



Colaiste Muire

Study & Revision Booklet

Finola Howard

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Question to ask yourself.....

What do I want to get from these revision sessions?

Revision is an essential part of your academic journey and as you prepare for either your Leaving Certificate, you will have to consolidate your understanding and apply it to exam questions. This booklet has been put together as a supportive reference and to remind you that planning is key to all successful revision but also to highlight some different revision strategies that you can use as you revise. Practice makes perfect and to help you get there, do communicate with your family and friends, letting them know the time frame of your revision so as not to be disturbed. Get into a 'revision pattern'; a routine for your mind which will enable your brain to be receptive to the topics. Do not feel that you need to revise everything or the whole topic in one sitting. Going back later to finish revising will renew your knowledge and enable you to retain the information in your long-term memory.

Balance is key – so have a restorative and fun break while finding key times for active revision.

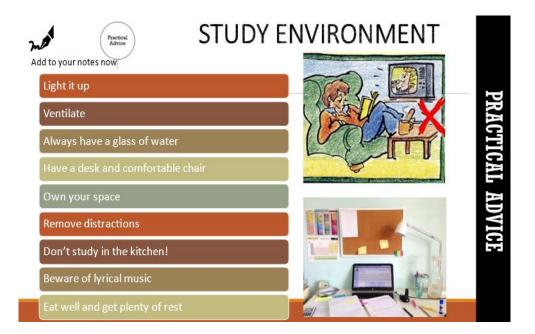
Best of luck
Finola Howard



PLANNING YOUR REVISION

Revision Skills...

- Planning revision
- Revision strategies
- Memorising
- Drafting model answers
- Behaviour/lifestyle
- Preparing for and being in an exam



Making a plan

As always, planning is the key. Here are some tips:

Create a revision timetable

You should start revising weeks ahead of your exams. Do be realistic about the goals you set in the time you have available and remember you need to allow breaks now and then.

Task: find out what you are doing in the Christmas holidays and add dates to your revision planner.

See next page for planner samples

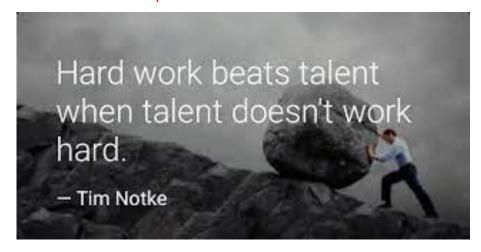
Know when your exams are & what subjects are on each day

Task: add the mock exam times to your revision planner now.

Identify key topics

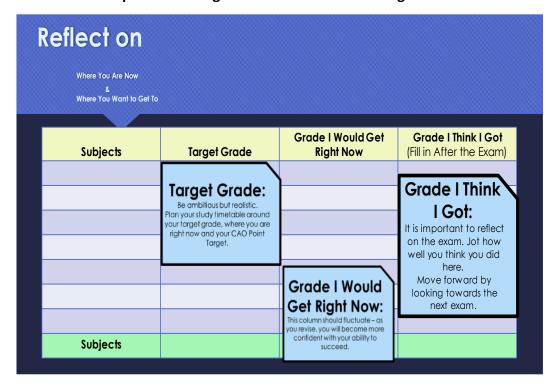
For each subject, identify the topics you need to revise.

Task: Create a file for your revision notes.



Goal Setting is important as you plan

Here is a sample table and guide to follow to establish goals:





An important goal is to create a study plan, a good starting point is to reflect on how your time is spent and prioritise what is important. Study time needs to fit into your schedule. But you should aim to study when you are well rested and mentally alert.

Being realistic about what you can accomplish is also important. For example, allocating very large chunks of time to online study might end up having a demoralising effect.

How to create my study planner

Just as an architect wouldn't begin a project without a blueprint, you can't just open a book randomly one day, begin reading and build a strong basis for your exams.

