Cove School



STUDENT
SUPPORT BOOKLET



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INTRODUCTION

We want each and every one of you to leave Cove School with the best possible results. Results that will not only enable you to take the next steps in your chosen career pathway and college choice, but results that you will be proud to record whenever and wherever required for the rest of your lives.

This booklet has been designed to give all students (and parents) guidance on how to successfully prepare for the GCSE examinations, and organise revision to suit personal preferences and learning styles.

Revision means **doing** something, not just sitting and reading books. It's an **active** process and requires more than just going through your notes. It's important to **TRANSFORM** notes from the past eighteen months rather than TRANSFER information.

This will need lots of paper, colours, highlighters, post its, cue cards and the willingness to engage in 'relearning' all the content started in Year 9 and 10. Most importantly, this needs to be started **NOW**. This booklet is intended to help each and every one of you with this process of revision and relearning!

This booklet also has advice on how to perform well in exams and tips on managing the anxiety that it is normal and many students experience.

If at any point in the revision or GCSE examination period you are concerned or worried then please contact us – we will help whenever possible.



MAKING REVISION NOTES

Writing notes is a great way of being **active** in your revision. It is also a positive method for tackling bulging folders and exercise books full of notes.

Revision notes should be created in the early stages of your revision (Sept – Dec). Don't attempt to memorise all your lesson notes – condense them first.

Subject revision guides are very helpful in your revision but you should not see them as a substitute for writing your revision notes. The revision guides give you the basics, they are not complete sets of notes that take you deeper into the subject.



TRADITIONAL REVISION NOTES

Read through your notes on a topic asking yourself as you are reading '**Do I understand this?**' When you feel you have understood the topic, go back and pick out key words and phrases that trigger off your memory.

Remember to:

- Use your own words
- Space out your notes
- Include key charts or diagrams.
- Make bulleted list.
- Use a variety of letter sizes
- Make your notes interesting (colour; boxes; circles; abbreviations etc.)

MAKING REVISION CARDS

These can be carried around in a pocket or bag and used whenever you have a spare moment

Remember to:

- Leave a margin so that you can make additional notes later should you wish to
- Make sure the subject and topic are clearly marked at the top
- Develop your own method for numbering the cards
- Don't be afraid to scrap a card and rewrite it if you are unhappy with it

CREATING PATTERNED NOTES

Some students find these more fun to do and interesting to revise from. They can be very good for giving an overall view of a topic and for showing links and connections

Use the following steps:

- Write the MAIN TOPIC in the middle of the paper and draw a ring around it
- For each KEY POINT draw a branch out from the main topic
- Write a KEY WORD or PHRASE on each branch
- Build out further branches and add DETAILS
- Add diagrams, pictures and symbols where you can
- Highlight links and connections
- Be creative and personalise it
- Use colour and different size arrows or lines.

REVISION (MEMORY) TECHNIQUES

MNEMONICS

For example:

Mnemonics (or Acrostics) help you to remember by using short words that stand for something to help you. A common mnemonic is, 'Richard Of York Gave Battle In Vain', to remember the colours of the rainbow (Red, Orange, Yellow etc.) Make your sentences or words as memorable as possible. *The sillier the better*, when it comes to acrostics.

What they're good for: Learning a list of key words or concepts or the structure to apply to a certain type of answer.

Charlie for Currency Reform Do Dawes Plan You Young Plan Like Locarno Pact Lorraine League of Nations Kelly Kellogg-Briand Pact

M-R-S-G-R-E-N

Science – Key characteristics of life

Movement - Respiration - Sensitivity - Growth - Reproduction - Excretion - Nutrition

MIND MAPS

Imagine a Mind Map is like a giant Spider's Web with all the ideas around it. The spider (or main idea) is in the middle and everything is around it. The most important ideas are in the middle and the sub-topics go out further and further. The key is to remember that a mind map is a visual tool and the following rules should be applied:

- 1. Use a key image to represent the topic at the centre
- 2. Use large branches for the main topics and smaller branches (branching off) for the sub-topics
- 3. Make each main branch a different colour
- 4. Use lots of images that will trigger your memory
- 5. Use key words and phrases, don't write too much text.



