

TRINITY NEWS

Word On The Street | Every Two Weeks | From Communications

Practice Exams & Revision

Well, it seems like forever since Year 11 sat their practice exams, back in the last week before the Christmas holidays. And it still seems like ages since we got the results of those practice exams.

So firstly, well done for sitting your practice exams, Year 11, and I hope you did well in them. If you did, congratulations! Practice exams are made to be as realistic as possible and as close to the exams that we will sit in May as possible, so if you did well in these then you are well on your way to passing your GCSE's with flying colours!

If you didn't do so well, don't worry! There is plenty of time for you to improve, and most students will typically move up a grade from their practice exams to their real GCSE's anyway, purely because of those 16 weeks of extra lessons, revision time, and additional knowledge and exam technique that helps them really boost their grades. So if you didn't get the grades you were hoping for, don't be discouraged, and definitely don't give up!

But that's not an excuse to lay back and relax! Just because you did well, or you know that you'll improve naturally over time, doesn't mean that you can just chill out and laze around until May.

I'm not saying that you have to revise every day, or even all that intensively. That would be kind of pointless, actually - you HAVE got months until your exams, and if you revise too much, you'll just wind up forgetting things by the time your exams come around.

But you DO need to do something. Here's how.

How to revise for your GCSE's:

1. Create a revision timetable.

It may sound boring or nerdy, but this one is very important. It allows you to prioritise your subjects on how much revision you need for each of them, and it gets you into the habit of doing regular revision. Don't skip this step.

2. Practice makes perfect.

Practice, practice, practice! It may be tiresome, but it works. This doesn't mean writing the same thing over and over, however. It means repeating your revision and testing your technique with past papers, so you know how to answer properly.

3. Collaborate with classmates.

It might be awkward for you, but working with others can really improve your understanding of difficult concepts and helps you retain knowledge far better than just studying on your own. After all, two heads are better than one!

4. Take regular study breaks.

This one might seem strange, but studying too hard for long periods of time reduces your information retention - you forget more stuff. Have a break, have a KitKat, whatever.

5. Understand your learning style.

Not everyone learns the same way. If mindmaps make you cry, don't use them. If flashcards are dull to you, ignore them. Do what helps you.

Written by Joseph Luke

New Habit Initiative

You may have noticed that since the start of the new year teachers have begun to put more stress on the presentation of books and classwork in general. You may have noticed PROUD stickers being introduced; teachers repeating the importance of underlining the title, putting down the date and learning objective. Most of us don't usually take the time-out to think "why?". We moan and we ignore them (we've all done it!) and this is why a new program has been launched with the help of the wonderful Ms. Hartley, and now Pupil Voice have jumped on the bandwagon too.

In the past few weeks years 7-10 have been introduced to the initiative - "30 days to make a new habit stick". If you missed it, or are part of Year 11 and interested in the idea, here is a quick rundown:

"30 days to make a new habit stick" is about taking a month to make a habit out of making presentation a priority. Hopefully, it will become a future habit for years to come. Things that improve presentation can be as small as underlining a date and title - these things may seem unimportant now, but if we make our work look better now, it will start to reflect on our personalities and the first impressions we give people as individuals.

Why is presentation important in real life?

Presentation is someone's first impression of you. This is very important. Take this for example:

Two individuals attend a job interview with almost identical CV's, both highly qualified for the job and great candidates. The first person who goes into the board room has an immaculate suit on with neat, combed hair. The second individual who attends is in informal clothing, which is clearly inappropriate for the job, with disordered hair and questionable stains on their scuffed shoes. As awful as this may sound, does it really matter what is said in the interview? Once someone has seen you it only takes their subconscious 8 seconds to make a judgment about the person in front of them.



So in your opinion... Who gets the job?

We can apply the same rules in school to someone having to give a presentation in front of their co-workers. Their slides are completely jumbled, they use fonts inconsistently, forget to use capital letters and punctuation regularly. Do you think that's a distraction from the point of the presentation? Pupil Voice certainly thinks so.

Most of you obviously have a long time to wait before you reach the real world, so:

How can presentation be applied in school?

When meeting new friends, how you speak to them; how you treat people; how you hold yourself all create an impression of you. You may not think it matters what we look like and how we are perceived but that's not true. It is human nature to judge other people's behaviour and appearance, so if you start with something small like underlining titles you can make a huge difference to your life.

Think about your attitude towards your work. If after reading this you see your faults... change yourself. The time to shape and grow our futures to what we want them to be is right now. The time for change is now, so do it while you can.

Written by Niloufar Kaidan

Dear Voice

Dear Voice,

I have this girl in my class who's really nice and we get on really well - except, we would, if my friendship group would let us. They don't like her, and make me feel really bad about 'ditching' them to go and talk to her sometimes. Is it me, or is that a bit unfair?