Follow these key steps

- 1. Find a quiet space to set yourself up.
- 2. Create a list of tasks under each subject e.g., English Shakespeare learn quotes, Maths quadratic equations. Make sure your tasks are specific. Breaking each subject into more manageable tasks is key.
- 3. You could even colour code the topics that you find easy versus the challenging. Perhaps some disappointing Christmas results have flagged areas you need to pay attention to. Make sure you prioritise these on your timetable.
- 4. Mark in the fun things first, your night out or time with friends/ family & extracurricular.
- 5. Break your study into 45-minute slots per topic, then switch topics.
- 6. Begin with a topic you enjoy then move to the more difficult topics.
- 7. Have a system set up use flash cards/ one-page notes/ past papers etc. Don't reread chapters. You should be condensing teachers notes or text book. Your notes are the best notes.
- 8. Have a varied approach, as certain study methods will suit some subjects better than others. This might depend on how intense the material is, how it will be assessed or simply how you best retain everything. Flash cards for History, jingles or rhymes for phrases you have to speak in French or pictures/ diagrams in Biology.
- 9. Put away your phone to avoid distractions.

Remember, your timetable is not set in stone. It's important to review and reflect on it each day or even weekly. If there is something that is not working for you or you think there is something you could add in that would work better, don't be afraid to change it. The more you are able to reflect and adapt your timetable to suit your needs the more efficient it will be for your study.

It's okay if not every day goes exactly to plan, this does not mean you have failed. Don't let it put you off from sticking with your timetable. You can start again tomorrow.

'Fail to plan, plan to fail'

Plan your weekly study over the break

| Time | Monday | Tuesday | Wedne | esday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
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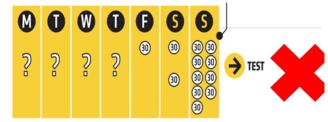
Weekly timetable

| | | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
|-----------|---------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Morning | 7-8 | SLEEP IN | SLEEP IN | SLEEP IN |
| | 8-9 | SLEEP IN | SLEEP IN | SLEEP IN |
| | 9 – 10 | Study includes 15 minutes break | Study includes 15 minutes break | FREETIME | PREE TIME | Study includes 15 minutes break | Study includes 15 minutes break | Study includes 15 minutes break |
| | 10 – 11 | Study includes 15 minutes break | Study includes 15 minutes break | PREEDIME | FREETIME | Study includes 15 minutes break | Study includes 15 minutes break | Study includes 15 minutes break |
| | 11 – 12 | Study includes 15 minutes break | Exercise | THEE TIME | Study includes 15 minutes break | Study includes 15 minutes break | Study includes 15 minutes break | PREPARE FOR NEXT WEEK |
| Afternoon | 12-1 | LUNCH | LUNCH | LUNCH | LUNCH | LUNCH | LUNCH | LUNCH |
| | 1-2 | Study includes 15 minutes break | Study includes 15 minutes break | Study includes 15 minutes break | Study includes 15 minutes break | FREE TIME | FREETIME | FREE TIME |
| | 2-3 | Study includes 15 minutes break | | Study includes 15 minutes break | Study includes 15 minutes break | FREE TIME | Study includes 15 minutes break | FREE TIME |
| | 3 – 4 | FREE TIME | Study includes 15 minutes break | Study includes 15 minutes break | Study includes 15 minutes break | FREETIME | Study includes 15 minutes break | FREE TIME |
| | 4 – 5 | FREE TIME | Study includes 15 minutes break | Study includes 15 minutes break | Study includes 15 minutes break | Exercise | Exercise | FREETIME |
| | 5-6 | DINNER | DINNER | DINNER | DINNER | DINNER | DINNER | DINNER |
| Evening | 6-7 | DINNER | DINNER | DINNER | DINNER | DINNER | DINNER | DINNER |
| | 7-8 | TRAINING | FREE TIME | TRAINING | FREE TIME | PREE TIME | FREE TIME | FREE DIME |
| | 8-9 | TRAINING | FREE TIME | TRAINING | FREE TIME | FREE TIME | FREE TIME | FREE TIME |
| | 9 – 10 | EREE TIME | FREETIME | FREETIME | FREE TIME | PREETIME | FREE TIME | TREE TIME |
| | 10 - 11 | TREE TIME | TREETIME | FREETIME | FREE TIME | FREE TIME | FREE TIME | FREE TIME |

INSTEAD OF CRAMMING FOR AN EXAM-SPACE STUDY OUT

Let's say you have a test one week & you have 5 hours to prepare for it broken down into 30-minute chunks. Very often the process looks like image 1.

