Study Skills

A Guide for Form 1 Students

St Mary's College, Arklow

Introduction

Being organised and having good study habits can make all the difference in your time at secondary school. Study skills are simple tricks and tools that help you plan your time, take better notes, stay on top of homework, and feel less stressed when exams come around.

Using planners and organisers means you always know what's coming up no more last-minute panic. Good study skills help you work smarter, not longer, so you can enjoy your free time too.

This guide will show you easy ways to get organised, remember what you learn, and feel more confident in class and at home.

KWL

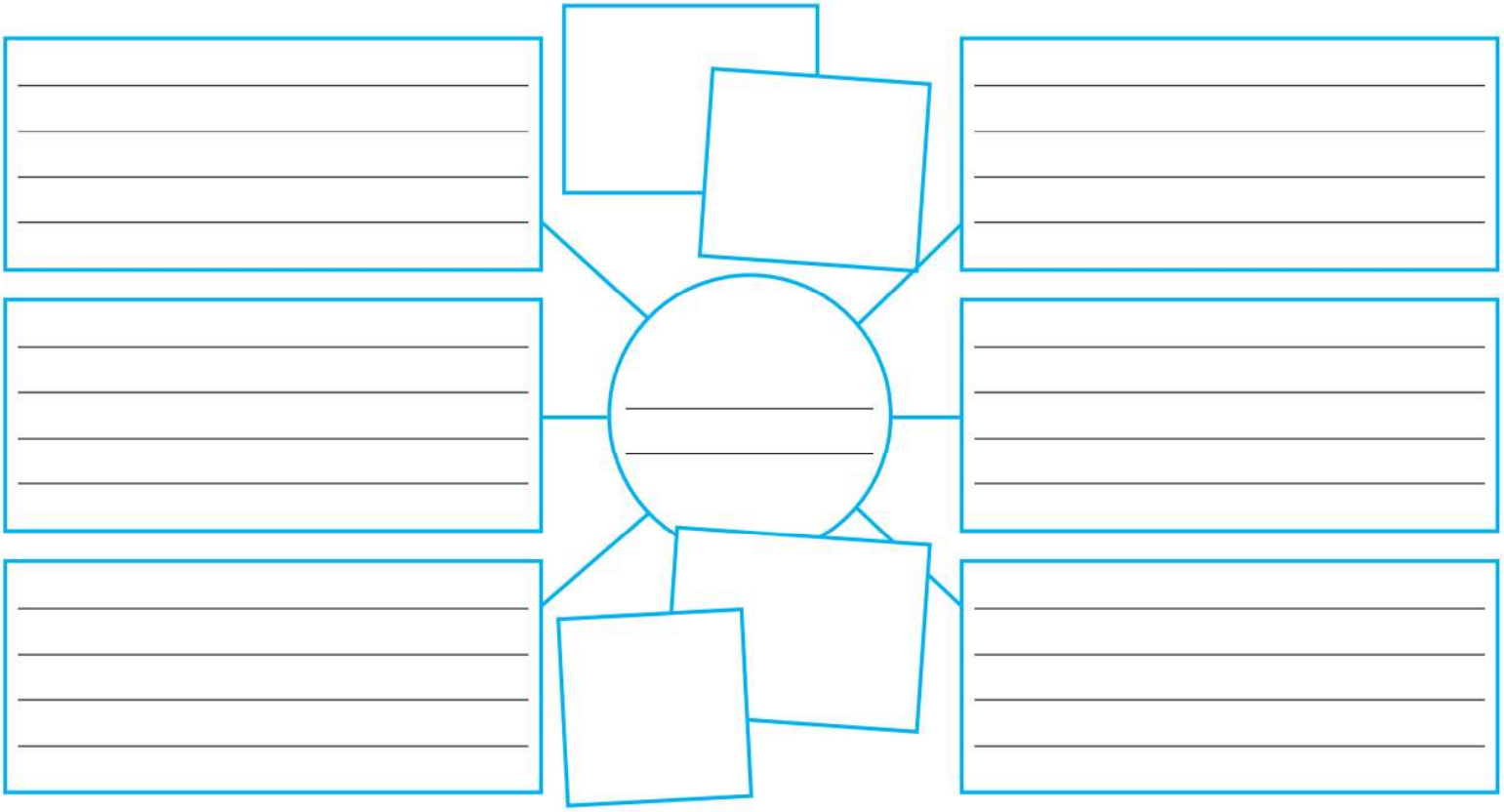
Topic:_____

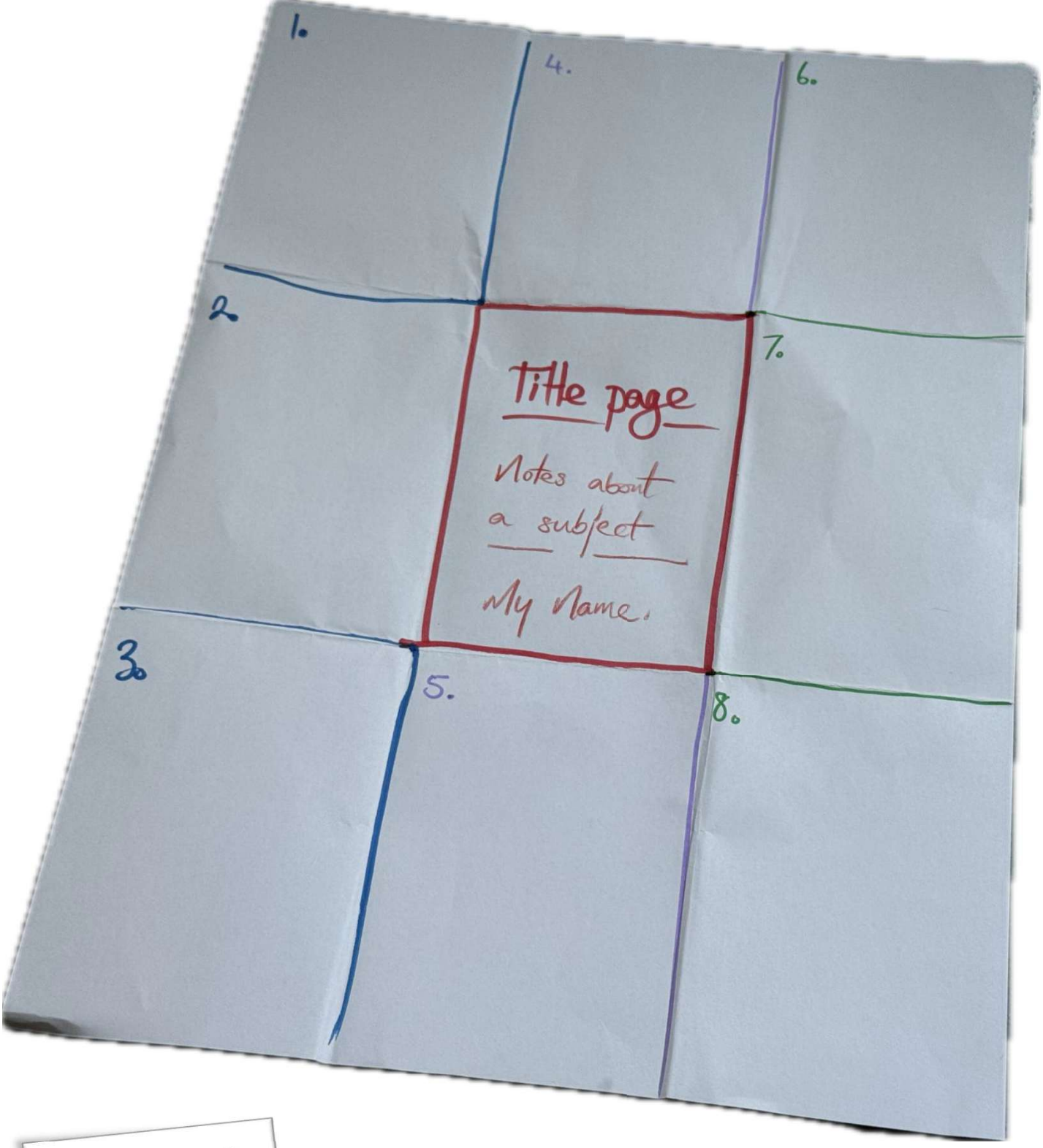
What I Know

What I Want to know

What I Learned

Mind Map







← Watch here

For breaking down a topic into smaller bite sized sections. A folded piece of paper that can be used in landscape or portrait like a small book, like flash cards.

