

A John Catt Publication

— The —

10 STEP GUIDE
to **ACING**
EVERY
EXAM
you ever take

Lucy Parsons

Workbook

Why bother with this workbook?

You might be thinking to yourself, 'Do I really need this workbook?' Or, 'Why has she bothered to make something to give me for free when I've just bought her book?'

Here's the answer.

I've read loads of self-help books. There's a whole shelf of them right next to me as I write this. They're full of great advice and wonderful words of wisdom. But, there's one thing I've learned from them all...

It's not enough to read these books. You have to do the exercises and put the advice into practice to get any real benefit from them.

That's what this free workbook is all about. If you just read the book you will probably think to yourself 'Oh, that's a good idea,' and, 'I should do that.' But, if you don't do the exercises in this workbook as you read the book you'll probably never do the things that I recommend - the things that will really make the difference to you.

Basically, I want you to succeed.

How to use this workbook

You can print this workbook off or fill it in on the screen. There are some clickable links to take you to other resources that you'll find helpful.

If you're struggling with anything, want to ask me a question or just want to show me how you're getting on, I'd love to hear from you. As you're working through the book get in touch with me on social media in the following places:

Snapchat: lucy.cparsons - send me a snap

Instagram: @lucycparsons - tag me in a post

Twitter: @LucyCParsons - mention me in your tweet

Now, you'd better get started!

Step 1- Your Great Big Why

Your great big why

Answer the questions below in as much detail as possible. Anything that comes to mind while you're thinking about your answers should be written down.

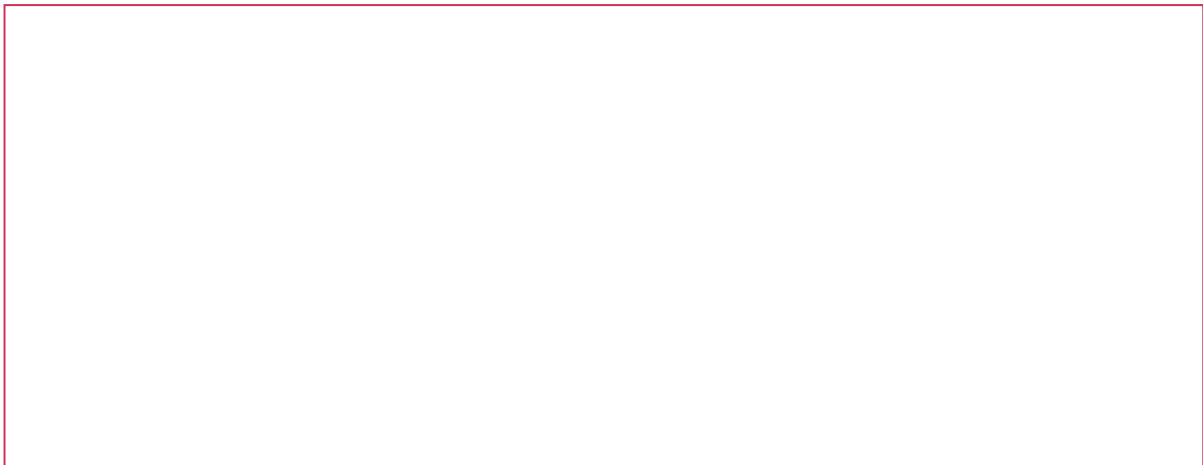
1. When you look five or ten years into the future, after you've finished your education, what kind of life do you want to live? What kind of house do you want to live in? What kind of job do you want to be doing? What does your social life look like? Are you married? Do you have children? Do you have pets? What kind of car do you drive (or do you ride a bike instead)? What books do you read and what kinds of films do you watch? What do you do on a Sunday? Describe your answers to these questions in as much detail as possible.

2. Describe a typical day in the life of your ideal you in ten years' time. What does your daily nitty gritty look like? Write down as much detail as you can.