What they're good for: Testing your knowledge of a whole topic. Getting everything you need to learn onto one page. Good for visual learning (using images to trigger memory)

"

Learning is something that no one can do for you, but it is something you will have to do for the rest of your lives – yes even after school! So it makes sense that you **learn** how to learn quickly, easily and



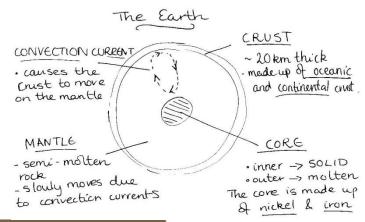
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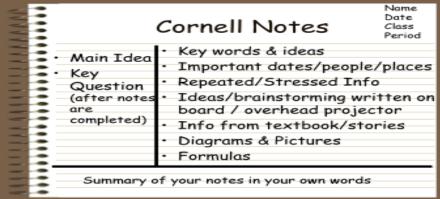
FLASH CARDS / QUESTION CARDS

Flash cards are a great revision technique because they allow you to condense your notes onto a set of small cards, which can then be used to test yourself later. It is worth spending time on your flash cards using images, diagrams and colour to make them visually appealing and to break up lots of text. The process of creating revision cards is great revision in itself, as you are identifying key information. Once created, your revision cards can also act as question cards, perhaps with the answers on the reverse?

Good flashcards include some or all of the following:

- Bitesize chunks of information
- Main points
- Mnemonics
- Colour coding
- Diagrams
- Keywords
- Definitions
- Lists





As you revise, you can form a pile of topics you are happy with and a pile, which you need to spend more time on. Use *apps* like *quizlet* and *cram* to help. Cornell Notes are a great way of interpreting a topic and laying it out in a way that is easy to aid revision (look it up!)

What they're good for: Visual learning and summarising your understanding of a topic in one diagram.

TEACH IT

The best way to learn something is to teach it to someone else. Adopt this approach with your friends, at home or perhaps during your revision lessons. Each student (or pair) becomes specialists in a topic and prepare a 5-10 minute session to teach it to their friends. Use any techniques and activities you like. When you have done, swap over and let someone else teach their topic.

What it's good for: Those who like learning with friends. Learning topics in-depth.



SMART PHONE REVISION (SONGS, PODCASTS AND RECORDING YOURSELF)

Auditory revision can be done in a number of ways. One is to use your phone or computer to record you explaining a topic. This way, you can listen to yourself at any time. Use podcasts from **GCSEPod**. You should also speak your teachers to identify the best sources for revision videos and podcasts, and ask them to share resources on SMHW to aid revision. For example, http://my-gcsescience.com is a fantastic source of short revision videos for GCSE Science. **Youtube** is a great source of support. Ask your teachers if they recommend any particular channels/sites, http://revisionworld.com is great for all subjects. Don't forget there are a lot of resource links on the schools **VLE**. Take photographs of key facts / rules in lessons (ask for permission first!)

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What they're good for: People who like to revise on the go.

REVISION GAMES

When revising with friends try to make your revision as active as possible and incorporate quizzes, board games or even a version of your favourite quiz show. These techniques will add variety and (hopefully) some fun to your revision by competing with your friends.

Playing the games is great revision, but time spent making them is just as valuable. QUIZLET and MEMRISE are a good place (both websites) to start!

What they're good for: makes revising more fun. Good if you like revising with someone else



EXAM REVISION MAT

Create a mat of 'key content' for a topic. Add questions to generate deeper understanding; challenge and evaluate knowledge. You could produce separate revision cards from the answers. When finished, think about how you can make it visually appealing and use colour to link ideas together. A good idea is to use cue cards to revise the information and then make an exam revision mat to consolidate and reinforce learning.



What they are good for: Visual and compacts information

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Practice questions are an excellent way to revise. Although it is unlikely the same question will come up in your exam (although it might!), practise questions help you test your knowledge, practise time management skills and understand what to expect from the exam. You should collect a variety of practise exam papers from your teacher and build them into your revision plan. It is always good to finish a revision chunk with some practise questions to test what you know - 'practise makes perfect'.

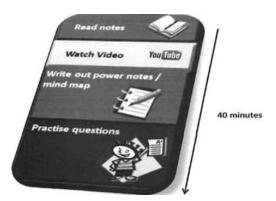
What they're good for: Well... practising!

REVISION SCHEDULES

The best way to plan and carry out your revision is to design your revision 'schedules'. A revision schedule

is a specific amount of time in which you revise for a subject. Evidence suggests that you should revise on one topic or subject for no longer than 45 minutes at a time before having a break and doing something completely different. A schedule could be shorter than this, for example, 30 minutes or even 20 minutes, depending on the subject and your attention span.