Y8 Girl

Dear Y8 Girl,

The situation you're in is a pretty tricky one. I'll start by saying that I think you have an extremely good point. I don't know if it's just me, but when I hear the term 'friendship group', I think 'group of friends who can be a bit exclusive of other people' - which is normally not the case at all, but nevertheless, it's what pops into my head. As soon as we find our group of friends, we stay with them, and letting new people in can be a bit awkward and strange. Why, I don't exactly know, but in my opinion, it's something to do with the stigma attached to the term 'friendship group' and the way it leaves people out, almost. It describes a little bubble of friends all happy together, and everyone knows and recognises each friendship group. But, I mean, why do we even need friendship groups? Okay, they're good to distinguish who's friends with who, but think back to primary school days, when there weren't really specific friendship groups, and you used to talk to pretty much everyone in your class. You had your best friends, but you would still mix with lots of other people. And for some reason, this kind of stops at secondary school.

So Y8 Girl, I think you're right. It is unfair that your friends in your friendship group won't let you mix with other people. Perhaps you could try telling them that nothing has changed - you're still you and your friends are still them, and you still love them, you just want to have other friends too, because the world is for exploring! People are there to make friends with! There shouldn't be a limit on how many friends you can

have, and if you really want to be friends with someone, it's kind of wrong for someone to try and stop you, if there's no real reason for them to do so. Have a chat with your friends about it, and ask them why they don't want you to be friends with this girl. It might be interesting to see what they have to say, because there's probably no good reason! Offer to try and split your time up between socialising with friends from your friendship group and other people, or spend extra time with your friendship-group-friends if they're feeling left out. It's down to you, really.

Love, Voice

Medical Challenge Day

The Medical Challenge Day at Stockton Sixth Form College was definitely a great experience! The medical students from Newcastle University not only educated us on how to get to medical school, but also about some aspects they cover in their course, through various challenges. Additionally, this Medical Challenge Day helped us to socialise with many people our age and to gain teamwork qualities. By working with pupils of other schools we have become more confident in trying to do something. The challenges were based on Cardiology, Anatomy and Medical Ethics. Personally, I found the Cardiology challenge the most enjoyable, as we learnt about how the heart functions to perform different jobs by doing a practical. Medical Ethics was also exciting as we had to do entertaining role plays to see how doctors would deal with patients in certain situations. Although I liked the other two challenges more, the Anatomy challenge was least interesting as it required a lot more thinking and discussion rather than fun activities. Overall, I think that the Medical Challenge Day was beneficial and inspired many of those who came, to enter the Medicine field. Furthermore, it has helped me and others to choose wisely about our career paths and what we will do to achieve our ultimate aims in life.

Written by Kripa Tom

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)

People often say “I’m so OCD about...” The phrase itself does not make sense - “I’m so obsessive compulsive disorder about...” - and usually most individuals don’t understand how offensive this may be to a sufferer. Using this terminology so freely suggests that OCD is a personality trait or a quirk of some kind; it reduces the credibility of the disorder and trivialises it.

People with OCD have often said that when they come out to people and admit that they have been diagnosed with OCD - which takes a lot of time to build up the courage to do so - one of the most common responses is to say “I totally understand what you mean, I’m OCD about...”

So Pupil Voice are, removing the ignorance associated with OCD by educating people.

OCD used to be considered a type of anxiety disorder but has been reclassified as a unique condition.

First of all, there are many different types of OCD, but the general understanding of the disorder is when someone is plagued with frightening thoughts and feelings which makes them feel the need to perform certain rituals or routines in certain ways. The disturbing thoughts are called obsessions, and the rituals are called compulsions.



Some common obsessions of OCD sufferers include: fear of dirt or contamination by germs, fear of causing harm to another, fear of making a mistake, fear of being embarrassed or behaving in a socially unacceptable manner, fear of thinking evil or sinful thoughts, need for order, symmetry, or exactness, excessive doubt and the need for constant reassurance, and so many more.

These obsessions may lead to compulsions such as: repeatedly bathing, showering, or washing hands, refusing to shake hands or touch doorknobs, repeatedly checking things such as locks or stoves, constant counting, mentally or aloud, while performing routine tasks, constantly arranging things in a certain way, eating foods in a specific order, being stuck on words, images or thoughts, usually disturbing, that won't go away and can interfere with sleep, repeating specific words, phrases, or prayers, needing to perform tasks a certain number of times, collecting or hoarding items with no apparent value, etc.

Although OCD’s origins are still uncertain, health professionals’ studies have shown that OCD may be hereditary (genetic), as well as dependant on one’s environment and how they have been brought up. Some scientists, however, think that OCD arises from problems in the pathways of the brain that link areas dealing with judgment and planning with another area that filters messages involving body movements. Although this is still somewhat of a grey area, all we need to know is that OCD is a DISORDER and using the term loosely may offend someone.

Next week we may have time to talk about how to help someone who is showing these behavioural patterns and what you can do, as a friend, to ease their distress.

Special thanks to the
Communications
Team for their work.