Image 1



Less effective – it may get you through the exam but most of the material is quickly forgotten. This also tends to make people stressed.

Image 2



Spacing revision out like this is highly productive. You will consolidate what you have learned & retain the material much more effectively.

Arrange your revision material

You will have class notes, past paper questions with your teacher's feedback, handouts and other photocopies and references. You will also need textbooks, past exam papers etc. Arrange to have everything you need well in advance.

Balance your subjects

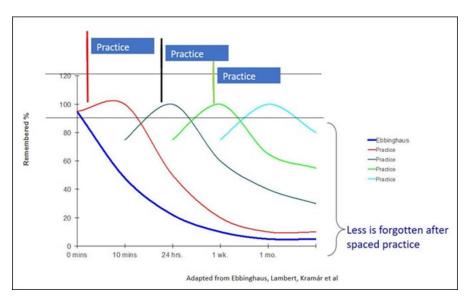
Allocate topics to days, and make sure you have enough time for everything you want to revise. Balance the time you have available between your various subjects. Do not neglect courses you find particularly easy or difficult.

On the revision planner

Identify revision time. How long should sessions be? How many hours per day?

The purpose of revision?

... Is to beat the forgetful curve



Note-taking/note-making: to understand the topic for which you are sitting an exam by organising material & making notes.

Memorising: to commit what you have learnt and understood to memory.

Draft model answers: to practice planning and writing answers to questions.

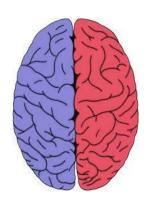


REVISION STRATEGIES

PRACTICE ...!

Treat your brain right

Did you know a good night's sleep can improve your results without you doing any extra work? And a wrongly timed chocolate bar can slow your thinking right down? Your brain's very sensitive and it constantly needs to repair itself and build new connections between the cells as you learn new things.



To do this, it needs top class nutrition, a steady supply of energy, a steady supply of oxygen, and time asleep to do all its updating.

So here's how to send your brain to the spa:

Diet

Tip 1: For general brain health, you need to eat a balanced diet, containing plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables. Every other part of your body will benefit from this too.

Tip 2: Your brain needs a steady supply of energy, but it can only get this from a type of sugar called glucose. This glucose comes from the carbohydrates you eat, but only certain kinds of carbs will do. These include wholemeal bread, pasta, porridge and pulses, which take time for your body to break down, so release their glucose slowly and steadily. Chocolate, biscuits and other sugary snacks are sadly not good for your brain. They release their sugar so quickly that your brain will peak...but then quickly crash afterwards leaving you feeling less energised than before. Not recommended for any brainy work.

Tip 3: Your brain needs to be primed with oxygen. It gets this from exercise (Tip 6 below), but you also need to have a good supply of iron in your bloodstream. This iron comes from foods such as red meat, green leafy vegetables like spinach, dried fruit, fortified cereals, and pulses, including baked beans.

Tip 4: Don't skip breakfast (or lunch) – especially before an exam. Your brain will perform less well if you haven't eaten for hours. Brain scientists have shown that a student's test results are lower when they haven't eaten. But you need to eat the right thing. Again, junk food won't work. The brain needs those slow-releasing carbohydrates. Beans on toast for example has been shown to be particularly beneficial.

Water

Tip 5: Don't go thirsty. Dehydration will affect your brain's performance. Don't go mad though – especially if you're about to sit an exam. Trips to the toilet will be a distraction.

Exercise -

Exercise

Tip 6: Your brain needs the rest of you to get moving and pump the oxygen rich blood it needs through every capillary. Studies show that exercise improves your memory capacity – and lack of it will make your brain age prematurely. So go for that walk! Your brain will thank you, and it helps you also to do Tip 7.

Sleep

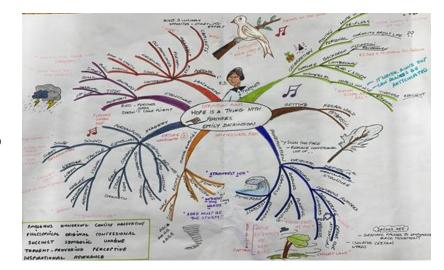
Tip 7: Possibly the quickest and easiest treat for your brain – a great night's sleep. You get to rest, and your brain gets to repair itself and consolidate all the day's new learning. Even an hour less sleep can affect your test scores the next day. And experts say if you want to maximise your revision, you should get some sleep as quickly as possible after you've done it. Catnap, anyone?