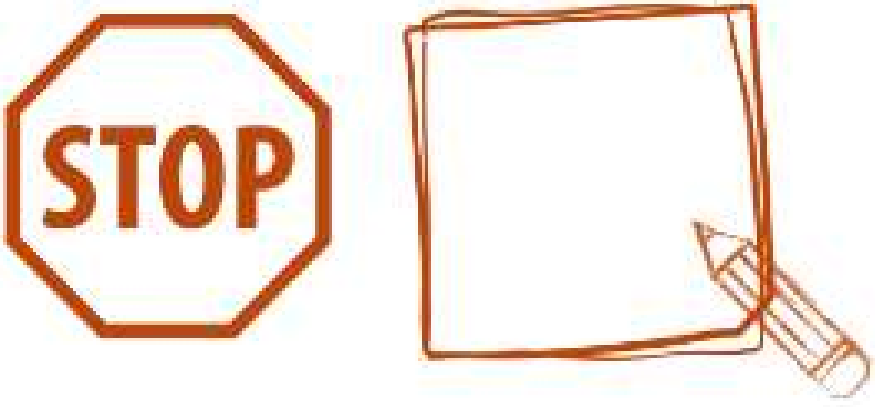
Stop and Jot



Stop and Paraphrase



Stop and Sketch



New Word Detective



Use the word in a sentence.

Where did you find it?

Where else could you find the word?



Illustrate the meaning.

Write three other words you think of when you hear your word.

1.

2.

3.

Parts of Speech

Is it a verb, noun or adjective?

Write the dictionary meaning.

Write the meaning in your own words.

Cornell Notes

Topic :	Date :
Essential info. to know :	
Questions :	Notes :
Summary :	



← Watch here

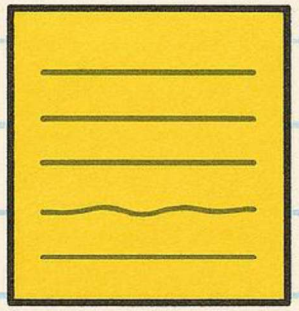
This is the Cornell Notes grid.

You split your page into three parts (I) a large section for main notes (ii) a narrow side column for keywords or questions, and (iii) a space at the bottom to write a quick summary.

When you use the grid, you can find key ideas quickly, test yourself with the questions on the side, and refresh your memory with the summary, all on one page.

USING COLOUR TO HELP MEMORY

1. Colour makes information stand out.



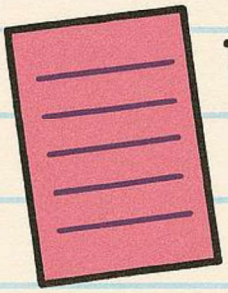
2. Different colours help separate ideas.

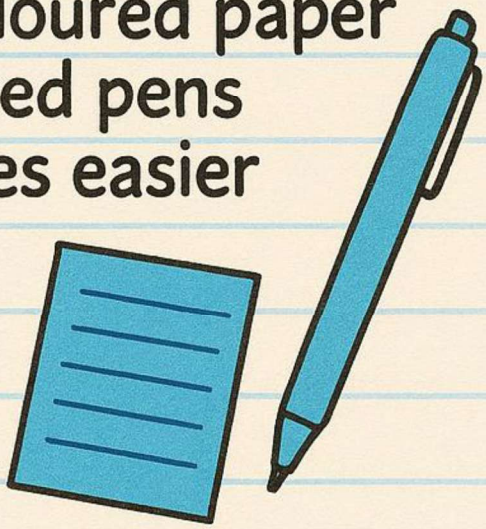


3. Bright colours (like highlighters) guide your eye to key points.



4. Writing on coloured paper or with coloured pens can make notes easier to remember.





HOW TO DEVELOP LONG QUESTION ANSWERS



WHAT is the answer?



WHY is that happening?



EXAMPLE - can you give one?

Question: Explain 2 factors that have influenced the created a high population density in an area you have studied.

What: I have studied Dublin city. 2 factors that create a high population density here are in-migration and employment opportunities.