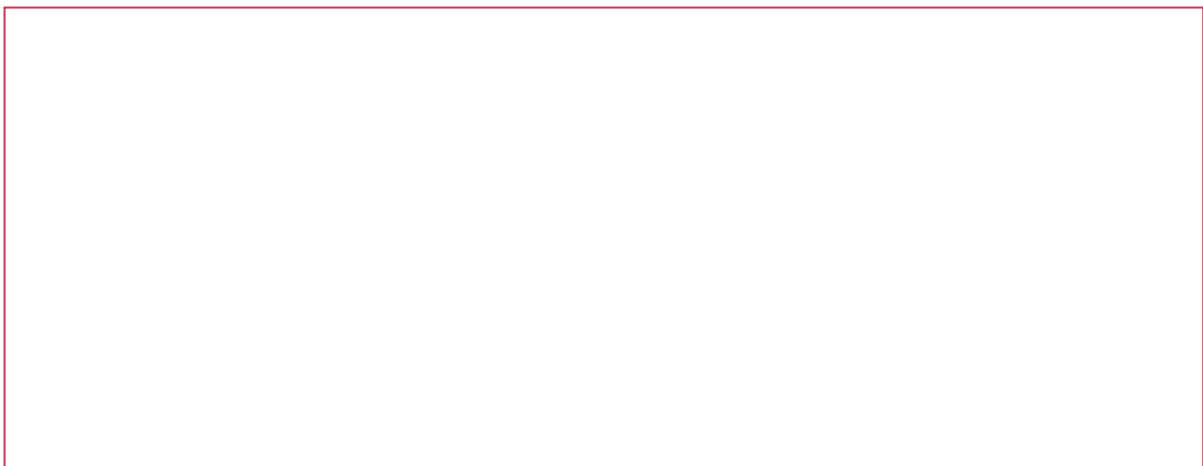
3. Why are you attracted to this life? What makes it exciting, fulfilling or something to aim for?



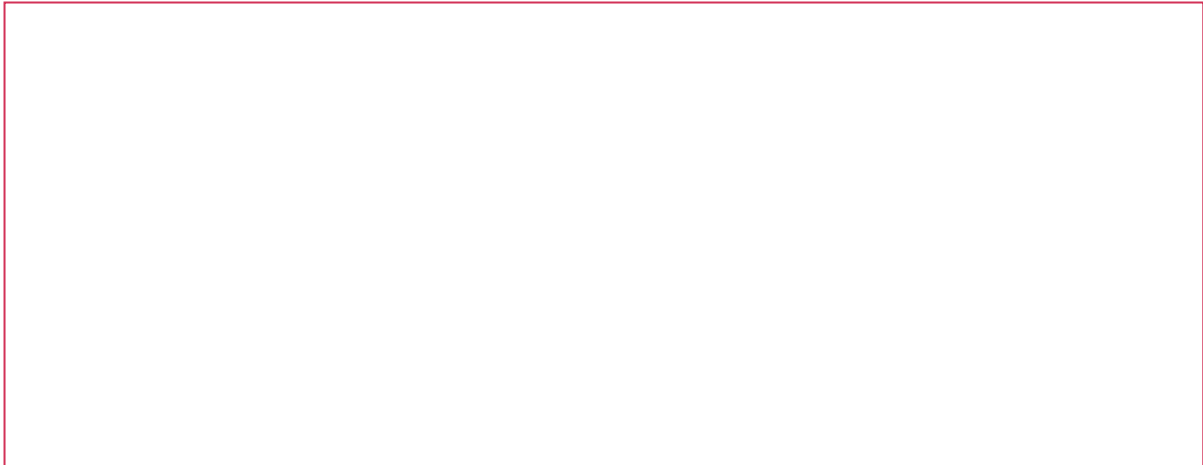
4. What do you want to achieve in your life? Do you want a nice house and two children? Or, do you want to be prime minister? Or both? Maybe you'd rather be the scientist who comes up with the technological solution to global warming? Or you want to run your own business and be rich? What is it that you want to achieve?



5. What do you want to be admired for? The way you bring up your children, your positive outlook and cheerful company or your positive influence on thousands of people's lives? Describe in detail what it is that you want to be admired for.



6. What mark do you want to leave on the world? Maybe you want to write a book, invent a new technology, improve your community for the better or have happy, well-functioning children that contribute positively to society. This is how you're going to be remembered.



You may have found that there was some repetition and overlap between your answers to these questions. If you found that, it's a good thing. The more you repeat yourself, or the more often you see a theme coming through, the more strongly you can identify that it is a strong motivation for you and part of your true dream.

Your path to your dream

In order to answer some of the following questions you will need a computer or tablet and an internet connection. Set a timer for 30 minutes and make it your mission to find out the answers to as many of these questions as possible. What you can't find out in 30 minutes on the internet you may need to ask actual people! You'll have to be more resourceful about this, finding people amongst your connections, or even asking strangers, to find out the answers.

