

How to Get Fit for Exams



Get Fit for Exams

Each year Learning Performance visits over 1,000 schools across the UK, reaching some 200,000 students, 17,000 parents and 5,000 staff.

Our learning strategies have developed over a period of twenty years and are entirely supported by scientific evidence and research on how the brain learns.

Exam season is now upon us. But don't panic as we have gathered all the scientific evidence in this handy guide, which will help increase your students' learning performance (see what I did there?!) and ultimately, exam results.

For more information about our Study Skills and Lifelong Learning workshops please don't hesitate to contact us.

Together we can
inspire a love of
learning



Together we can raise achievement.

Contact us on
01903 872 849

Email
carrie@learningperformance.com

Visit
www.learningperformance.com

How the Brain Learns

The brain is like a muscle. It grows. Yup, when you learn something new a part of the brain changes and grows bigger, much like an arm muscle after lots of weight training.

Inside the brain are billions of tiny nerve cells, called neurons. Each neuron has branches connecting them to other neurons creating a complex network that even the world's biggest super – computer cannot emulate.

When you learn something new these connections multiply and get stronger. Eventually something you once found impossible becomes easy, like playing the piano, or algebra, even exams.

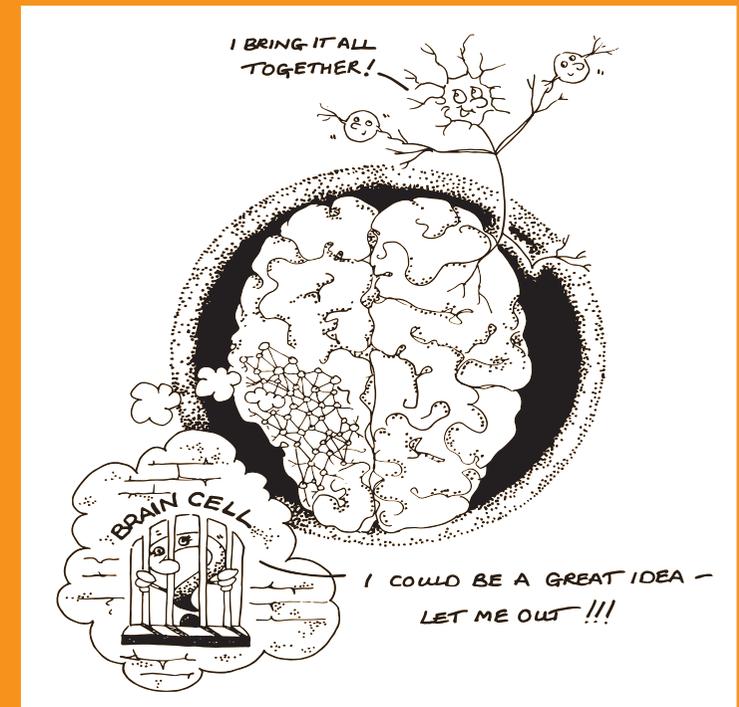
Think about it. A baby isn't born knowing how to walk, they learn, their brain develops and grows stronger until walking becomes second nature.

All this makes your brain and *you* pretty awesome.

The Intelligence Myth

Labelling yourself as “stupid,” is scientifically wrong. You can't argue with science so fling all those negative thoughts such as, “I can't do it,” or “It's too hard,” out of the window because there is no such thing as fixed intelligence.

No one thinks a baby is stupid because it can't talk. We know they just haven't learnt the language yet. It is the same for you. Right now you may not be able to complete the Maths formulas, or Chemistry experiment but with practice and effort you can learn to do it. Your brain just needs to connect and develop that lovely learning network.



The Left and Right Brain

Learning can be easy and dare I say, fun!?! You just need to know how. A popular theory is that the left-brain is logical and analytical, whereas the right brain is creative.

This is partly true. The functions of the two hemispheres do process information differently. For example, the left prefers to process the details of objects while the right processes the overall shape of objects we see. But the danger here is to believe you are either a left or right brain thinker.

Commonly we hear students say, “I’m not logical so I won’t ever be good at Maths,” or “I’m better at Drama than Science so I’m just not going to bother.”

The brain is a single, interactive system with parts working together to accomplish a given task. To make your brain even more powerful you have to know how to **combine the left and right hemispheres**. Then there is no stopping you!

How to Learn

As we have seen your brain tends to process things in two ways which simplistically, is logically and creatively. So how do you combine both?

Memory Techniques, such as image chains, peg words and the memory palace, is one strategy. Creating a memory palace is famously used by Derren Brown and World Memory Champions. It works by logically placing items in various locations. It's best to use a place you know well like your home, classroom or exam hall. There is just one rule: **go wild and unleash your imagination!**

Another, technique is A - Mapping. This is my personal favourite as it is great for large topics or units of work. I even A - Map when taking notes. The brain loves it as it combines logic and creativity perfectly.

You can read more about how to A - Map by visiting our blog www.makinglearningeasier.wordpress.com which has tons of information and resources.

Get Rid of Revision

There are armies of powerful memory techniques to help spice up your revision. However, the real key to revision is changing your mindset.

Naturally, when I think of revision I visualise stress, tears, boredom and no social life. Hardly an incentive to whip the study books out.

Luckily, a recent study on gamers discovered that those who had frequent breaks were more successful than those who sat playing the games for hours. We have been saying the same about revision for years and now here is the scientific proof. Get rid of revision and use the **Review Philosophy** instead.

Review	When	For how long
First Review	10 minutes later	About 10 minutes
Second Review	1 day later	About 5 minutes
Third Review	1 week later	Between 2 – 5 minutes
Fourth Review	1 month later	Between 2 – 5 minutes

How long do you brush your teeth for? How long does it take for you to make a sandwich? Reviewing doesn't have to be a time consuming process.

Work smarter not harder.

Sleep, Sweet Sleep



Scientific studies show that sleep plays a critical role in memory consolidation.

No, you can't sleep in class (unless, a very cool teacher allows it). But you can get plenty of rest by not staying up so late or by having an extra 10 minutes in bed if you get your school stuff together the night before.

I'm off to have a nap. See you later.

Now. Go forth.
Be Awesome.

Book a Get Fit for Exams Workshop

At Learning Performance our aim is simple, to inspire a love of learning and create a generation of confident and successful individuals.

We have a team of over 60 fabulous presenters across the country. Many have a theatre and education background making their delivery engaging, modern and fresh.

To book a Get Fit for Exams workshop or any other Study Skills or Lifelong Learning workshops contact Carrie.

Director Carrie says...



“As a family - run business we provide customers with experienced, knowledgeable and practical expertise. All with a personalised service! I’m incredibly proud to be Managing Director of Learning Performance.”

98%
of students rated our
presenters 'very good'
or 'excellent'

94%
of students rated our
strategies 'very good'
or 'excellent'

For more information visit
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To book or to discuss your
needs contact us on

01903 872849

or email

carrie@learningperformance.com