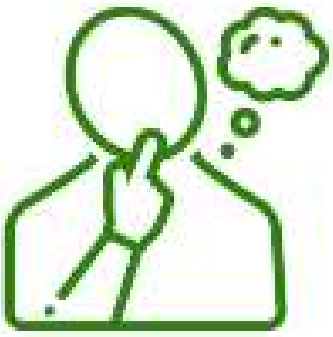
In-migration:
Why: Dublin's population is growing because of the expansion of the EU in 2004. In 2004, many Eastern European countries joined the EU and their citizens could travel and work freely throughout the EU without needing to get working visas.

Example: Since 2004, many people moved from Poland to Dublin to work. Many have settled and stayed, boosting Dublin's population and increasing population density here.

Employment Opportunities:
Why: Dublin's population is growing because there are a lot of jobs in Dublin. People move to the city as they are nearly guaranteed employment. Businesses set up in Dublin because there are 4 universities located within the city and this gives businesses easy access to a young, educated wotkforce.

Example: Dublin's technology centre at Grand Canal Dock hires thousands of graduates in software engineering and computing. Companies like Meta and Tik Tok are located there.

Think Pair Share

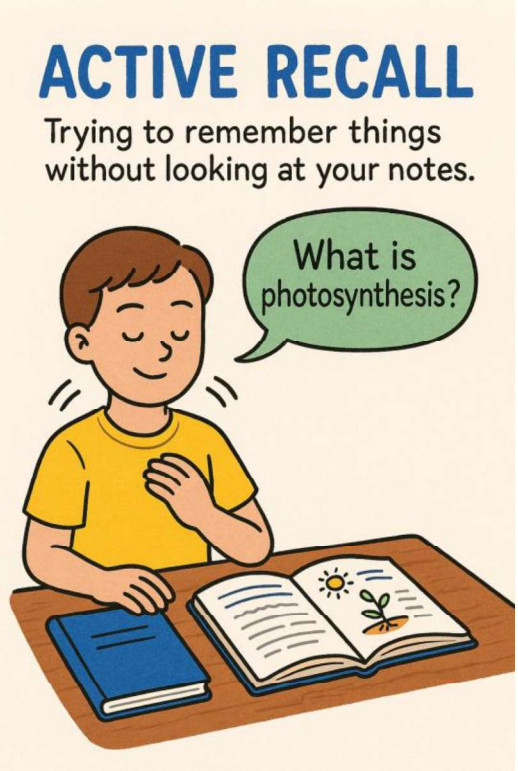






Active Recall

Active recall means trying to remember things without looking at your notes.