Note-taking/note-making

YOUR NOTES ARE THE BEST NOTES

Throughout the academic year you will have been taking lots of notes. Now that it's revision time, the main objective is to work on your notes in various ways to make them more memorable:

- Physically organise your notes so that they are clear, logically ordered and easy to find your way around.
- Then read them, underline key words, highlight different themes.
- Devise your own colour coding system using different colours for different topics or themes will help you to memorise and divide them up in your mind.
- Write-out more and more concise versions aim to reduce each topic to an flash cards. At this stage, your notes are an aide memoire, not a full summary of facts and arguments.
- You may find Diagram-based notes, such as Spider diagrams, Mind maps and Concept maps/flow charts helpful ways of summarising a lot of information onto a single page. Flash cards can be useful too.



Mind map

Emily Dickinson

Flash cards — mind map convert to cards

Side A



Side B



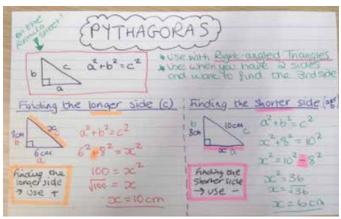
Rules for Flashcards

- 1. Write a word, definition or keyword on one side of the flashcard
- 2. Write the meaning on the other side
- 3. Use colors, drawings and make it fun for yourself
- 4. Distinguish the important stuff from the unimportant stuff.
- 5. One topic or answer per card
- 6. Say the answer out loud repetition is key
- 7. Use visuals or drawings silly pictures or diagrams
- 8. Use colour highlighters or different colour pens
- 9. Mix them up different sets in different order/ or begin with the answer
- 10. Use often when you know it drop it

But how do I revise Maths?!

- **Get a list of topics** work out which ones you can do and which ones you can't.
- Make revision cards for each topic write down the important formulae and facts you need to know, as well as a example of a perfectly answered question
- **Posters** make posters with the topics and facts you need to memorise (e.g. circle theorems) and stick them up at home/study Ask others friends, teachers, You Tube tutorials.
- Past papers complete using your notes and revision cards to help, but also your try on your own in exam conditions.
- **Don't avoid the harder topics** just because they seem hard doesn't mean you won't be able to do them.
- **Repetition** stuck on a particular topic? Use your textbook/ notes to practice lots of the same questions back to back until you feel more confident

And most importantly...



• **Practice, practice, practice!!!!!** The more Maths you do, the better you will become...it really is that simple!

Memorising

There is no way around this task – to do well in exams, you have to remember your material. Ultimately, you have to work out the way of doing this that works best for you. Some of these approaches may help:

Look at our notes for a topic on three or four occasions. This will fix them in your mind better than a once and for all approach.

Predict a page of notes in your mind before you look at it. What you have forgotten will bring itself to your attention as you read.

Other Methods to memorise

Recording Yourself

This method of studying might not be for everyone. A lot of people don't like hearing the sound of their own voice, but it can be really effective for the auditory learners amongst you.

Try using the voice recorder on your phone to record yourself reading some of your notes aloud. You can then listen back to these audio notes instead of reading over them again and again. For some people this works amazingly, because their brain intakes knowledge much better through hearing the information.

Teaching/Explaining to someone else

A really good way of checking if you've retained information is to try and teach or explain the concept to someone else. If you find that you can convey the correct meaning of what you're explaining to the other person, and they also feel that they now understand, then you'll know that you've correctly studied and repeating it to someone else is a brilliant way to revise and confirm that you got this.

You may also use a white board / A3 sheet to self-test your knowledge. Speaking the content aloud will reinforce learning.

Mnemonics

Use the letters of a word, or the initial letters of a phrase, to trigger associations.

