** to revise. If not, advise them to speak to their geography teacher urgently. Do they understand the **exam structures** they will face for each exam? **We have gone through these many times** but discuss it with them.

2) Have they **sorted out their exercise books** and made sure they have everything they need? Do they have the **revision materials** and a **suitable revision space**?

3) Have they organised a **timetable**? Think about a new one following the mock exams to take them up to the final GCSE exams.

4) They should **start by condensing their notes** – using class notes, YouTube and recommended websites. Notes should be based around each topic and then they could use flash cards, posters, post-it notes, place mats, mind maps, knowledge organisers or PowerPoints. Any resources that students have created for the mock exams can also be used for the final GCSE exams.

5) **Students should learn their notes** – read, cover, write, check; get someone to test them; group discussions. **They must not just read their notes** – how do they know if they have remembered them until they are in the exam? We are using regular knowledge-based tests to support this memory recall. There are plenty of online quizzes available on Google Classroom, Seneca, GCSEPod and BBC Bitesize to support them.

6) **Sample/past exam papers** – they should be doing as many sample papers and questions as possible (the mark schemes are all online as well and can be used to assess their knowledge against these. We will happily look at questions that are causing difficulty when brought to our attention as we use these regularly in classes).

### Purpose of the mock exams and feedback in Geography

- To **improve upon performance** in the mock exams which will ultimately **boost confidence**.
- Look at **Year 11 monitoring and geography comments** so you know what they **should focus** on. Recent monitoring will also provide a **very up-to-date reflection** on exactly what needs to be done to accelerate progress.
- To allow more **accurate forecasting of GCSE grades** – these will then be used by any colleges or courses applied for so they are important!
- To identify **what we/they need to work** on for their final exams.
- A chance for the students **to experience how the exams work again** so they are clear about what to expect in the real exams in the summer.

Revision should have **started early** and should be **little and often**. If they try to cram all of it into a couple of days, they are less likely to remember all of the information, more likely to panic and very likely to experience difficulties and therefore **lack confidence**. It is never too late to start revising but the earlier that you can encourage your child to start.

Everyone's brain works differently and **what might work for one person could be less effective for another**.

Revise **three topics a week** and plan time once or twice a week to **review the revision/class work** that has been completed. Reviewing the information **helps to transfer it from short-term memory to long-term memory**. If revision is **not reviewed**, they will find it **harder to remember** the information.

### Designing a revision timetable

They should...

- Aim to revise for **all subjects Mon-Fri and some of Sunday**.
- Be given a **revision timetable** outline to create their own revision timetable.
- They should put in **all the things** they do, in and out of school *e.g. Music lessons, dance, football*.
- Aim to do 2-3 hours a night – split this up into 40-minute sections. **Geography should appear 3 times a week**.

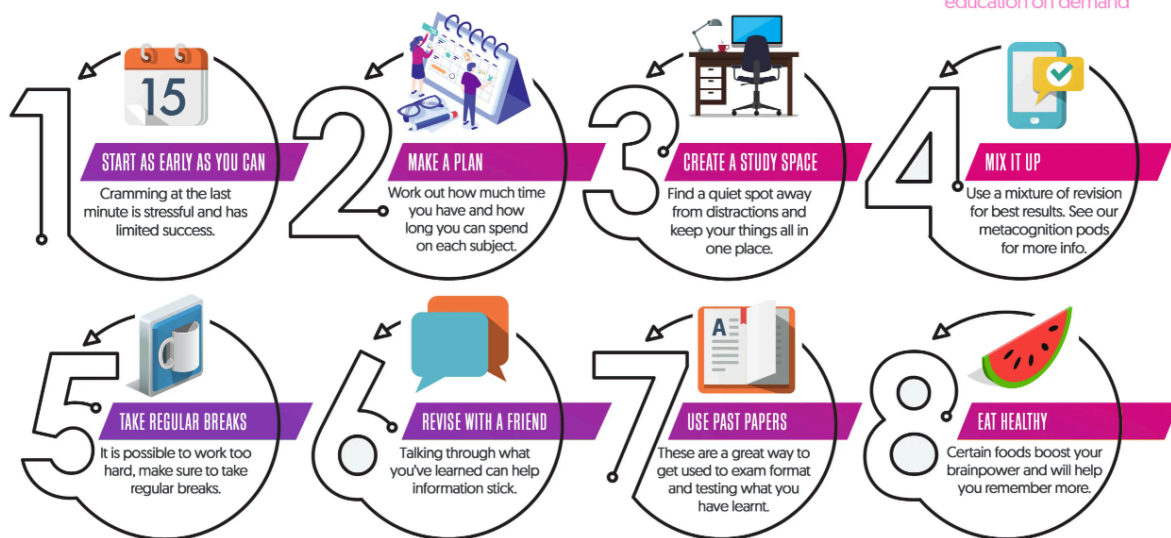
- Try and do revision **early** on in the **evening** so they have the rest of the *time to relax*.
- **In each Geography session**, specify a **topic** to revise e.g. rivers/coasts – hard & soft engineering – advantages/disadvantages, sustainability definition – social, economic, environmental.
- **Make notes** on the area of focus – learn it, **test it**, re-visit it.
- Try a **practice question** on this topic. There are plenty of past papers on Google Classroom with mark schemes.
- Decide **when to re-visit** the area and go over it again. They should ask you to test them to support knowledge tests we are holding in class. Review these knowledge tests with them as they should be sticking these in their books.

