

May 2018

Exam Preparation for 6th Years



Answering exam questions comes down to five essential skills:

- 1) Planning and carrying out revision
- 2) Researching the format which the exam paper will take
- 3) Revising specifically for exams.
- 4) Following the format and answering specifically what is asked.
- 5) Taking care of yourself before and during exams (stress avoidance, healthy diet, exercise, multi vitamin supplement if required, plenty of sleep).
- 6) Work backwards from when you finish school to the start of the exam. You will have 11 days from Saturday 26th May. Have a schedule. Allow 1-2 days per subject and study English all day on the Monday and Tuesday.
- 7) If you have a long break before your last exam don't assume that you will spend a full 5 days studying for that exam- you will be tired so don't neglect any subject when making out your schedule for the final 10 days before the exams begin.
- 8) Consider your use of Social Media!!!

The evening before the exam:

- Keep revision light, concentrate on polishing up the things you already know rather than starting something new. Don't study late into the night.
- Study next day's subject all day.
- Get everything ready for the next day- exam number, pens, calculator (check battery), glucose sweets, water, healthy snacks, etc.
- Double check exactly what time the exam is at and where the exam is on. There is always somebody who will get it wrong.
- Relax- read a book/ watch t.v./ have a bath/ do a guided meditation (Insight Timer App)



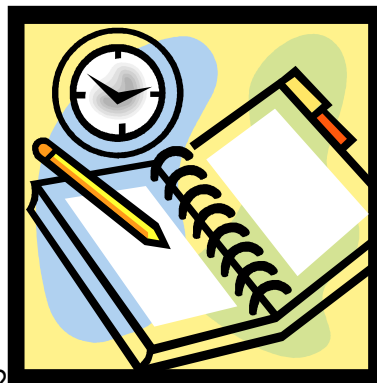
Don't forget your mandala colouring!

The day of the exam:

- Arrive at the school in good time- students who arrive late tend to get flustered and time cannot be added on if you are late. Being late can ruin your chances of success.
- Avoid the cluster of people outside the exam centre asking each other questions.
- You will already have a broad outline of the number of questions you must answer and the time available for each answer. Your time allocation over the 2-3 hour period should be broadly set out in your mind.
- As the starting time draws near, think of the things you can do, not the things you can't.

At the start of the exam:

- Check that you are looking at the correct exam paper- subject and level.
- Do the administrative bits first- write your exam number on all returnable booklets.
- Read the question paper carefully- you know the format, read the instructions carefully.



- How long do I have for the entire exam?
- How many questions are to be answered?
- How many compulsory questions- what numbers are they?
- What choices do I have, if any?
- Take 60 seconds without looking at the paper and breathe!
- Mark each question you can do.
- Go back over the marked questions and choose your best from these.
- Work out a timetable for the exam. Divide the time available for each question, less ten minutes at the end for correction / revision.

Writing your exam questions:



Begin with your best answer, follow this with your second best and so on. The compulsory question(s) should fall into this scheme. The purpose of this scheme is:

- To give you confidence.
- To show the examiner that you really know the subject, creating a really good first impression.
- To receive high marks early on.
- To enable further ideas to form for weaker answers- jot these down as soon as you think of them.

Answer each question by using your exam technique skills.

- Watch your handwriting- the examiner has to be able to read it!
- Notate the answers carefully in red pen- check the paper.
- Avoid padding, slang and never use 'text language'.
- Keep your sentences short and simple as less can go wrong with short sentences.
- Use familiar words, concrete not abstract.
- Keep re-reading the questions as you answer them as this will prevent you from going off in tangents.
- Don't waste time and energy writing down things the question doesn't require you to do. Take careful note of key words in questions including 'how?', 'why?', 'when?', 'what?', 'explain', 'discuss', 'compare', 'contrast', 'prove that', etc. Do **exactly** what the question asks.
- For essay type questions, spend the first few minutes **planning** your answer. This helps to ensure that the essay has a promising beginning, middle and a convincing end. Planning your essay at the start also helps you to avoid missing out important ideas.
- For numerical or problem type answers make sure the examiners can see exactly how you reached your answers. Show clearly each step you take- if something goes wrong you can still get marks for all the things the examiners can see that were correct.
- Every now and then give yourself a minute off. Give your brain a chance to rest and reflect. Give your thoughts time to put themselves into a sensible pattern and then continue writing. **Keep an eye on all the exam questions.**

- Glance at the questions you are not going to answer- they may contain information you can use in your answers- this is especially true in language papers- words, phrases, grammar.

Be certain that you attempt the required number of questions.

- Five questions at 20% each= 100% - H1 Max
- Four questions at 20% each = 80% - H2 Max
- Attempt in some way all that is required from you.



- *Keep a close eye on the clock.*
- Bring a watch.
- Be severe on yourself with the time you are allocating to each question.
- Leave ample space after each answer so that you can add on later.
- If short on time with your last answer jot down all the major points and sub points you would have used. At least you are showing that you have all the information needed to answer that question.
- Don't leave early. Ignore other candidates who walk out when they have finished the paper.

Leave ten minutes for final review- stop answering the exam questions. Even if you are in the middle of a question there are usually more marks to be gained by following the suggestions below than by continuing to try to finish the question.

- Read your script from beginning to end.
- Correct all misspellings, grammar and punctuation.
- Add points as necessary and appropriate.
- Make deletions if necessary- use brackets and ruler.
- Notate the answers carefully in red pen- check the paper.
- Ensure that your answers can be read and understood.
- Stay at your desk until the time is up. Even in the last minute an idea may come back to you which could be worth some extra marks.

Afterwards avoid post mortems- they rarely do much for the confidence of any student. It is always easy to be wise after the event. There is nothing you can do now to add on, so take some free time, and then prepare for the next examination paper.

***Good luck!
Ms Connaughton,
May 2018***

Study Schedule for the Leaving Cert-June 2018

Fill in this schedule working backwards so that you are studying English all day on Tuesday 5th. Study for your final exam on Sunday 27th.

Date	Exam?	Subject to Study
Sun 27/05	x	
Mon 28/05	x	
Tues 29/06	x	
Wed 30/06	x	
Thurs 31/06	x	
Fri 01/06	x	
Sat 02/06	x	
Sun 03/06	x	
Mon 04/06	x	
Tues 05/06	x	
Wed 06/06	English Paper 1	
Thurs 07/06	English Paper 2	
Fri 08/06	Maths Paper 1	
Sat 09/06	x	
Sun 10/06	x	
Mon 11/06	Maths Paper 2 Irish Paper 1	
Tues 12/06	Irish Paper 2	
Wed 13/06		
Thurs 14/06		
Fri 15/06		
Sat 16/06	x	
Sun 17/06	x	
Mon 18/06		
Tues 19/06		
Wed 20/06		
Thurs 21/06		
Fri 22/06		