Each chunk should also include a range of revision techniques. This will help add variety to your revision and keep you stimulated. You should plan your revision schedules for each subject, as you may



choose different approaches for each one. For example, you might make more use of audio techniques when revising for a German test or do more practice questions when revising maths. If you organise your revision into schedules, you will find it much easier to plan and manage your workload.

THERE ARE MANY GOOD REASONS FOR USING REVISION TIMETABLES

These include:

- 1. To set up a routine and discipline yourself
- 2. To share revision time between subjects
- 3. To keep up with your revision
- 4. To get the right balance between revision and leisure time
- 5. To avoid wasting time trying to decide what to do for each revision session

HOW TO CONSTRUCT A REVISION TIMETABLE

A blank revision plan, can be found at the end of this booklet, each student also has a planner with a revision timetable which can be copied and used.

Use these, or something similar, to:

- 1. Write in your subjects.
- 2. Be specific which topics you have to revise. Use the 'Subject content' at the back of this booklet.
- 3. Use the calendar and block out where you know you have other commitments eg sports practice etc ..
- 4. Add in Zone 11's you are attending.
- 5. Decide what method of revision you are going to use, mind map/revision cards etc..
- 6. Plan your time, chunking revision periods, giving yourself time for breaks.
- 7. Use colours to highlight subjects or perhaps use a key, to help focus the plan.
- 8. Put it on the fridge to remind you of the plan!

SOME IMPORTANT RULES!

- No more than 45 minutes non-stop revision at a time!
- Don't overdo it! Revising solidly from 4pm until midnight will exhaust you and your brain! A tired brain can't learn! Make sure you get plenty of sleep and have a proper break for meals.
- Take a ten minute break in between sessions; get a drink, stretch your legs and give your brain a break!
- Spread your subjects out too. Don't choose to revise all three sciences one after the other on the same day. You will get bored! And make sure you use a variety of techniques. Do some note taking for one subject, some mind mapping for another and maybe try some past paper questions out for the next subject after that!
- Every person is different though, you need to work out what is best for YOU!
- Lastly, don't panic! If you are organised, you will be fine!
 Lots of regular revision, slotted into your normal routine, is a hundred times better than manic swotting the day before the exam!

If you find it difficult to plan your own revision schedule, there are other resources out there to help you www.getrevising.co.uk is a handy website to help you create a revision timetable and a range of other resources such as flash cards, quizzes and mind maps.

WHAT GOES WRONG WITH TIMETABLES?

There are three main reasons why timetables don't work out:

- They are drawn up to cover too many weeks ahead small steps, one week at a time.
- 2. They are drawn up in too much detail keep it simple.
- 3. They are over-ambitious and unrealistic

A good one strikes the balance between flexibility and routine.

Like most students, you will never stick exactly to your timetables and when you don't it doesn't mean that your timetables aren't working.

There are many ways to divide up a full day that is available for revision. One simple way is to divide each day into three blocks; morning, afternoon and evening such as:

Morning session: 9.00 am - 12.30 pmAfternoon session: 1.30 pm - 5.00 pmEvening session: 5.30 pm - 9.00 pm

Study for two of these sessions in a day and rotate the session you have free on different days.

MANAGING YOUR REVISION & STRESS-BUSTING TECHNIQUES

Believe you can do it. If you prepare for the exams properly you should do fine, meaning that there is no need to worry excessively.

Get accurate information. Make sure you fully understand the resources that your teachers have made available to help you revise and know where you can find them. Ensure you have a revision checklist for every subject and you know what to expect from the exam paper (number of questions, type of questions, marks available, length of the exam and if there are any optional questions/sections).

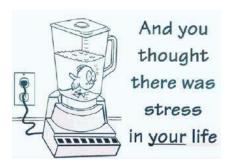


Sort out your priorities. If you think there's too much work, and not enough time left to do it, write down everything you need to do, and sort it into order of priority. You can then work out what action you need to take for each task, and work your way through your list. You need to take into account which topics are the most important or compulsory, which you already know best, and which you have enough information on.

Avoid distractions. Avoid friends who make you anxious by telling you how much more revision they have done than you or reeling off facts and topics they have learnt that you haven't (yet). Revision is a personal thing, so don't worry what anyone else is doing unless you are helping each other and revising together.