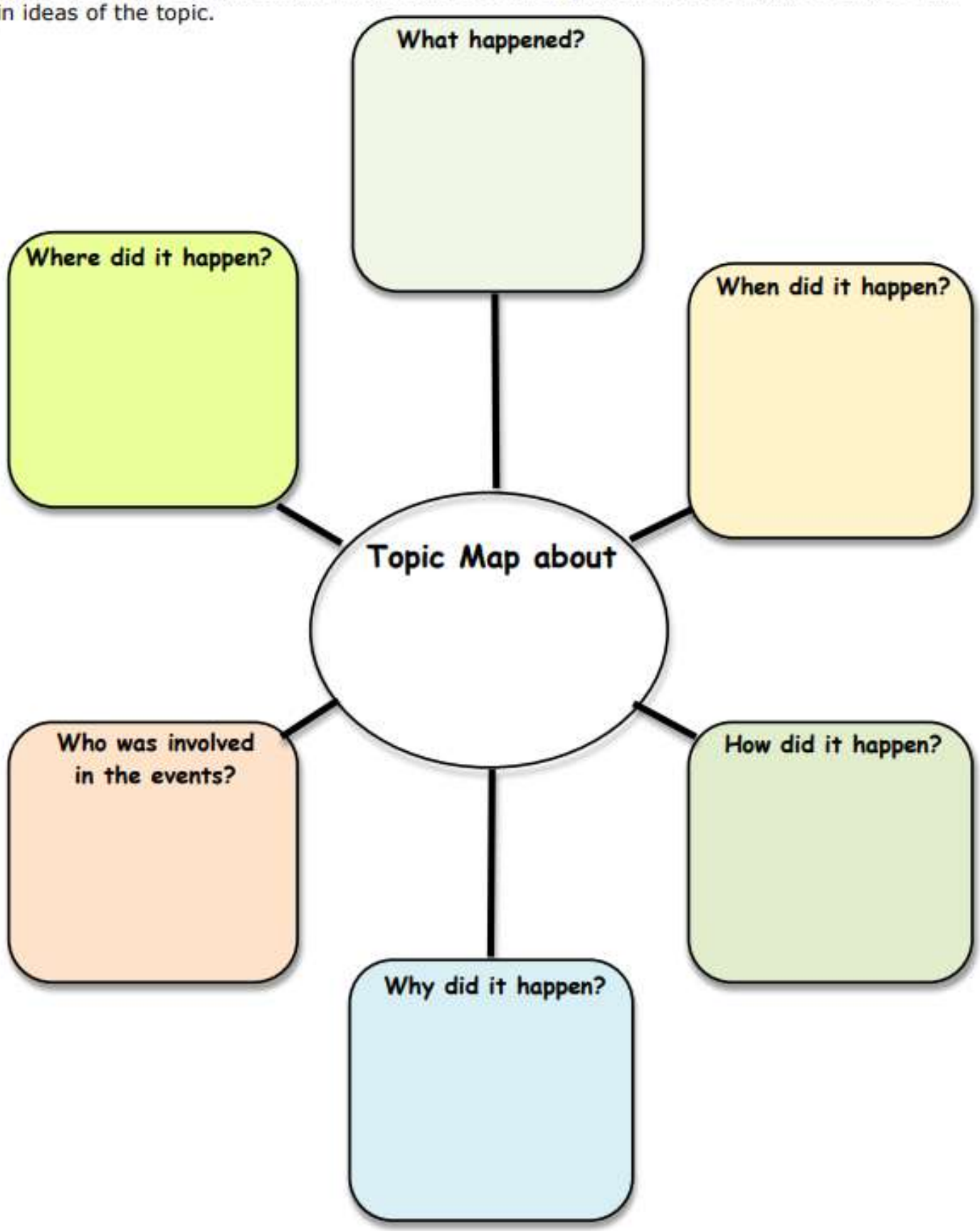
For example:

1. **Read** your notes once.
2. **Close** them.
3. Ask yourself a **question**, like "What is photosynthesis?"
4. **Say** the answer from memory.
5. **Check** your notes to see if you were right.

It's like quizzing yourself, that's all.

5Ws + 1H

What did you learn today? Complete the 5Ws and 1H organiser and see can you pick out the main ideas of the topic.



What's the Big Idea?

Key Topic

is about...

Main Ideas:

Essential Details

Big Idea Summary Sentence/s

1. Skim through the chapter and write down key words and phrases (Hint: some of these words might be highlighted, bolded, italicized)	2. As you read each paragraph or section write a definition of the key word or phrase.

Did you know ...?

Interest sparks ideas:
When you're curious about a topic, your brain naturally wants to find out more, and learning feels easier.



A quick "work burst" works wonders:
Focusing hard for even ten or fifteen minutes on something you enjoy can get you started and often leads to getting more done than you expected.

Momentum keeps you going:
Once you're in the flow, your brain stays switched on, so finishing one small task often makes the next one feel quicker and easier.

What I've learned from A to Z

A _____

B _____

C _____

D _____

E _____

F _____

G _____

H _____

I _____

J _____

K _____

L _____

M _____

N _____

O _____

P _____

Q _____

R _____

S _____

T _____

U _____

V _____

W _____

X _____

Y _____

Z _____

66 Word Summary

Read the entire selection (section/page.). Then reread and highlight main ideas, keywords or phrases. Then write a summary in 66 words. Use one word in each square. You must use complete sentences.

Summary Frames

Although I already knew that _____ I learned some new information about _____.

I learned that _____.

I also discovered that _____.

Another fact I learned _____.

However, the most important thing I learned was _____

_____.

I found _____ interesting for several reasons.

I discovered that _____.

I also learned that _____ and that _____.

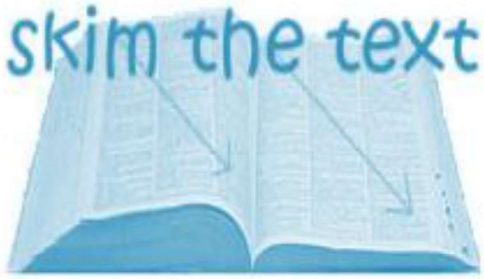
Finally, I _____.

