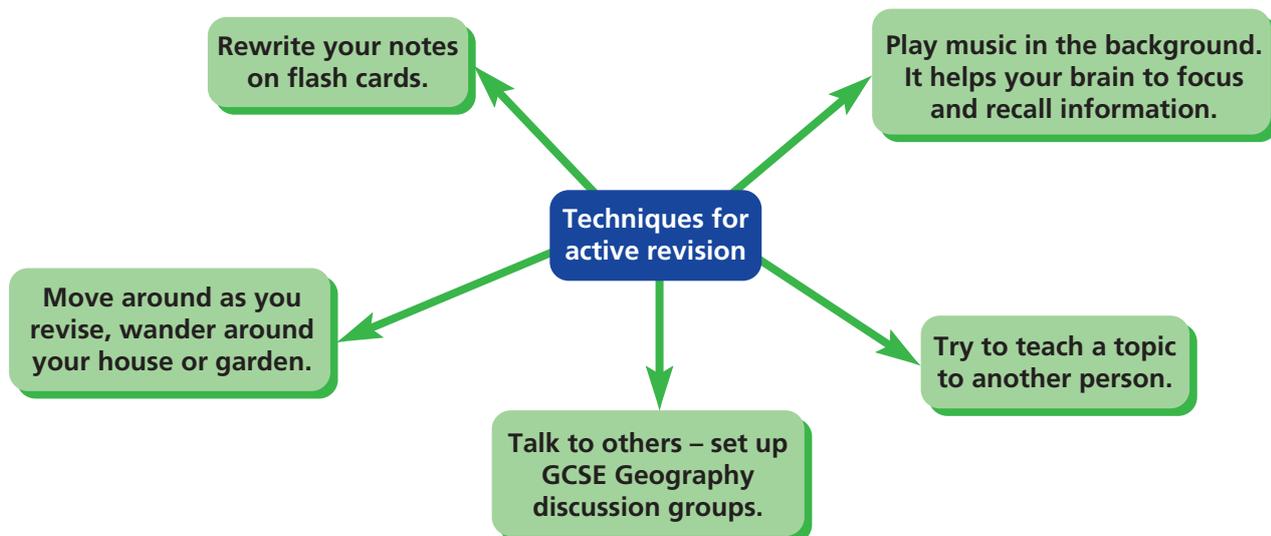# Introduction

Revision technique

Revise actively

There is a large amount of factual detail that you have to remember for your Geography exam, and if you only sit and read through your work, you may not be able to remember it. **Be active!** Here are some activities that might help your memory:

Rewrite your notes on flash cards.

Play music in the background. It helps your brain to focus and recall information.

Techniques for active revision

Move around as you revise, wander around your house or garden.

Try to teach a topic to another person.

Talk to others – set up GCSE Geography discussion groups.

Revision tips

- **Switch off the internet.** This stops you being distracted by social media sites and other websites.
- **Find your special place.** Allocate a room in your house as a working space. Your bedroom is probably not the best place!
- **Do short bursts of revision and reward yourself.** For example, do 20 minutes of revision for a reward of 10 minutes on your favourite social media sites.
- Relate work to an **anagram** or draw a diagram to help you remember.
- Don't forget to **eat** plenty of fruit and **drink** plenty of water.
- Put information on **sticky notes** around your mirror. You will read them subconsciously as you clean your teeth.
- **Practice papers and mark schemes.** Use these for revision, in order to become familiar with the wording of questions and how you answered or should have answered them.
- Think about where your weaknesses are and concentrate on revising for these topics.

Exam technique

Exam technique is all about how you complete the exam once you are in the examination hall.

- You should always read the front of the paper. This can sometimes be done while you are waiting for the exam to start if the paper is facing upwards on your desk.
- When you are told to start the exam, do not waste time putting your name on the front. Instead, start immediately and then put your name on the paper at the end.
- Do not waste time looking around in the exam, keep yourself focused and concentrating at all times.

Unit 1 exam techniques

The paper has 54 marks and a time limit of 60 minutes. Therefore, you must try to keep to a mark a minute. There is no choice on the paper, all questions have to be answered.

Start with Section B. This is the knowledge part of the exam. It will help you to settle into the paper because you will be doing a lot of writing and recalling the information that you have learnt. This will allow you to complete the 13 mark question (9 Geography and 4 SPaG marks) towards the middle of your allowed time when you are still fresh rather than when you are rushing at the end.

Now turn back to the beginning of the paper and complete the skills questions. If you are having problems with a question, put a star in the margin and carry on to the next question. You must, of course, remember to go back and complete the starred questions at the end.

Always check the answers you have given for all questions.

Units 2 and 3 exam techniques

These papers have 69 marks and time limits of 75 minutes. Therefore, you must try to keep to a mark a minute.

Start with Section B as you will have learnt one of these questions. By doing this, you will complete the SPaG allocation question towards the start of the exam. You will also have completed the question with the most marks allocated to it.

Then turn back to Section A. You must answer all of the questions in this section. There are three topics for the questions in Section A. Each topic has 15 marks awarded to it and ends with a question worth 6 marks on the higher tier paper and 4 marks on the foundation tier paper. Some people prefer to do all of the 4 or 6 mark questions at the same time but it is probably more logical to work through each topic in turn.

Command words

Here is a list of common command words which may be used on the exam paper. It is a good idea to underline the command words and any other key words in the question.

Compare	Say in what way two or more things are alike, or different from each other.
Contrast	Say in what way two or more things are different from each other.
Define	You may be asked to define a term. The examiner will be expecting you to state the meaning of that term in a geographical framework.
Describe	This is a very common command word and requires you to give the main characteristics of something. Questions will often ask you to describe a photograph, a pattern on a graph or a map. You should write an accurate account of what you see.
Name, give, identify or state	These words require you to answer briefly and are usually only worth 1 mark. For example, 'give the grid reference for …' or 'name one type of sea defence'.
Use data in your answer	This is often used with the command word 'describe'. In this case you must use data (information) in your answer. For example, you could be asked to describe the population distribution on a map using data in your answer. You would use the figures provided on the map to make specific factual comments on each area.
Discuss	If you are asked to discuss something, you will be expected to bring forward the important points of the argument.
Estimate	In some cases you may be asked to estimate a distance which means you have to give an approximate value.
Explain	This is another very common command word. It is asking you to give reasons as to **why** something occurs.
Justify	You may be required to justify your answer to a previous question, possibly using a map or a photograph. In this instance you must state the case for your answer, in other words, you must give reasons for your answer.
Outline	If you are asked to 'outline' something, you will be expected to summarise its main points.
Suggest / give reasons for	This is similar to the command word 'explain' but sometimes there are varying reasons why something happens and there is not necessarily a right or wrong answer. The examiner will expect you to give more than one reason.
Annotate	This means give a descriptive comment and an explanation.
Label	This is a simple descriptive comment which identifies something.
Rank	This means to put the answers into the correct order; you may also be required to justify your order.