Don't keep things bottled up. Confiding in someone you trust and who will be supportive is a great way to alleviate stress and worry. Talk to your parents, teacher, Form Tutor and Head of Year if anything is worrying you. We're here to help and support you.

Plan your study time. Too much material + Too little time = Anxiety. Plan your study with regularly scheduled revision chunks of no more than 45 minutes, you should be fine.



Organising your space. Think about *where* you work. See if you can separate out the places where you work from the places where you *relax*. Even if this all happens within one small room, create a 'working place' (around a desk/table?) which contains your papers, books, etc. and everything you need for your work.

Try to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Anxiety increases when you feel tired, run down and overwhelmed. Overall resilience depends on your physical and mental health, which can be strengthened by:

- enough movement and exercise (vs. couch potato lifestyle)
- balanced life (vs. over-stress)
- positive thoughts/beliefs (vs. self-defeating thoughts/cynicism)
- health focus (vs. self-neglect)
- replenishing nutrition (vs. junk food)
- regular and adequate sleep (vs. late night lifestyle).

Reward yourself. If you're working hard and revising properly then it is only right that you reward yourself for your hard work. Organise things with friends, treat yourself to something... or even better, get your parents to treat you! Having a reward gives you something to look forward to and will help you manage boredom and anxiety.

TOP TIPS

BEFORE THE EXAMS

- Know your exam timetable highlight yours in colour and put them on your calendar.
- Know where and when you need to be and give yourself enough time not to be rushed.
- Allow time for your brain to get into action have a shower. Eat breakfast at home, at school or eat some fruit as you walk to school.
- Check the exact subject of the exam, how it will be structured (e.g. short answer section and an essay) and how the marks are awarded.
- Make sure you have everything you need the night before books you are allowed to take in, equipment including a calculator for science and maths.
- Keep to normal routines bed and getting up at normal time.
- Leave yourself time to go to the toilet before the exam
- Take water into the exam your ability to remember and your concentration improves by 70% if you are hydrated.
- Don't worry if you think you have forgotten it all before you go in if you have revised it will all be there and will come back.

DURING THE EXAM

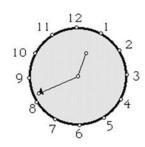
- Read questions twice. It can be easy to misunderstand a
 question so always read the instructions twice and think
 what the question actually means and what the examiner
 wants you to write about.
- 2. Questions first. If your exam paper includes a case study or some other form of stimulus material, it is always worth reading through the questions first. This way, when you come to read the case study, you will know what sort of information (perhaps evidence) you are looking for. Application is a key skill in many examinations and linking the case study to your answers is crucial.



"Your brain is like a sponge that absorbs knowledge, but that's not exactly how it's done."

- **3. Highlight and abbreviate**. Most exams will have some sort of stimulus material, such as a case study or extract. Read these carefully and use a highlighter to identify key words or information that you know you should refer to or use in your answers. Reading stimulus material may trigger ideas on what you could write in your answers. Make notes in the margin to remember these ideas, or perhaps even device your own abbreviations to help you make quick notes.
- **4. Plan your answer**. Especially on longer, essay style questions, ensure you give yourself planning time to think how you will structure your answer. Write down a few bullet points, highlight information from the case study (if there is one) and use spare paper or pages in the exam booklet the do a little plan before you start to answer the question. Never put 'pen to paper' straight away. Think about your response and the direction of your answer before you start to write.

5. Plan your time. If your exam has two sections worth equal marks, then it makes sense to be starting section B half way through the exam. Understand the paper you are about to sit, how many marks it is worth and then have a rough plan of where you should be up to at various points in the exam. There may be some guidance on the front of the exam paper, but discuss this with your teachers and get their suggestions before the exam. Regularly check the clock and pace yourself.



- **6.** Check answers. If you finish the exam early, use the time effectively to flick through your answers and see if there is anything you might have missed. You will be more relaxed at the end of the exam so it will be easier to find any mistakes that you might have made.
- 7. Remember your exam technique (how you should answer the questions). Your teachers will have explained and you will have practised how to write good answers. You will probably know what makes a good answer, and what does not. Don't let this slip away when you get into the exam. It is easy to focus on the questions in front of you and forget exam technique but, stop and ask yourself "How do I answer this type of question?" You might also write down some notes on your paper before you start the exam to help you remember.
- **8.** Move on and come back later. If you are stuck on a question, give yourself some thinking time to try and solve it, but not too much. If you are really stuck move on and come back later. It might also be worth writing the question number down at the end of your exam paper so that you don't forget to come back and try again.
- **9. Don't panic**. It's natural to feel some exam nerves prior to starting the exam, but getting excessively nervous is counterproductive as you will not be able to think as clearly. The quickest and most effective way to eliminate feelings of stress and panic is to close your eyes and take several long, slow deep breaths. Breathing in this way calms your whole nervous system. Simultaneously you could give yourself some mental pep-talk by mentally repeating "I am calm and relaxed" or "I know I will do fine".