1. What is your dream? Describe it in a couple of sentences.



2. If your dream is a lifestyle, how much do you think it's going to cost? This is how much you're going to need to earn. What job could you do that will help you earn this much money? Would you be happy doing this job? What qualifications do you need to do this job? Do you need to go to university or college? What grades do you need to get in there? What other experience do you need to get onto that course?

3. Is your dream a particular job or career? What do you need to do to get into that career? What qualifications do you need to do this job? Do you need to go to university or college? What grades do you need to get in there? What other experience do you need to get onto that course?

4. Is your dream going to a particular university or studying a certain subject? What grades do you need in your exams to get into that university or onto that course? What other experience do you need to have e.g. work experience or activities do you need to do e.g. further reading, independent research work in order to get onto that course or into that university?

Step 2 - The Mindset for Success

Use the spaces below each question to give your answers.

Why do you fear failure?

1. Does failing make you worry about what other people will think of you?

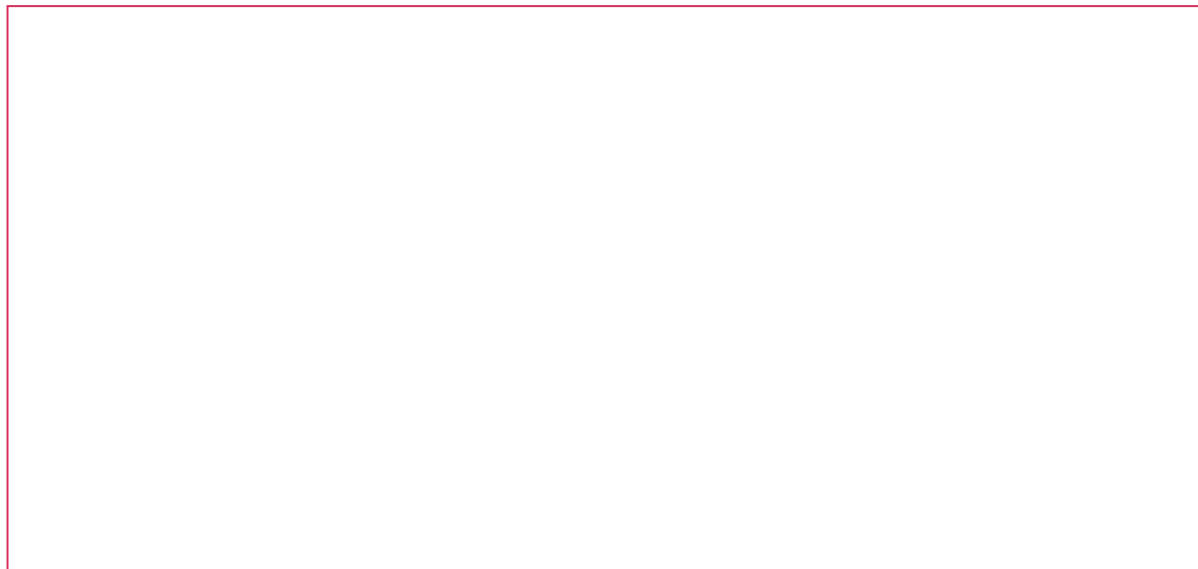
Are you worried about letting down your mum and dad if you don't get the grades they want you to? Are you worried about your friends laughing at you if you don't get the grades you're predicted? What is it that makes you so scared of what other people think?

2. Does failing make you worry about your ability to pursue the dream you identified in chapter 1?

Are you worried about not getting the grades you need to get into the university that's offered you a place? What about worrying you won't get the grades you need to get into sixth form? How much does your identity and the meaning of your life hinge on getting the grades you need?


3. Does failing make you worry that people will lose interest in you?

What if all your friends are cleverer than you and predicted to get much better grades? They've all got offers at Russell Group universities and you're headed for a university that's not so well respected. You've been friends since you were eleven but you can't see how they'd still want to be friends with you if you're clearly not a high-flyer like them. What other insecurities do you have that make you think that people like you for your cleverness?



4. Does failing make you worry about how clever you are?

You're worried that a poor set of exam results will make people think you're stupid for the rest of your life. Writing your lack-lustre GCSE grades on every application form from now until eternity makes you feel sick. Do your grades really show your value as a person?