As you can see _____

_____.

Sum It Up

1. Preview the text by looking at headings, sub heading, pictures, diagrams, etc. Then read the text carefully.



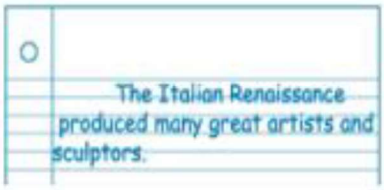




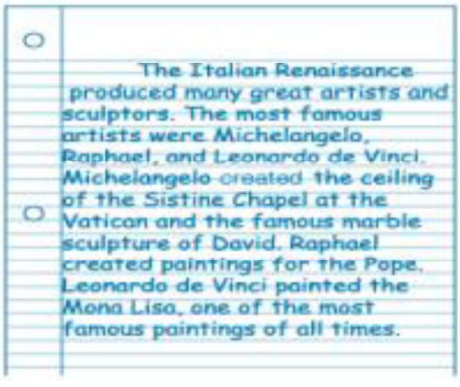
2. Highlight VIPs (**v**ery **i**mportant **p**oints).

3. Create an A+ B + C topic sentence.

A=Identify the title or main heading
B=Select a strong verb (don't use *is* or *was*)
C=Finish your thought with the big idea.

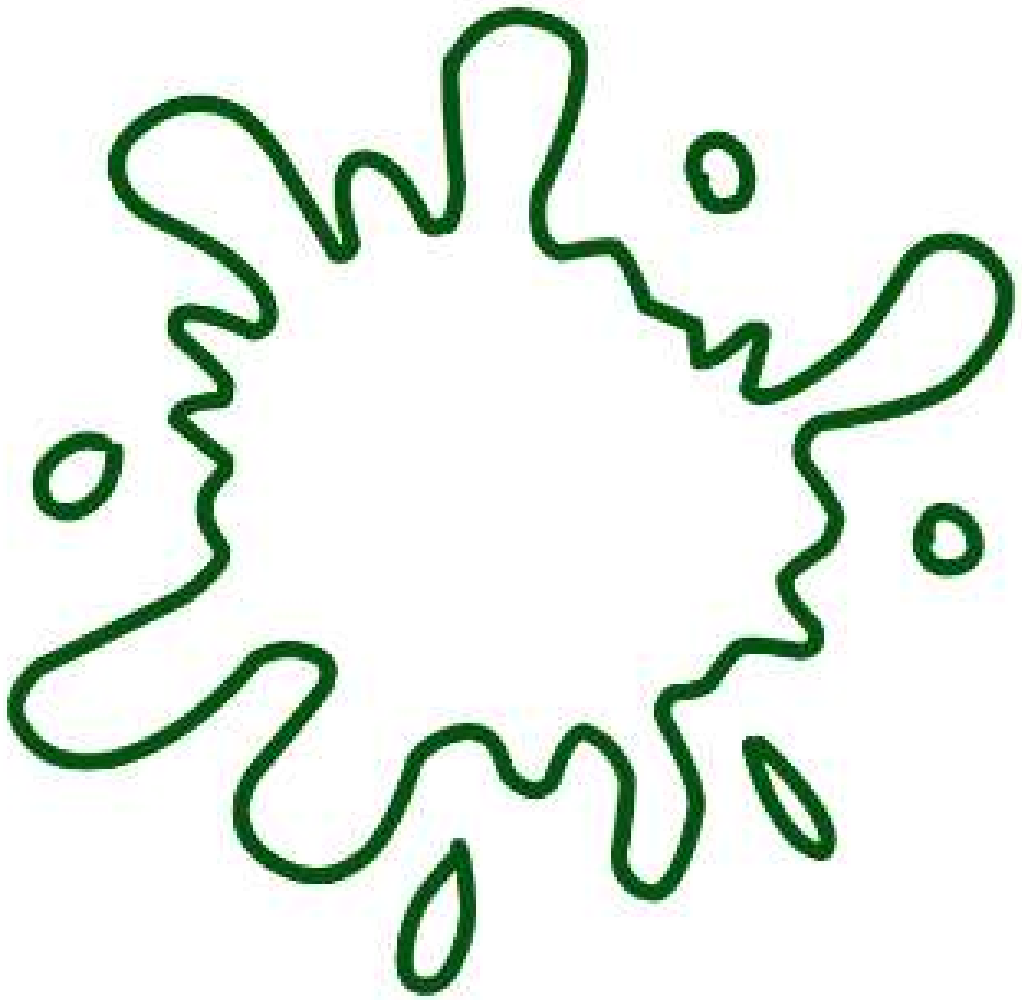


4. Now add on your VIPs. Be sure to write them as complete sentences.



The Muddiest Point

What was the muddiest point or hardest thing for you today?



3-2-1 Notes

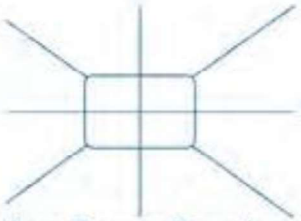
03 Things I learned

02 Questions I have

01 Interesting fact

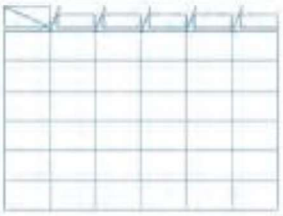
Other Useful Graphic Organisers


Ranking Ladder

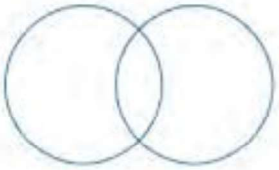

Four Corner Organiser

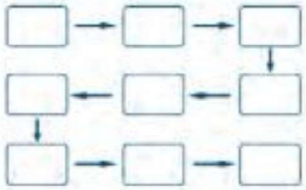