# TOP REVISION TIPS

Don't let the stress of revision overwhelm you. Stay in control with these top tips.



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## Revision techniques

Below is a list of some revision techniques. They need to try to find a couple that work for them and aim to **vary** the techniques used.

## Map skills

In the geography exams, they **will be** using **Ordnance Survey** maps. They **will be given a key** to help them to read the map but any opportunities we can give them to practise map skills will support the work we do in class.

- 4-figure and 6-figure **grid references**. Be able to read them and give them.
- **Recognising physical features** on a map – meanders, oxbow lakes, flood plains, valleys.
- **Recognising human features** on a map – using the key to identify roads, settlements, museums etc.
- Measuring **distances** on a map using the **scale**.
- **Using map evidence** to select suitable sites for developments/flood protection/caravan sites

You will be aware that GCSE Geography has changed significantly over time and is no longer about learning the countries and continents of the world off by heart! However, students still need to have a **good sense of place** and be aware of these in order to achieve success in the exams. Being able to identify the **7 continents** and **major oceans** will support them with this and the world map in their planner is a useful resource to develop their awareness of geographical locations.

### Examples of how to revise for GCSE Geography – find a technique that works

1. Turn notes into **bullet points**. **Highlight** key words. Keep **shortening** them until they have one word, which will **trigger the memory** for each point.
2. Make **flash cards** with the key ideas. (See [www.flashcardexchange.com](http://www.flashcardexchange.com) for ideas). Put these onto key rings if it helps.
3. Sample **exam papers** or questions  
(<http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/geography/gcse/geography-8035/assessment-resources>)
4. Draw **mind maps to have an overview of each** topic to show how the main ideas link together. Use colour effectively – choose **different colours** to represent different areas of knowledge required.
5. Turn **class notes into pictures or diagrams**, especially for rivers/coasts and Natural Hazards (June).
6. Use **websites** carefully. Our **geography student website** on the student portal and **Seneca Learn are the best resources**. **Seneca** is a superb online resource – good for consolidating knowledge and then testing. BBC Bitesize also provides flashcards for AQA GCSE Geography (8035). Ensure **only the topics studied** are being revised!
7. **Learning posters** – put key information on knowledge organisers/small posters. Use **patterns, colour and drawings**. Pin them up where they'll see them often (like in the bathroom, bedroom).
8. Use **mnemonics to remember key terms** (SEE = Social, Economic, Environmental, TED = transportation, erosion & deposition, CASH = corrasion, attrition, solution, hydraulic action)
9. Make up questions and get somebody to test them verbally. Put aside the ones they don't know and keep working on them until they've learnt them all. **Use tests provided in class**. **Revision triads** work for some with 3 people who are each responsible for supporting the learning and revision of the other two in their group (may need careful supervision at home!)
10. Create **podcasts** on their **phone** for case studies or examples they need to learn. **Listen** to them as often as possible, especially before sleeping.
11. Make a **rhyme, rap or song** out of revision notes.
12. **Read notes out loud** to someone. Get them to **elaborate** on ideas and topics mentioned.
13. **Explain key ideas** to a parent/brother/sister. **Teaching other people** helps them to learn content.
14. Associate information with actions and act out notes as they read them. (Works for some!) Effective for learning the types of erosion via CASH = corrasion, attrition, solution, hydraulic action.
15. Write information on **post-its** and **stick it** around the room.
16. Turn notes into a **PowerPoint** and share it with friends. Divides the work up so they support each other. (Beware that they don't spend ages making a Powerpoint – content is the key!)
17. Try **recalling detailed diagrams/graphs/illustrations from memory** and **test them** on these. For example: *The Bradshaw model*. Have them **enlarge copies of these** and **stick them prominently near the bed** so they cannot avoid looking at them and learning them!
18. Could use '**maps from memory**' that are utilised in class with them to learn diagrams. (Place completed diagram out of sight, view it for 1 minute and reproduce it in 3 minutes).
19. Use the **BBC Bitesize GCSE Geography (AQA 8035) app** as a quick check of knowledge but **Seneca** is more reliable as it is written by examiners. Students also have access to **GCSEPod** which has plenty of resources for students.