For example, the key elements in the topic 'Hitler's Rise to Power' could be remembered by the word 'VIEW', which stands for:

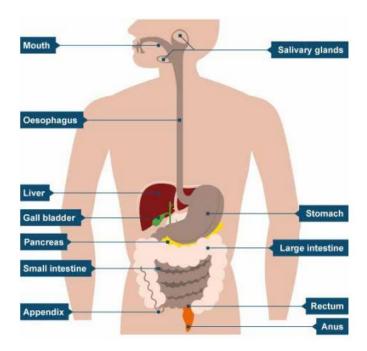
V = Versailles (the treaty signed at the end of World War I)

I = Individual personality of Hitler

E = Economic collapse

W = Weimar

Task: Create a digestive system mnemonic



Remembering lists

The idea

Memorising is very very hard to do if you're just trying to drill random items or facts into your head. What the Linking System does is remove the randomness between items, forming connections between them, and reacting action sequences that make Hollywood blockbusters look tame. It's all up to you and the power of your imagination.

Here's how to do it:

Step One

Get someone to write you a list of words or objects to remember. Say there's a banana, a ball, a paintpot, a hammer, a teapot...

Step Two

Choose your first object, and use your imagination to create a memorable image for this in your mind. A boring old banana, for example, is no good. Imagine it huge, or gyrating, or blue. Or all three.

Step Three

Now link this first item to the next. In this case it's the ball. So perhaps your huge gyrating banana could sprout a hand and start bouncing the ball on the ground.

Step Four

Now link the ball... to item 3, the paintpot. And make it memorable. So the ball could fly into the open paintpot with a giant splash which causes paint to fly everywhere... See the paint, hear the splash.

Step Five

Continue linking each item to the next in a story. Just make sure that each link is really visual, unusual and memorable. Go wild – make it funny, surreal, even rude (ssh). Whatever works for you.

Step Six

Rehearse the whole story in your mind a couple of times.

Step Seven

And off you go – you should be able to remember the whole list effortlessly. And even backwards... give it a try.

Picture it

Think of a picture of the topic.

To remember coastal retreat in geography, you might picture:

- Waves crashing against the cliff (think: 4 processes)
- Wave cut notch
- Collapsing cliff
- Wave cut platform

It can work for non-visual concepts too: a mental picture of one of Hitler's rallies might suggest Crowds, Regimentation, Technology, Scapegoats, etc...



PREPARING FOR AND BEING IN AN EXAM

In the run up to the exams..

What are good study habits? What are bad study habits? Watch the video here:



TASK: Divide your paper into two halves. On one half write down your good study habits, on the other half write down your bad study habits. Ask yourself, "what would make my study habits better?"

Memorising numbers

Here are some techniques for number recall:



And more tips on how to learn smart:



Revision's biggest enemies...

Boredom



Procrastination



Low self-confidence



The three psychological hungers

Humans have an innate need for...

Stimulus

- Structure
- Recognition

Revising alone for long periods of time in the same way does not satisfy these hungers, which is why...

- A lack of stimulus leads to boredom.
- A lack of structure leads to procrastination.
- A lack of recognition leads to low self-confidence.

How to feed those hungers

Stimulus - Mix things up – give all your senses a chance to work. When you feel the boredom kicking in do something different.

Structure - Making a revision timetable and sticking to it will feed your structure hunger – lack of organised time leads to procrastination.

When revising it is easy to end up spending all our time in withdrawal.

When you start to procrastinate it probably means you need to be putting your energies into a different time structure.

Recognition

Don't just focus on the negatives

When you start to have low self-confidence remind yourself what you can do, or find someone else who will recognise your efforts and praise you for it.

Keeping motivated is key!

There is no denying it... revision is boring, time consuming and not really that fun, so staying motivated can be tricky.

Drafting model answers

The most important thing to do when you first open your exam booklet is to read all the questions. This should give you an idea of where you will need to spend the most time.

Analyse the question

Using past exam papers, think about the wording of questions. What are the problem or key words? What approach is being asked for? You could practice rephrasing the question in your own words to highlight the exact meaning.

Plan your answer

Work out how many separate points you need to include (check the number of marks available). For longer answers make a rough plan, so that you can remind yourself of all your revised information before you start to write.

Write your answer

When you know what you are going to answer, start writing. Remember to include an introduction with definitions if you need to.

Check it!

Go over your answers by rereading and looking for errors and ways to improve your points.