5. Does failing make you worry about disappointing people whose opinion you value?

Maybe there's a teacher you really admire or your grandad has always believed in you, supported you and encouraged you more than anyone else throughout your life. You're desperate not to let them down because you know what the disappointment on their face will look like and you can anticipate the hollow feeling in your stomach when you see it. Do you really think that these people will stop liking you, loving you and believing in you because of what happened one day in an exam hall?



6. Do you play down your abilities and ambitions when you're talking to other people so that they don't expect too much from you?

You keep telling people that there's no way you'll get the straight As that school has predicted and you're really not that clever. What message are you giving to yourself when you say these kinds of things out loud to other people?



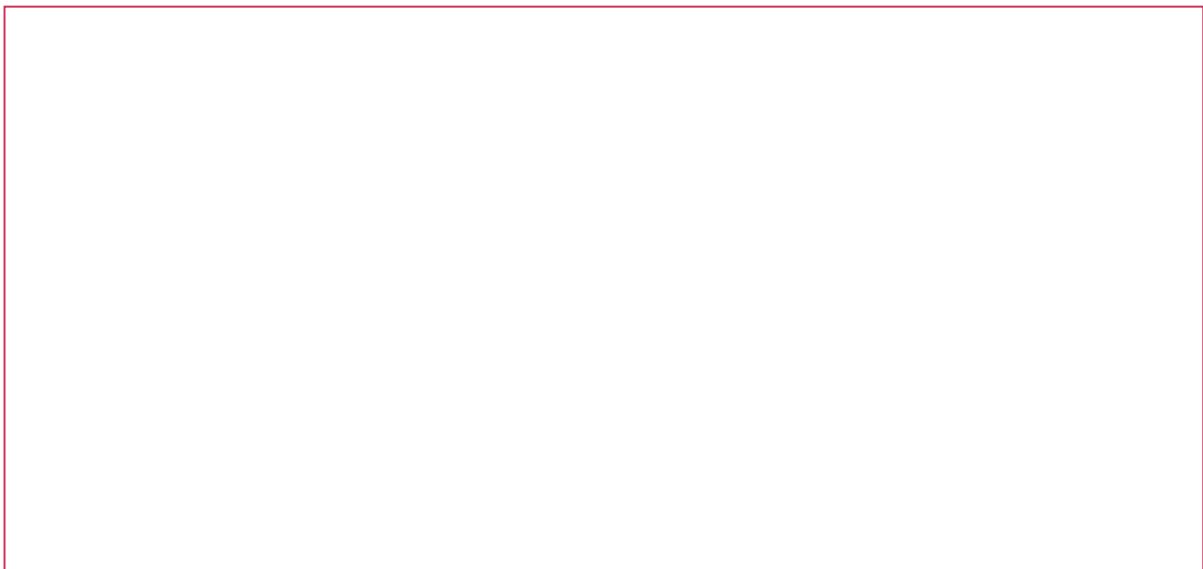
7. If and when you get a disappointing result, do you find it difficult to imagine what you could have done differently to get a better result?

You've got your mock exam grades back and got much worse grades than you wanted. You tell yourself that your expectations of yourself were too high and that you're meant to get low grades, instead of really digging deep into what you could have done differently so you can learn from your mistakes and do better next time. Why do you give up on yourself so easily?



8. Do you often get last-minute headaches, stomach aches, anxiety attacks, panic attacks or other physical or psychological symptoms that prevent you from completing your revision or doing your best in an exam?

What is it that you're trying to avoid? Are you looking for an excuse for failure?