HAPPINESS IS



...your last exam paper.

"You have brains in your head and feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself in any direction you choose!" – Dr. Seuss

WHAT CAN YOU, AS PARENTS, DO TO HELP?

DO:

- Recognise how important these exams are and how much time your son/daughter will need if they
 are to do as well as they can
- Discuss with your child what will be involved and what your role could be
- Accept this is going to be a stressful time for the whole family expect outbursts and try to remain calm
- Give plenty of encouragement and praise for hard work and practise, rather than talent and ability. Don't expect too much
- Provide the necessary environment for success. Ideally this should be a quiet, well-lit place to study with interruptions kept to a minimum when they are working
- Keep them well supplied with suitable food and drinks make sure they eat healthy snacks regularly, and drink enough so they don't get dehydrated
- Respond positively when they ask for help. If you can't help immediately say when it's convenient
- Encourage planned exercise and relaxation time (too much study is not helpful)
- Encourage your child to have regular breaks, to do something they enjoy, even if it's just half an hour off for their favourite soap, or listening to music
- Help them to forget about each exam as it is finished avoid post mortems
- Keep a low profile try and work with your child and support them rather than 'policing' them
- Emphasise the need for plenty of sleep and respect their body clocks many teenagers are more alert during the night and this may be the best time for them to revise even though it makes parents anxious!

DON'T:

- Make comparisons with brothers, sisters, their friends and so on
- Unintentionally add to their worries by constantly mentioning the exams
- Relate too much to when you were sitting exams at school or how you did with your revision
- Worry if their revision techniques seem strange or unusual
- Make a battleground out of whether or not they listen to music when doing their revision
- Distract them unnecessarily
- Expect them to study all the time as taking some time out to relax will have a positive effect on their work
- Ask them to do too many chores or look after younger brothers and sisters; encouraging the rest of the family to help by not disturbing revision.

During the exam period

Try to ensure that:

- They know the start times of every exam that day
- They know the revision lessons for each day
- They know when the extra exam sessions are during the exam period
- Your son/daughter gets a good night's sleep before exams
- They have all the equipment they need.

Making use of your child's report

We have changed the measures of attitude to learning to focus on key areas of the student's whole approach to their learning. This information should give you areas to set short term goals for improvement. Teachers have been asked to give scores based upon the following five areas: Leadership, Organisation, Resilience, Independence and Communication.

A breakdown of what each comprises can be found below.

- **Leadership:** To what extent does the student show leadership qualities? How do they perform in class, readily answering questions, taking part in discussions etc.
- **Organisation**: Are they prepared for learning? Do they take care with presentation. Is homework handed in on time?
- **Resilience**: To what extent do they show a growth mindset not giving up when it is too difficult?
- **Independence**: How good is their homework? Are they able to complete work with the minimum of help from the teacher? Do they use the 4B's?
- **Communication:** How well do they structure their answers in class? Are their sentences logical? Are they able to articulate opinions during discussions?

"What keeps me going isgoals."

- Muhammad Ali

If any of their L.O.R.I.C. scores are anything but a '1', then talking to them about why that might be is essential to allow you to formulate short term goals that can be rewarded when they are met.

How to stick to your goals:

- ✓ Review your goals regularly.
- Measure and assess your progress.
- Make changes if they are needed. Be honest with yourself.
- \checkmark Keep your goals visible if they are out of sight, then they may be out of mind.



Outline your work plan by setting yourself goals to achieve.



Keep track of what you have achieved. Create a timeline so you keep on track.



Define what tasks you need to complete in order to achieve your goals. Tick off complete tasks.