## **Performing on the Day**

- Get a good **night's sleep**. While the temptation is for them to stay up half the night 'cramming in' more facts and figures, evidence suggests this approach is counter-productive. In the context of a two-year course, an extra night studying until the early hours can make very little difference to knowledge. However, having a mind that is refreshed, alert, and ready to respond to circumstances will obviously be of far greater benefit.
- **Arrive in plenty of time**. To perform well on the day, they need to be relaxed and to feel in control of the situation. This is difficult to achieve if they have missed breakfast and are stuck on a bus in traffic as the exam time approaches. They need 'quiet time' to mentally rehearse the exam and run through a 'structured approach' before entering the exam.
- **Check they have all the equipment ready**. Each exam has its own requirements. Paper 1, 2 and 3 will require them to use maps, graphs and diagrams in the exam paper. They must have **blue/black pens** to write with, **sharp pencils, eraser, ruler** and **coloured pencils** may be useful along with a **calculator**. They will have to write extended 9-mark (+3 SPaG) answers so need to have plenty of ink! A lot of nervous energy can be expended on last-minute hassle if these items are not checked in advance.
- Encourage them to **"think positive"**. On the day of the exam, **remind them of the good things** (the material they know well, all the revision they have completed, all the past exam questions done, the good grades achieved) rather than dwelling on areas of weakness. Having that **self-belief** will give them the **confidence to trust their judgement** within the exam hall and 'hit the target'.
- There can be a lot of tension, drama, and hysteria in the air on the days of an exam. You want them to keep the **balance between maintaining focus and interacting normally** with their friends. Encourage them to find a quiet spot away from others to mentally 'warm-up' before the geography exams and 'chill-out' afterwards. They should be encouraged to surround themselves with people who are likely to add to the calm rather than add to the clamour.
- Beware of post-exam analysis! The more they participate in the exam post-mortem, the more confused and disheartened they're likely to become. They can't change what has happened, only focus on the present and this will need their full attention. **Advise them to avoid any social networking that analyses the exam papers whether positively/negatively**, what's done is done!

All past papers, specification and details about the course can be accessed via -

<http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/geography/gcse/geography-8035/assessment-resources>

## **KEY DATES FOR GCSE GEOGRAPHY**

### **GCSE mock exams for 2025**

- **Thursday 23 January - Paper 1** (afternoon exam). **1hr 30mins**. *Living with the Physical Environment*.
- **Thursday 30 January - Paper 3** (afternoon exam). **1hr 30mins**. *Geographical applications. (Issue evaluation based on the pre-release material & unfamiliar fieldwork)*.

### **Final GCSE examination dates for 2025**

- **Wednesday 14 May - Paper 1** (morning exam). **1hr 30mins**. - *Living with the Physical Environment*. 35%.
- **Friday 6 June - Paper 2** (afternoon exam). **1hr 30mins**. – *Challenges in the Human environment. (Urban issues & challenges and the challenge of resource management)*. 35%.
- **Thursday 12 June - Paper 3** (morning exam) **1hr 30mins**. – *Geographical applications. (Issue evaluation based on the pre-release material & unfamiliar fieldwork)*. 30%.
- **RESULTS DAY = Thursday 21 August 2025**