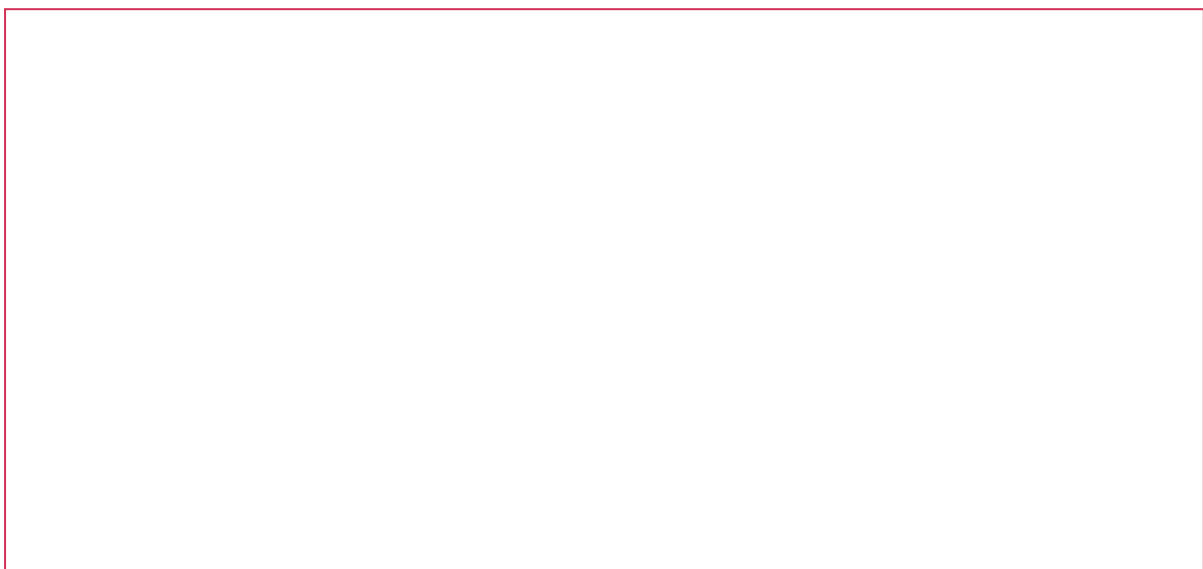
9. Do you displace the tasks that are most important for helping you to achieve your dreams with things that will sabotage your preparation?

You hide from the important work you need to do by doing 'busy' non-urgent work like tidying your room or phoning a friend just to put it off and distract yourself. If you're really honest with yourself you know what you're doing and could stop yourself if you really wanted to. Why do you do this?



10. Do you procrastinate and “run out of time” to complete your homework tasks and revision properly?

You procrastinate over the things you should be doing and purposefully run out of time so that you sabotage your own results. What message are you trying to send to the world and to yourself when you do this?



Your commitment to success

In Step 2 of the book I talk about the importance of you making a deep commitment to success. No maybes, I'll try or ifs and buts. You *have* to commit to success wholeheartedly.

So, I'd like you to repeat one of these mantras daily until you believe it in your heart, soul and bones. You can also make up your own and make them much more specific to you and your dreams - that will make them even more powerful!

Mantras for Success

I am committed to success.

I will succeed.

I believe in myself and my abilities.

I have the power within to achieve my goals.

Nothing will stop me from achieving my goals.

Every day I expand my possibilities by stepping outside of my comfort zone.

I have everything I need to achieve my dreams

Step 3 - Look After Yourself

Your plan to look after yourself

Answer these questions to come up with your plan for how to look after yourself so that you can do your best in your studies.

Sleep

1. Ideally, how many hours sleep do you need every night?

2. What time do you need to get up in the morning?

3. Knowing how much sleep you need and what time you need to get up in the morning, what time should you be turning you light out and going to sleep?

4. What activities help you to wind down and relax in the last hour of the day so that you're ready to calmly drift off to sleep? Write down your ideal last hour of the day here.

Exercise

1. What is your favourite type of exercise? List one to three types of exercise below.

2. When is the ideal time in your days or weeks to fit in these types of exercise?

Eat and drink

1. List your three favourite healthy snacks to carry with you.

2. How will you make sure you've always got a healthy snack to take with you? Who do you need to talk to? Do you need any packaging to help you carry them?

3. What's your favourite healthy breakfast? I challenge you to eat at least two portions of fruit or vegetables before you leave the house every morning. How are you going to make this happen?

Take time for yourself

1. What activities make you feel relaxed, recharged and rejuvenated? List at least five here.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

2. How can you fit these activities into your everyday life or your week? What are the ideal times for you to do them?

Part-time jobs

1. If you have a part-time job how many hours per week does it take?

2. Do you feel that your grades would improve if you didn't have a part-time job? Why?

3. Are you willing to cut down your hours or leave your job to get better grades and pursue your dream?

Extra-curricular activities

1. List below all the extra-curricular activities that you do and how much time they take each week.

2. Do you feel that any of these activities are having a negative effect on your grades?

3. Which activities do you enjoy the most and give you the biggest boost?

4. Which activities are you willing to sacrifice to pursue your dream and get better grades?

Step 4 - How to Manage Your Time

Your weekly routine outline is on the next page. You can fill this out by hand, fill this version out on the screen or complete an excel version and then print it out. Whatever works for you!