Weekly Revision Timetable

	NOE	TUE	WED	THE	1 2	SAT	SUN
8:00am							
9:00am							
10:00am							
I I:00am							
12:00am							
1:00pm							
2:00pm							
3:00pm							
4:00pm						19	
5:00pm							4
6:00pm		¥					
7:00pm							
8:00pm							
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Term Time Revision Timetable

WEEKDAYS MON TUE	MON	TUE	WED	THO	FRI	FRI WEEKEND	SAT	SUN
3:05pm								
4:00pm						AM		
5.00pm								
6:00pm						PM		
7:00pm								
8:00pm						EVENING		

USEFUL LOG-INS

PiXL Independence

Web Link: https://students.pixl.org.uk

PiXL School Number: 302364

Password: Indep48



The independence section has resources that students can work through for most subject areas. These resources can be downloaded and provide a structure to tackle complex problems independently, guiding revision.

The Endurance section contains video recipes for healthy meals and exercise regimes to build physical and mental stamina.

The Multiple-Choice tests at the start of the booklets can be accessed at Quizlet (An app can be downloaded)

https://quizlet.com/PiXL_GCSE

Passwords for each quiz:

GSCE Subject	Password	GSCE Subject	Password
RS	pixl2018rs	PE	pixl2018pe
Technology	pixl2018technology	Chemistry	pixl2018chemistry
Higher Maths	pixl2018highermaths	Physics	pixl2018physics
Drama	pixl2018drama	French	pixl2018french
English AQA	pixl2018englishaqa	Spanish	pixl2018spanish
English Lit	pixl2018englishlit	German	pixl2018german
History	pixl2018history	cs	pixl2018cs
Foundation Maths	pixl2018foundation	Geography	pixl2018geography
Higher Maths	pixl2018higher	Music	pixl2018music
Biology	pixl2018biology		

Doddle Learn (Science)

www.doddlelearn.co.uk

Username is FirstnameSurname14 (Year 11) FirstnameSurname15 (Year 10)

Kerboodle – online textbook (Maths, Science, Geography, MFL)

www.kerboodle.com institution code: pxq2

(user name and initial password both initial surname, eg Darth Vader would be dvader)

Hegarty maths

https://hegartymaths.com/login/learner

Seneca Learning

Senecalearning.com

https://www.gcsepod.com/



SUPPORT YOUR CHILD ON THE PATH TO SUCCESS

Your child's school has invested in the award winning resource, GCSEPod, to help your child reach their goals! Join the thousands of parents encouraging their children to use GCSEPod to support learning, homework and revision.



Student

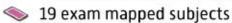
"The correlation between success and failure was made almost 100% clear by the use of GCSEPod."

Yateley School

"My daughter used GCSEPod for her GCSEs and was very successful with her results, she absolutely loved your Pods and this style of revising."

Parent







Audio visual content

Builds confidence

Use on the go, anytime, anywhere



For more information please visit www.gcsepod.com/parent

HOW TO LOGIN-

- 1) Go to www.gcsepod.com and click LOGIN
- 2) Click NEW HERE? GET STARTED!
- 3) Enter your child's details and confirm the name of the school they attend
- 4) Create a username and password

Quiz your child!





Test your child on their Pod knowledge with some of these general questions!

General Questions

- What didyoulearn from watching the pod?
- 2. What willyou remember?
- 3. Tell me3 key words you have learnt from the pod.
- 4. Tell meeverythingyou knowonthetopic.
- 5. How confident do you feel on the subject?
- 6. Do youthinkyouneed to learn more on that subject?
- 7. What part of the pod interested you the most?
- 8. What was your favourite part of the pod?
- 9. Teach mewhat you've learnt?
- 10. Where you surprised by what you've learnt?
- 11. What was your least favourite part?

Character Questions

- 1 Whoare the 3 main characters of the book/play?
- 2. What are their relationships with each other?
- Which social class do they belong too?
- Dothemaincharacterschangebytheend ofthe book/play? How?
- If you had the chance to talk and ask each charactera question - what would you ask them and why?

Tip: Think of some specific questions on other subjects, like photosynthesis, algebra or WWII.

Tip: Print out this page, take it everywhere you go and ask questions when you're in the supermarket, in the car, cooking dinner...

English Literature Questions

- 1. What's the book/play about?
- 2. Can you give me a plot overview?
- 3. Where is the book/play set?
- 4. How does the setting reflect the book?
- 5. Who are the main characters in the book/play?
- 6. What genre is the book?
- 7. Do you know any important guotes?
- 8. What is the structure of the book?
- 9. What are the book/plays themes?
- 10. Does the story interest you? Why?