Tri Pie

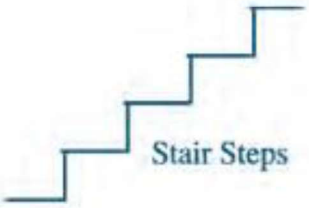

Brain Droplets

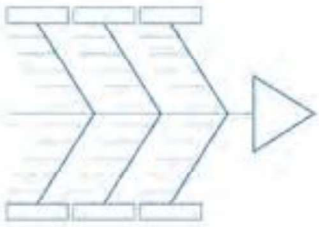

Cross Classification Chart


Funnel

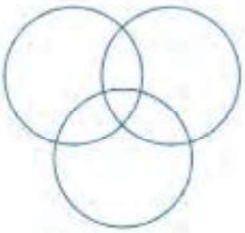

Double Venn

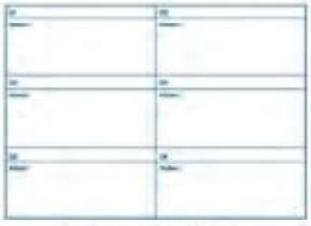

Sequence Chart


Stair Steps


Fish Bone


Chain of linked events


Triple Venn

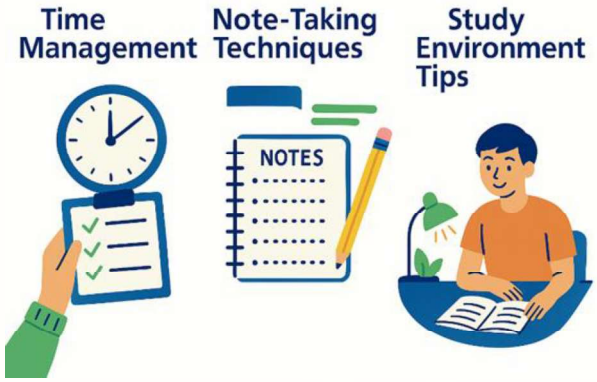

Research Grid


Star Burst

Some Advice

Time Management

Plan your day with a to-do list so you know exactly what needs to be done and when to take breaks.



Note-Taking Techniques

Keep your notes neat and short: use bullet points, keywords, and headings to make them easy to read later.

Study Environment Tips

Choose a quiet, tidy spot with good lighting and no distractions so you can focus better.

Memory and Revision Strategies

Review your notes regularly, test yourself out loud, and use flashcards or mind maps to help ideas stick.

Try these useful tools which are free →