[Click here to get access to the Excel version.](#)



Your weekly routine

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
00:00							
01:00							
02:00							
03:00							
04:00							
05:00							
06:00							
07:00							
08:00							
09:00							
10:00							
11:00							
12:00							
13:00							
14:00							
15:00							
16:00							
17:00							
18:00							
19:00							
20:00							
21:00							
22:00							
23:00							

Key

Sleep		School		Study time		Meals	
Exercise		Hobbies / job		You-time		Self-care	

Step 5 - Get Organised

Your must-have stationery list to stay organised in your studies.

- Planner
- Lever Arch Files
- Dividers
- A4 file for carrying with you at all times
- A pen
- A pencil
- A ruler
- Rubber
- Pencil sharpener
- Spare pen
- Spare pencil
- Coloured pens
- Colouring pencils
- A pencil case
- Highlighters
- If needed: mathematical equipment e.g. scientific calculator, set square, protractor, compass

Paper

- Lined paper
- Plain paper
- Graph paper
- A3 paper
- Note cards / index cards

Step 6 - Study Habits For Success

Which three mini-habits are you going to adopt? Write them down below:

1.

2.

3.

Mini-habits tracker

Month: _____ Year: _____

Habit 1: _____

Habit 2: _____

Habit 3: _____

Day	Habit 1	Habit 2	Habit 3
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			
16			
17			
18			
19			
20			
21			
22			
23			
24			
25			
26			
27			
28			
29			
30			
31			

Tick in each box when you've completed your mini-habits for each day. As you see the ticks accumulate you'll feel a greater and greater sense of achievement, accomplishment and commitment to your mini-habits.

Your Habits Personality

Take Gretchen Rubin's Habits Personality Test then write down your habits personality and what it means below.

[Habits personality test](#) (Clickable link).

Your habits personality:

What your habits personality means

Your plan to tackle bad habits

Use the table below to identify the things that most often pull you away from your good intentions and good habits. What steps can you take to stay on track and stay focused on the things that are going to help you to achieve your hopes and dreams?

Good Study Habit	What stops you?	How can you make it happen in the future?

Once you've successfully tackled the habits in this table, come up with some more bad habits that are preventing you from reaching your full potential and work on trying to prevent them from popping up in your daily life.

Step 7 - Widen Your Knowledge

Find articles relevant to your subjects on twitter. The blog post linked to below has links to hashtags and twitter accounts that pull together the best articles shared on twitter every day. Basically, someone else is doing the hard work in finding them for you!

The Best Twitter Accounts and Hashtags to Help you Improve Your Grades

1. Which of the 25 ideas for broadening your knowledge listed in the book appeal to you most? List five ideas below.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

2. Which ideas will you start with? Where are you going to find the books, articles, films or resources that you need?

3. Add a regular time slot into the weekly routine that you created in Chapter 4 for widening your knowledge. This could be 20 mins per day or an hour on a Sunday morning. You choose what works best for you and make it work for yourself.

How do you learn best?

Fill in this table with your top five learning experiences and your bottom five learning experiences.

Top 5 learning experiences	Bottom 5 learning experiences

Clickable link: [Revision Planning Kickstarter Five-day Email course](#)

Revision Plan Outline

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Morning							
Afternoon							
Evening							

Subject key

Subject	Colour	Subject	Colour	Subject	Colour

Revision Plan Outline

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Morning							
Afternoon							
Evening							

Step 9 - Revision - Getting it Done

Make your own practice exam questions and learn to think like the Chief Examiner

1. Choose a type of exam question that you're going to focus on. You could choose a short answer question or an essay.
2. Find as many examples of this type of question as possible and write them in the table below.

Number	Question
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	

3. Highlight, circle or underline the command words in each question. Look carefully at how each question is structured.

4. Now, create some questions of your own, based on your knowledge of the specification or syllabus. Try to phrase them in the same way as the questions you wrote down above but use different subject areas.

Number	Question
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	

5. Now answer your questions, then use your knowledge of the mark scheme, as well as the generic section that most mark schemes have, to answer them.

On the next page there's a worked example of this process. Have a look at how I did it to see how it's done.