Write under exam conditions

Practice writing at speed under exam conditions when revising. Make sure you know the overall time limit and then you can work out how many minutes you have per mark. It will help you to plan your time in the exam.

Make sure you know this before you go into the exam – don't waste valuable exam time calculating!

Discounting

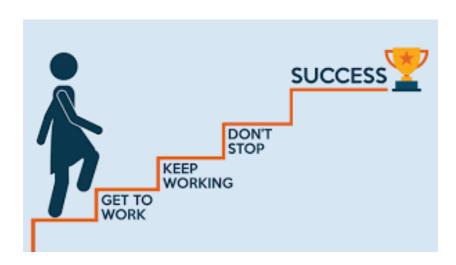
- Ignoring, 'playing down' or exaggerating an aspect of yourself, others or a situation.
- Discounting results in unresolved problems.
- Discounting can happen at different levels.
- By being aware of where discounting takes place you can start accounting instead and work towards solving the problem!

Steps to Success

Discounting creates a 'blind spot' and leaves you stuck on a step. Accounting helps you move up!

When you think of your mock – which step are you discounting at?

Remember, change to accounting and you can move towards success!



Preparing for the big event

Things to do the night before...

- Eat a well-balanced meal.
- Get your stuff ready for the morning.
- Review topics with someone.
- Visualize a positive outcome.
- Make a morning plan.
- Have time to relax, watch TV, have a laugh.
- Set your alarm.
- Gentle exercise before going to bed.
- Get a good night's sleep



What causes exam anxiety?

- Past exam experience.
- Fear of failure.
- The pressure you put on yourself.
- Low self-esteem.
- Pressure from your parents.
- Easily distracted.
- Feeling stupid.
- Lack of revision.
- Tiredness.
- Being late for the exam.
- Poor memory.
- Pressure to be perfect.
- Not having enough time.
- Negative 'I can't do it' attitude.
- Comparing yourself to others.



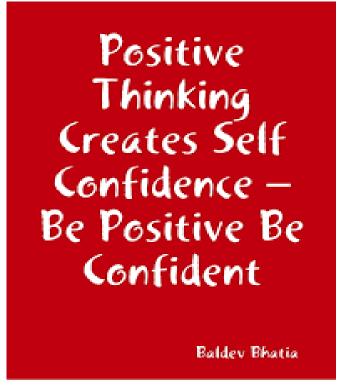
Reduce exam stress

- Believe in yourself.
- Don't try to be perfect.
- Take steps to overcome problems.
- Don't be an ostrich. Start now.
- Keep things in perspective.

Useful revision planning & templates – see back page for an example week by week timetable you can complete.

Useful Website & tips

- 1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p60rN9JEapg
 The 9 BEST Scientific Study Tips
- 2. Xmind mindmapping software (can be downloaded as an app).
- 3. https://www.naturalreaders.com/-
 Allows you to turn your notes and essays into MP3 if you type them in a word document.
- 4. If you have a google account Google Docs Voice typing facility allows you to type and edit by talking to a device and then writes your dialogue.
- 5. Record feature on your phone.



| Subject: | Level of difficulty | Notes created | Review it | ; | | Exam Questions |
|----------|---------------------|------------------|-----------|---|---|-------------------|
| Topics | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | |
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| 17. | | | | | | |

Weekly timetable

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| | 7 – 8 | | | | | | | |
| B | 8 – 9 | | | | | | | |
| Morning | 9 – 10 | | | | | | | |
| ž | 10 - 11 | | | | | | | |
| | 11 - 12 | | | | | | | |
| | 12 - 1 | | | | | | | |
| _ | 1 – 2 | | | | | | | |
| Afternoon | 2 – 3 | | | | | | | |
| \fter | 3 – 4 | | | | | | | |
| • | 4 – 5 | | | | | | | |
| | 5 – 6 | | | | | | | |
| | 6 – 7 | | | | | | | |
| <u></u> | 7 – 8 | | | | | | | |
| Evening | 8 – 9 | | | | | | | |
| Ш | 9 – 10 | | | | | | | |
| | 10 – 11 | | | | | | | |

NOTES:

WEEKLY STUDY PLANNER

Week of:

| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
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