WORKED EXAMPLE: Make your own practice exam questions and learn to think like the Chief Examiner

1. Choose a type of exam question that you're going to focus on. You could choose a short answer question or an essay.
2. Find as many examples of this type of question as possible and write them in the table below.

Number	Question
1	Physical factors are more important than human factors in affecting river discharge. Discuss this view.
2	Describe how and explain why fluvial (river) landforms change downstream.
3	With reference to one case study, discuss the impact of flooding on people and the environment.
4	Assess the relative importance of physical and human causes of river flooding.
5	'Soft engineering is a better river flood management strategy than hard engineering.' Discuss this view.
6	To what extent is there conflict between development and sustainability in tundra areas?
7	To what extent are more recent developments in cold environments (such as oil, fishing and tourism) sustainable?
8	Discuss the impact(s) of rising sea levels on coastal environments.
9	Describe two or more landforms resulting from glacial erosion (such as corries, arêtes, pyramidal peaks, glacial troughs and associated features) and explain their formation.
10	Describe two or more landforms resulting from coastal erosion (such as headlands and bays, blow holes, arches, stacks, cliffs and wave cut platforms) and explain their formation.

3. Highlight, circle or underline the command words in each question. Look carefully at how each question is structured. (*I've put the command words in **bold** in this example*).

4. Now, create some questions of your own, based on your knowledge of the specification or syllabus. Try to phrase them in the same way as the questions you wrote down above but use different subject areas.

Number	Question
1	Describe two or more landforms found in the lower reaches of a river and explain their formation.
2	Discuss the impact(s) of river flooding on built-up areas.
3	Physical factors are more important than human factors in determining the rate of glacier retreat. Discuss this view.
4	With reference to one case study, discuss the impact of global warming on people and the environment.
5	To what extent is there conflict between development and sustainability in coastal areas?
6	Assess the relative importance of physical and human causes of coastal flooding.
7	
8	
9	
10	

5. Now answer your questions, then use your knowledge of the mark scheme, as well as the generic section that most mark schemes have, to answer them.

What's distracting you?

Use the table to identify the things that routinely distract you and try to come up with solutions to prevent those distractions.

Distraction	Solution

Your Mini-Motivations

What mini-motivations are you going to use to help you to stay focused and incentivise you to revise? Write them down here.

	5 Minute Motivations
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

	10-20 Minute Motivations
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

	30-60 Minute Motivations
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

Revision POWER HOUR



Get the most out of your revision with a power hour. Here's a step-by-step of how to do it.

Choose a past paper question

Google your subject, level and exam board e.g. "Geography A-Level Past Papers AQA"

STEP
01



STEP
02

Revise

Spend 20 minutes revising what you need to know to answer your question

Do the question

Set a timer for 20 minutes and answer the past paper question you chose

STEP
03



STEP
04

Mark your answer

Using the mark scheme for the past paper mark your answer. This will help you to think like an examiner

Get feedback

Show your teacher your work. Ask them whether your marking is accurate and how you could improve your answers

STEP
05



lifemoreextraordinary.com

Step 10 - Exam Time

Exam Review

1. What went well? What would you do the same next time?

Maybe you used some really good revision techniques that worked for you, you did loads of past exam questions or you really bottomed out the things you didn't understand at the beginning of revision season.

Make a list of all the things that went well and what you'd do the same again next time.

2. What didn't go well? What would you change next time?

Maybe, like 82% of the people who answered a twitter poll I did, you feel that you didn't start revising early enough. Maybe you really struggled to maintain your stamina for revision because you didn't take enough revision breaks. Maybe you spent hours in front of your desk feeling like nothing was going in.

Write down the things that went badly and how you would change them next time around. If you're stuck for ideas, re-read the book!

What didn't go well?	How can you make it better next time?

Congratulations!

You've read the book and completed the workbook. By now you should have a solid strategy for getting the very best grades in your exam possible.

I'd be really grateful if you would leave a review of the book on Amazon to let people who are considering buying the book know how it has helped you.

Please also share pictures of your completed workbook pages with me on social media.

Snapchat: [lucy.cparsons](#) - send me a snap

Instagram: [@lucycparsons](#) - tag me in a post

Twitter: [@LucyCParsons](#) - mention me in your tweet

Finally, I'd like to say thank you so much for putting your trust in me and letting me help you to achieve not only amazing grades, but to move towards realising your dreams.

Good luck!